



Partnership Based Marketing Model (Partnership Marketing) For UMKM Case Study of Bolu Cukke Rahmah Liliriaja District, Soppeng Regency

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to analyze the implementation of a partnership-based marketing model at the Bolu Cukke Rahmah MSME in Liliriaja District, Soppeng Regency, and to evaluate the effectiveness of mutualistic symbiosis between the MSME and travel drivers in supporting business sustainability. This study employs a descriptive qualitative approach with data collected through interviews, observations, and documentation. Informants include the business owner, employees, travel drivers, and consumers selected purposively. The results show that the partnership operates informally and is based on trust. Travel drivers act as promotional intermediaries by recommending the products to passengers, while the business provides rest facilities and refreshments as a form of appreciation. This partnership helps increase consumer purchases, expand market reach, and support business sustainability. The findings indicate that partnership-based marketing can be an effective strategy for MSMEs to increase sales without incurring high promotional costs.

A. INTRODUCTION

Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (UMKM) have an important role in encouraging community economic growth and creating job opportunities. The existence of UMKM not only contributes to increasing community income, but also becomes one of the important pillars in regional economic development. In the face of increasingly fierce business competition, UMKM actors are required to be able to implement effective marketing strategies so that the products produced can be widely known by consumers and able to survive in the long term.

One approach that can be used in increasing business competitiveness is through the implementation of the right marketing strategy. Mahyus et al. (2022) emphasized that the marketing mix is a set of marketing tools that companies use to achieve their marketing goals in the target market. Through the proper management of marketing elements, business actors can adjust products to market needs and expand their marketing reach more effectively.

In the midst of an increasingly dynamic development of the business world, UMKM actors are also required to be able to adapt to various changes that occur in the business environment. Muliati et al. (2024) stated that the transformation and

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development of the business world requires business people to have an understanding and ability to design effective strategies to face increasingly competitive competition. Therefore, the ability to manage marketing strategies is one of the important factors in maintaining business sustainability.

In addition to marketing strategies, increasing the capacity of business actors is also an equally important aspect in the development of UMKM. Norhaedah et al. (2023) explained that increasing the capacity of UMKM is an effective solution to face various market challenges while optimizing the potential of their businesses. This effort can be done through strengthening managerial capabilities, developing marketing networks, and utilizing opportunities for cooperation with various parties.

The success of this strategy is certainly inseparable from the role of human resources as the main driver of business activities. Luthfi et al. (2024) stated that humans are the main assets that become active actors in every operational activity to achieve organizational goals. With the role of human resources who are able to manage the business effectively, the marketing strategies implemented can run optimally. On the other hand, business development also needs to pay attention to the local potential of an area. Ernawati et al. (2023) emphasized that the development of local potential requires a strategy that is able to encourage understanding and involvement of the community at large in the development process. The use of local potential not only strengthens regional identity, but can also open up new economic opportunities for the surrounding community.

This phenomenon can be seen in Bolu Cukke Rahmah UMKM located in Liliriaja District, Soppeng Regency. In carrying out its marketing activities, this business establishes partnerships with travel drivers who act as promotional intermediaries through recommendations to passengers. This cooperative relationship shows a symbiotic pattern of mutualism that provides benefits for both parties, while helping to expand the reach of product marketing.

Based on these conditions, this study aims to analyze the application of a partnership-based marketing model in Bolu Cukke Rahmah UMKM in Liliriaja District, Soppeng Regency and assess the effectiveness of the mutualism symbiotic relationship between business actors and travel drivers in supporting business sustainability.

B. METHODS

This study uses a descriptive qualitative approach to deeply understand the phenomenon of partnership-based marketing in Bolu Cukke Rahmah UMKM. Pend/mnbcx 1ekatan was chosen because it was able to provide a comprehensive overview of the interaction process and the pattern of cooperation established between business owners and travel drivers as partners in marketing activities. According to Creswell (2009), qualitative research aims to explore and understand the meaning derived from a certain social problem or phenomenon through the process of in-depth data collection and analysis. In this study, a descriptive approach is used to describe factually how the partnership-based marketing model is applied and how the symbiotic relationship of mutualism between UMKM and travel drivers contributes to the sustainability of Bolu Cukke Rahmah's business.

C. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

1. Partnership-Based Marketing Model (Partnership Marketing)

The results of the study show that the marketing model applied by Bolu Cukke Rahmah UMKM is informal and trust-based. Cooperation between businesses and travel drivers is not based on a written contract, but develops through interactions that take place repeatedly in daily operational activities. Travel drivers act as promotional intermediaries by recommending sponge cukke products to passengers during the trip. When there are passengers who want to buy souvenirs, the driver will stop at the Bolu Cukke Rahmah shop. As a form of appreciation, the business provides facilities in the form of resting places, drinks, and bread for consumption for drivers.

This partnership mechanism shows the existence of a mutually beneficial pattern of mutual relations. Drivers gain comfort during the trip, while businesses gain additional consumers from recommendations given to passengers

1. The Effectiveness of Mutualism Symbiotic Relationships on Business Sustainability The Influence of Driver Recommendations on Purchase Decisions

The results of interviews with 20 consumers show that most consumers know Bolu Cukke Rahmah products through travel driver recommendations. Of the total respondents, 14 consumers bought because of the driver's recommendation, while 4 consumers already knew the store before and 2 consumers were interested because of the strategic location. These findings show that driver recommendations have a significant influence on consumer purchasing decisions.

Mutual Benefits in Partnerships

The partnership that is established provides benefits for both parties. Travel drivers get facilities such as rest, drinks, and bread as travel provisions. Although the incentive is not financial, drivers feel appreciated and comfortable to make a stopover. On the other hand, businesses gain additional consumers that help increase daily sales.

Impact on Business Sustainability

The existence of a travel fleet that stops at the store contributes to the stability of the number of consumers. The recommendations that drivers give to passengers also serve as verbal promotions that help expand market reach. In addition, this partnership relationship helps build the trust of new consumers who have not previously known Bolu Cukke Rahmah products.

Overall, the results of the study show that the symbiotic relationship of mutualism between Bolu Cukke Rahmah UMKM and travel drivers has proven to be effective in supporting business sustainability. Drivers benefit from convenience during the trip, while businesses gain additional consumers that contribute to sales stability.

Discussion

The results of the study show that the marketing model applied by Bolu Cukke Rahmah UMKM is carried out through an informal partnership pattern between business owners and travel drivers. This partnership is formed through repeated interactions and is based on a relationship of mutual trust without a written contract.

Although informal, the relationship can run consistently because both parties benefit from the cooperation that is established. This shows that UMKM marketing strategies can develop through social networks formed in daily economic activities.

This finding is in line with the opinion of Irianti and Muhammad Luthfi (2025) who stated that the development of UMKM is not only determined by production capabilities, but also by marketing strategies that are adaptive to the business environment. In this study, partnerships with travel drivers are a form of using social networks as an effective marketing channel for small businesses.

The study also found that travel drivers have an important role in conveying information about products to passengers during the trip. This information is often the basis for consumers to stop by and make a purchase. This condition shows that the promotion that occurs is interpersonal and based on direct recommendations. These findings are in line with research by Pratama et al. (2022) which explains that recommendation-based marketing has a significant influence on consumer purchasing decisions. In addition, the relationship between business owners and travel drivers shows a pattern of mutually beneficial cooperation. Travel drivers get rest and consumption facilities, while businesses get additional consumers from travel passengers who make stopovers. According to Vatamanu (2021), business sustainability is not only influenced by financial aspects, but also by the ability of business actors to build collaborative relationships with various parties involved in business activities.

Thus, the partnership-based marketing model implemented by Bolu Cukke Rahmah UMKM has proven to be able to expand market reach and maintain the stability of consumer visits. This strategy shows that informal partnerships based on trust and mutual benefits can be an effective marketing alternative for UMKM in supporting business sustainability.

D. CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the research, it can be concluded that Bolu Cukke Rahmah UMKM in Liliriaja District apply a marketing model based on informal partnerships with travel drivers as one of the marketing strategies. The partnership is formed through social relationships based on trust and interaction that takes place on an ongoing basis without a written cooperation contract.

Travel drivers act as promotional intermediaries by recommending products to passengers during the trip, so as to encourage consumers to stop by and make purchases. On the contrary, the business provides facilities in the form of rest, drinks, and consumption as a form of appreciation to travel drivers. This mutual relationship shows a symbiotic pattern of mutualism that provides benefits to both parties.

Overall, the partnership-based marketing strategy implemented has proven to be effective in increasing consumer visits and helping to maintain business sales stability. Therefore, informal partnerships based on trust, communication, and mutual benefits can be an effective alternative marketing strategy for MSMEs in supporting business sustainability.

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