

**QUALITATIVE STUDY OF ENHANCE PERSONAL BRANDING THROUGH DIGITAL PLATFORM*****PENELITIAN KUALITATIF TERHADAP PERKEMBANGAN PERSONAL BRANDING MELALUI DIGITAL PLATFORM***

By:

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**Abstract:** At this time, the development of technology is growing rapidly and digital platforms are present to meet the needs of people. One of them is social media. Social Media becomes a place for people to build their personal branding. Not only for celebrities or entrepreneurs, but personal branding is intended for anyone who wants to be known by others for what is best done. The advantage of personal branding in today's digital era is the achievement of "likes", "followers" or "subscribers" making social media from influencers a driving force for marketing and sales (James F, 2013). Therefore, this research aims to know how influential personal branding in digital platform, how to build and maintain personal branding power and how personal branding affect public awareness which is able to increase economic value. This research is a descriptive qualitative research type. The results found in this research are 1)Increasing personal branding through social media as a digital platform in line with the increase in the number of followers, likes and comments, 2)Similarity factors (hobbies, tastes or regions of origin) and admiration for influencers are factors that connect influencers and followers, 3)Building personal branding starts with sharing interesting activities, stories and experiences through social media, 4)To maintain the personal branding power, namely by active communication and interaction on social media and by developing content and personal character, <sup>5</sup>Enhance personal branding through social media can attract the attention of business actors or brand owners to market their businesses/products/services/brands through social media owned by influencers.

**Keywords:** Personal branding, digital platform, social media

**Abstrak:** Saat ini perkembangan teknologi semakin pesat dan platform digital hadir untuk memenuhi kebutuhan masyarakat. Salah satunya adalah media sosial. Media Sosial menjadi tempat bagi orang untuk membangun personal brandingnya. Tidak hanya untuk selebriti atau pengusaha, tetapi personal branding ditujukan untuk siapa saja yang ingin dikenal oleh orang lain untuk apa yang terbaik yang dilakukan. Keunggulan personal branding di era digital saat ini adalah tercapainya "likes", "followers" atau "subscribers" menjadikan media sosial dari influencer sebagai motor penggerak pemasaran dan penjualan (James F, 2013). Oleh karena itu, penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui bagaimana pengaruh personal branding dalam platform digital, bagaimana membangun dan mempertahankan kekuatan personal branding dan bagaimana personal branding mempengaruhi kesadaran publik yang mampu meningkatkan nilai ekonomi. Penelitian ini merupakan jenis penelitian deskriptif kualitatif. Hasil yang ditemukan dalam penelitian ini yaitu <sup>1</sup>peningkatan personal branding melalui media sosial sebagai platform digital sejalan dengan peningkatan jumlah pengikut, suka dan komentar, <sup>2</sup>Faktor kesamaan (hobi, selera atau daerah asal) dan kekaguman terhadap influencer menjadi factor yang menghubungkan influencer dan pengikutnya, <sup>3</sup>Membangun personal branding berawal dari membagikan aktivitas, cerita dan pengalaman menarik yang dimiliki melalui media sosial, <sup>4</sup>Cara mempertahankan kekuatan personal branding yaitu dengan melakukan komunikasi dan interaksi aktif di media sosial serta dengan mengembangkan konten dan karakter diri, Meningkatkan personal branding melalui media sosial mampu menarik perhatian pelaku usaha/pemilik merek untuk memasarkan usahanya/ produk/jasa/merek melalui media sosial milik influencer.

**Kata Kunci:** Personal branding, digital platform, media sosial

## INTRODUCTION

Nowadays the development of technology is so fast and the trend are also developing. People in this era are bound with gadgets to support the use of social media. Lot of people also very important for them to make themselves better assessed by someone. Because the person who has been deemed good then, one can very well accepted by many people. By social media people can show everything in their lives like daily activity, where were they are, what kind of meals they just ate, and there are many more their can do in social media. Every people have to decide what they want, what brand they will bought. Through an election brand it determine an appraiser each other. Personal branding is a marketing strategy to make one skills stand out from other professionals in an industry. Because people very relate with social media so they can stand out their product and the other will notice or will curious with the product. But somehow people not have enough power to influence the other to make sure about the product quality and goodness. Because they don't have competency to build public trust. Lack of awareness in one of the lack of strength in personal branding. People still don't fully know yet how to create the personal branding. They just enjoy the product themselves, without realizing the opportunity if they share information about the product.

Branding is not only about logo, corporate identity, marketing, and advertising, but branding is about something unique. Because branding is about strategy that can relate with marketing that using a tactic. Brand can push customer to buy a product that can support the marketing activity. Good branding is can tell the value and the benefits on the product without having to go through advertising process that can take a big cost. However, that doesn't mean brands don't need marketing. Branding is most valuable in a business, both from sales or services. Branding also more concern how to satisfy the customer rather than company's products chosen and bought by the public. This time lot of company not using a famous artist or model to promote their product, but their just using some people who has a competency to influence a little bit of environment to know their product. This is the opportunity that people cannot see, because people are think that it's part of famous people. The personal brand is all about the difference that one can bring the industry through the unique quality, experience, and way of presenting them. Some company still used blog for branding because it still a good strategy to build a branding for some reason blog will increase the visitor of the brand websites' and automatically will make the visitor know more about the product. And create the product with the right keyword so the people will be easy to search the product even though they do not know about the specific name of the product but they can find it because of the right keyword. And if the article of the product shared in many times it may also increase the blog visitor automatically.

### Research Objectives

Based on formulation of problem, this research aims:

1. To know how influential personal branding in digital platform
2. To know how to build and maintain personal branding power

## THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

### Digital Platform

Digital platform define as any electronic tool for communication includes desktop, mobile phone, and social media. That connecting lots of people to communicate or socialize. Digital platform can also be in the form of software and technology that use for business operation in IT system, and serves for operations and customer engagement (Ayodeji et al., 2020). In this era digital platform used for developing businesses, for example like online shop or people who selling product from social media. And as a consumer, people can give a review or give valuation of some product to share an information to other people by using digital platform.

### Marketing

Marketing refers to activities a company undertake to promote the buying or selling of a product or service. Gronroos (1994) had a statement that marketing has to be somewhat abstract, without losing any power as a guideline for teaching and practicing in market. In order to create satisfaction of the customer with the power to build the customer trust by the communication and also by the product experience itself.

## **Digital Marketing**

Digital marketing is the fastest growing marketing area ever (Ryan, 2014). Basically both digital marketing and traditional marketing are the same thing. It's just that the difference between the two is the existence of digital communication tools that encourage digital marketing. It makes it possible to connect and build long-term relationships between producers and customers. Through digital marketing using the interconnected power of the interactive web is able to create consumer demand, currency exchange and even the exchange of attention to value. This is called attention economy (Stokes, 2011).

## **Personal Branding**

Creating personal branding is about creating a unique identity. Not only for celebrities or entrepreneurs, but personal branding is intended for anyone who wants to be known by others for what is best done. Indirectly, personal branding is designed to be seen by anyone and how they are seen by others. However, the important thing in personal branding is how to create other people's perception of you. This makes managing personal branding it their own responsibility to find their uniqueness (Nanayakkara and Dissanayake, 2020).

## **Previous Research**

Shaker and Hafiz (2014) explore various literatures from different disciplines to address the issue of developing a contextual framework of "construction of online personal brands." The study covers the area of personality dimensions, personal brand identity both core and extended, influence of surroundings in identity creation in the online environment, individual's image positioning and management etc.

Nanayakkara and Dissanayake (2020) investigated how social media has been utilized for personal branding applications. Paper followed an extensive literature review to build a discussion on theoretical and empirical contents related to social media use in personal branding whilst a rationale is made on the relevance of the theory of social capital. Paper attempts to appreciate the application of social capital theory to explain the theoretical foundation in the use of social media for personal branding whilst trust is highlighted as an additional notion within. The literature review was executed addressing to key sub contents related to personal branding and social media. It reviewed journal articles as the main source of information to organize the contents with empirical justifications. Finally, paper discusses the concepts of brand image, brand identity and brand positioning in personal branding and how active involvement of social media results online personal branding.

Johnson (2017) discussed the importance of developing, maintaining and promoting one's personal brand. Personal branding is the process by which an individual actively tries to manage others' impressions of their skills, abilities and experiences. Self-awareness and understanding one's strengths and weaknesses in order to effectively present the self is essential to building a personal brand. Students need to understand the concept of personal branding and how actions they engage today, especially in social media, can affect their future. Making students aware of the process of personal branding assists them in regulating their postings and disclosures on social media. Many tools are available on social media to convey one's personal brand such as LinkedIn, Pinterest, Instagram, Facebook, Vimeo, YouTube and blogs. Providing students with tips on how to best convey their image on social media will help them be successful in building their careers. Examples of class assignments from students' use of blogs, Pinterest and LinkedIn will be discussed.

## **RESEARCH METHOD**

### **Research Approach**

This research is a descriptive qualitative research type that is used to obtain in-depth and comprehensive information about enhance personal branding through a digital platform. This type of research is research that is used to analyze or describe the data that has been collected properly without intending to make generally accepted conclusions or generalizations (Sugiyono, 2012). It is hoped that this approach can reveal the situations and problems faced in personal branding through digital platforms. And the result of this only describe and construct in-depth interview with research subjects so will be able to provide a clear overview about personal branding power through digital platform.

### **Population, Sample and Sampling Technique**

In qualitative research, populations and their samples use a term called data source in certain social situations (Komariah and Satori, 2011). Therefore, the sample in this study consisted of interviews with two influencers whose account criteria had followers with a minimum number of ten thousand followers, namely A

and B and four loyal followers (two each followers of person A and person B) who have followed the influencer for at least the last 1 year. In this study, the sample collection technique uses non-probability sampling technique which is a sampling technique that does not provide opportunities or opportunities for every member of the population to be used as a research system (Akdon, 2008). Then, the data source used is a purposive sample that focuses on selected informants who are rich in cases for in-depth studies (Sukmadinata, 2007).

### **Data Collection Technique**

Data collection technique in this study include three things, namely the first observation. Through observation, researchers can learn about behavior and the meaning of that behavior. In this study, researchers observed activities that took place between influencers and their followers on the digital platform used to interact. The second is the interview. Data collection techniques with interviews, namely by using oral questions to research subjects (Sanusi, 2011). Researchers will conduct a personal interview method, namely interviews between researchers and respondents who are directed by the interviewer for the purpose of obtaining relevant information (Kuncoro, 2009). And the third is documentation. Through documentation, documents and data needed in research problems will be collected which will then be studied more deeply so that they can support and increase trust and proof of an incident (Komariah and Satori, 2011).

### **Data Analysis Method**

In this study, the data analysis method is carried out by systematically searching for and compiling data obtained from interviews and documentation by organizing data into categories, describing them into units, synthesizing, arranging into patterns, choosing which ones are important and what will be studied and make conclusions (Sugiyono, 2012).

## **RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

### **Result**

#### **Interview Result**

This study focuses on describing to enhance of personal branding through digital platforms using qualitative methods. Researchers conducted in-depth interviews with informants, namely two social media influencers (MSI A & B) and four followers according to predetermined criteria (F1 & F2 is Follower Informant MSI A, F3 & F4 is Follower Informant MSI B). In this study, researchers used Instagram social media as a benchmark for the digital platform used due to the ease of obtaining information on the development of personal branding owned by influencers and information on their followers.

Informant MSI A is a Social Media Influencer who has been actively using Instagram social media since 2013. In the course of her career, MSI A participated in various beauty events and won them. This has an effect on increasing the number of likes, comments and followers on his social media accounts, whose initial posts were only able to reach 195 likes and 12 comments, but now his posts are able to attract the attention of many people and are able to get up to 2,448 likes and 120 comments. The development of MSI A's personal branding is increasingly visible until it is able to give him the opportunity to try new things such as models, event MCs and so on. Not only attracting the attention of its followers, but MSI A's personal branding is also able to attract the attention of business actors or brands who then cooperate with them in marketing their products/services. Currently, MSI A informants have approximately 35,100 followers. In an interview conducted with MSI A, he usually uses social media as a digital platform for daily use and to fill his spare time such as Instagram, YouTube and TikTok. He uses social media to share stories and be an inspiration to his followers. In building his personal branding, the thing he did was to continue to share about the various activities he participated in through his social media accounts. And to maintain the personal branding that has been built, he consistently shares and develops it by interacting with his followers.

Informant MSI B have been using social media for a long time and often share their unique experiences through their social media. His career was built on the power of the digital platform he used. MSI B informant was a blogger, internet marketer for a music group and novelist. In the beginning, MSI B's informant was known to many people through one of his love stories which was poured into a book which was later turned into a feature film. With personal branding as a blogger and writer, MSI B informant started his Instagram social media in 2011 by getting 393 likes and 31 comments. In developing his social media, MSI B informants often share various daily activities he does, including his hobbies and passion in the automotive field, with a funny demeanor as well as sharing his experiences using the items he owns. It also opens up business opportunities in automotive-

related fields. For example, by holding or even being invited to do workshops on automotive, especially customized motor vehicles or about the creative industry. Not only that, it also brought him to cooperate with various motor vehicle brands and many other brands. The personal branding he has built is able to make him now get likes with an average of approximately 5,000 likes per post and the number of followers is approximately 254,000 followers who have also verified their accounts (blue ticks). In interviews that have been conducted, MSI B explained that he uses social media as a digital platform because of the ease with which he can share stories about his daily activities and hobbies, such as the story feature provided by Instagram and Youtube to find inspirational materials for content to be created. According to MSI B, his personal branding was built based on his previous experiences and professions, namely bloggers and novelists who then attracted people to become followers and which were then shared and developed through social media. He also explained that in maintaining and developing personal branding through social media, the need for consistency in sharing activities and stories through social media accounts, continuing to innovate to develop interesting content, inspire and educate followers and be yourself in every content shared.

Informant F1 are active social media users who have followed MSI A's social media since 2016. F1 informants decided to become followers after seeing through social media the achievements of MSI A's informants. In the interview he explained that he saw the personal branding development of MSI A through social media, MSI A is an inspiring and accomplished character which makes him feel proud because of the fact that they are from the same area. Through the content shared by MSI A there is a place that it shares which makes F1 interested in that place and decide to go to the same place.

Informant F2 is a social media follower of MSI A's informant who has been following him since 2016. The achievements and beauty of MSI A's informants are the reasons for F2's informants to become loyal followers of MSI A's informants. Through interviews conducted, F2 saw the personal branding of MSI A as a mature, elegant, beautiful and cheerful character that made F2 also receive positive energy from each shared content. It was also from this content that F2 went to the same beauty clinic as MSI A and tried the treatments and products that the clinic offered.

Informant F3 is an active user of social media who has been a follower of MSI B's informants since 2020. The similarity of hobbies, namely motorized vehicles, is the reason F3 informants become followers of MSI B's social media informants. What F3 saw from MSI B was that his character was enthusiastic about his hobby in the automotive field, which made F3 also more enthusiastic about the same hobby, so that F3 bought the same automotive product used by MSI B.

Informant F4 is a follower of MSI B's informant from 2019. Interest in MSI B's informant's social media content regarding motorized vehicle custom made F4's informant follower of MSI B's content on social media. F4 sees MSI B as a creative character who always shares useful information about automotive and who dares to try new things and share with his followers. This is what makes F4 buy the same motor vehicle as the one owned by MSI B.

## Discussion

From the description of the results of research that has been done based on the results of interviews conducted to 6 informants, namely 2 Social Media Influencers and 4 Followers, can be described as seen in figure 1.

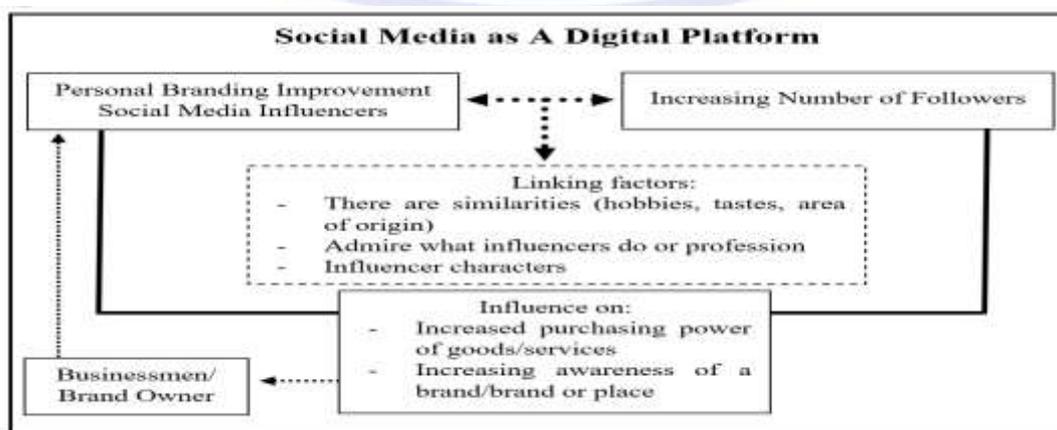


Figure 1. The Effect of Enhance Personal Branding through Social Media as a Digital Platform

Source: Data Processed

The level of increasing one's popularity through social media as a digital platform creates opportunities for someone to show a unique personal branding, not only building but also in the process of personal branding (Nanayakkara and Dissanayake, 2020). From the results of the research, it was found that the increase in personal branding was in line with the increase in the number of followers and the number of likes and comments on social media owned by influencers. The factor that connects a Social Media Influencer and his followers is the first there are similarities factors such as hobbies, tastes/interests in a thing or area of origin. Second, what the influencer does or does, can also be an achievement. And the third is the character of the influencer who is able to inspire, entertain, encourage and have a positive effect on followers. This can be an attraction that can make someone want to become a follower.

A person's personal branding should be built on the character of a person's personality which should highlight strengths, goals and personalities that are capable of influencing or persuasive actions (Shaker and Hafiz, 2014). These things will become a strong basis in building one's personal branding strength. Starting from sharing through social media about the activities they participate in or through interesting experiences they have and the offline professional experience they are working on, it is interesting attention and become the beginning of the personal branding of an influencer.

Social media that is used on a daily basis is used as a place to share stories, interests and hobbies/interests of influencers to inspire and entertain their followers. These activities are carried out continuously and creatively consistently to maintain and develop personal branding owned by influencers. In addition, by interacting with followers through social media, creating better content and showing the development of self-potential through social media owned by influencers, it can be a way to develop and maintain their personal branding.

The more professional it looks, the more serious the way to communicate personal branding is because the improvement of personal branding never stops even as a person ages. The marketing potential of the modern era is dominated by marketing through social media which is accessed through personal devices. Activities that occur on social media between Social Media Influencers and their followers attract the attention of business actors or brand owners to use Influencer Social Media as a marketing technique for their businesses or brands. These marketing techniques have an effective effect on increasing purchasing power and increasing awareness of the business or brand. As the results of previous research found that the application of Influencer Social Media as a marketing tool is very suitable to be applied to improve brand image effectively and increase consumer brand awareness of the brand (Haryanti and Wirapraja, 2018).

## CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

### Conclusion

Based on the results and discussion of the research conducted, the following conclusions can be drawn:

1. Increasing personal branding through social media as a digital platform in line with the increase in the number of followers, the number of likes and the number of comments on social media influencers.
2. Factors that connect Influencer and Follower Social Media, namely the similarity factor (hobby, taste or area of origin), admiring what the influencer does or profession and the influencer's character shown through social media.

### Recommendation

1. To build personal branding, it starts with influencers sharing the activities they participate in or through stories of interesting experiences they have or it can be in the form of offline professional experiences that are shared through their social media.
2. To maintain the personal branding power, namely by conducting active communication and interaction on social media that is owned continuously and consistently creatively which is conveyed through posts and shared stories. In addition, creating better content and showing self-development through social media is also another way to maintain personal branding.
3. Enhance personal branding through social media as a digital platform can attract the attention of business actors or brand owners to market their businesses/products/services/brands through social media owned by influencers that are able to have an effect on increasing purchasing power of goods/services and increasing awareness of a brand / brand or a place.

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