

## **Restaurant Marketing Strategies in Facing New Habits Post-Covid-19 Pandemic: Revolutionary Entrepreneur Paradigm**

**Marika Christa Widyasari<sup>1</sup>, Dr . Harry Soesanto<sup>2</sup>**  
Universitas Diponegoro, Semarang, Indonesia  
[Harryjogja99@gmail.com](mailto:Harryjogja99@gmail.com)

**Abstract:** The Covid-19 pandemic is a form of danger that has the potential to threaten all aspects of people's lives, such as social, economic, health and psychological. The impact on people in Indonesia is of course not much different from people in other countries who are also facing the Covid-19 pandemic. The condition of social vulnerability (social vulnerability) is a real reality that occurs in society in the face of the Covid-19 pandemic. Social vulnerability has shocked the resilience of society due to the Covid-19 pandemic. The Covid 19 pandemic has made the economy in Indonesia sluggish, especially for SMEs. Even though the existence of SMEs in Indonesia is very important and considered by the government because SMEs can accommodate a large number of workers and become a source of income for the middle and lower classes of the community. The productivity of SMEs in an area will undoubtedly have an impact on job availability, and of course, it will reduce the number of unemployed. Therefore, this study looks at how to improve the performance of SMEs so that they exist in the midst of the Covid 19 pandemic. The cases of the Covid-19 pandemic in Indonesia continue to increase every day. As of March 30, 2020, there were 1,414 positive cases, 75 recovered cases, and 122 deaths. The Covid-19 pandemic in Indonesia has a multi-sectoral impact, from health, education, social, economy, to religious activities in the community. The impact on these sectors is increasingly being felt by the community, especially in relation to the issue of social welfare in society. The social welfare of the community here is related to health, household economic conditions, a sense of security, comfort and a good quality of life. So that people who are faced with the Covid-19 pandemic can still fulfill their basic needs and carry out their social functions. That is why, apart from being the main focus of dealing with the Covid-19 pandemic, the government has not ruled out the welfare conditions of the community during the Covid-19 pandemic. If the people's welfare is neglected, it is feared that it will trigger massive social vulnerability in the community. This of course makes the situation and conditions in Indonesia even more like tangled threads. Solve one problem, another problem arises.

**Keyword :** *Customer Segmentation; Health Protocol Education; Online Food Ordering; Product Innovation and Payment Means*

## **1. Introduction**

The global economy in 2020 will have a big impact due to the pandemic known as Corona Virus Diseases (COVID-19). Governments around the world have taken a stance in responding to the pandemic by limiting contact with other people, often known as physical distancing. This resulted in all countries being forced to restrict movement both nationally and internationally which brought the economy to a complete halt (Carracedo, Puertas, & Marti, 2020). Therefore, there are several new habits to avoid direct contact to prevent transmission of the virus.

In the restaurant business, this pandemic is a very serious shock because it requires changing restaurant patterns. The restaurant pattern has changed such as customers picking up food at their own restaurants or often known as self-pick-up, drive-thru, or instant courier delivery. Companies must strive to change in the aftermath of this pandemic and change in ways that have never happened before (Mora Cortez & Johnston, 2020). Several restaurants have reopened with some health information that restaurant customers and company management must comply with.

This pandemic has significantly reduced restaurant sales and changed new lifestyles in the aftermath of COVID-19. Therefore, restaurant owners really need a guide for the running of a reliable business. There are many strategies implemented by restaurant owners to survive this pandemic. Strategies that are often used by restaurant owners are by reviewing the market segmentation targeted by restaurants, educating customers on health protocols, ordering food online and so on. With these strategies, it is hoped that customers will return to the restaurant to buy interest.

This phenomenon is of particular concern because opening a business after a pandemic has different challenges from the economic conditions before the pandemic took place. There needs to be a new strategy used in restaurant business development, such as online food ordering so that restaurants continue to run but still comply with government regulations, gain customer trust with health protocol education, and use digital wallets as a payment method. With this revolutionary strategy, it is hoped that customers can trust the restaurant and are not afraid to return to the restaurant.

## **1. LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **1.1 Customer Segmentation**

Promotion is the thing most commonly carried out by business actors. There are many ways to do product marketing. In marketing products, market segmentation is needed. Market segmentation serves to find out who are the target customers in the business and what specifications are desired by customers (Ritter & Pedersen, 2020). In identifying potential customers, not only referring to business solutions but also relational marketing and customer integration into the innovation process must be considered. (Windler, Jüttner, Michel, Maklan, & Macdonald, 2017).

Segmentation needs to be used because it can help restaurants to select potential customers and can target market strategies accordingly (Carnein & Trautmann, 2019). Segmentation exists in every market and allows individual customer groups to come up with different marketing strategies. Since the pandemic, segmentation has been used in the promotion of restaurant products on social media and instant courier services. With a digital wallet payment system, market segmentation from restaurants does not only reach the middle and upper income segment of customers but also reaches young people. This is possible to reduce the intensity of face-to-face and stimulate the economy after a new normal era.

### 1.2 Health Protocol Education

The spread of the COVID-19 virus in 2020 develops rapidly in a short period of time, has severe economic consequences and requires entrepreneurs to act accordingly (Carracedo et al., 2020). This is because all countries have imposed the authority to limit the free movement of the national and international population which has made the economy sink to a red point (Nicola et al., 2020). Changes in consumption also create a new habit of avoiding physical contact as an effort to prevent infection (Sheth, 2020).

Customer perceptions of food safety are increasing such as food storage, food processing and food packaging. Consumers who fear food safety tend to have negative attitudes and will not return or recommend food to others. Therefore, health protocol education is urgently needed and allows consumers to believe that the food served in restaurants is in accordance with post-COVID-19 hygiene and health protocol standards.

### 1.3 Online Food Ordering

Online food ordering has grown in popularity and restaurants recently since the pandemic. With online food ordering, restaurants get increased revenue, productivity, wider marketing and better customer relationship management (Kimes & Laque, 2011). Consumer behavior in sleeping or eating patterns can change because customers can feel stressed and anxious with news, rules and regulations that change in order to adapt life to the new normal era. Convenience in online ordering is determined by experience during online food purchase transactions and is related to ease of use and product search and online transactions as well (Jiang, Yang, & Jun, 2013).

When the beginning of the pandemic hit all over the world and the government agreed to impose restrictions, the lifestyle, especially in restaurant consumption, changed drastically. In 2020, online food ordering is increasing and consumers are more likely to prefer ordering food online.

### 1.4 Product Innovation and Payment Means

Innovation is a way for organizations or business people to make adjustments to the situation. Difficulties and circumstances can force business people to think productively and innovatively to discuss new opportunities. High uncertainty is required to be innovative (Dijk, 2020). When faced with uncertain situations, entrepreneurs or business people must think with an innovative mindset and adapt to circumstances in order to survive the situation (Cankurtaran & Beverland, 2020). An innovation that is usually made by restaurant business owners is menu diversification, collaborating to serve digital payments, and so on. Digital wallets are payment applications that are used to replace conventional wallets and many other uses (Sumathy & Kp, 2017).

Innovation is intended to increase performance and success in the area of profitability and achieve competitive advantage (Tung, 2019). During pandemics worldwide, restaurant business owners are required to make adjustments such as delivery services and instant couriers. Product innovation and collaboration with digital wallet services are strategies for business owners to survive during a pandemic. This is done to comply with government regulations to reduce direct contact and also increase the effectiveness of restaurant owners.

## 2. METHODOLOGY

The method used in this research is a qualitative method. Qualitative methods are valuable tools in implementation research because they can help answer complex questions such as how and why attempts to implement best practices may or may not succeed (Hamilton &

Finley, 2019). Implementation research is driven by conceptual theoretical models that help understand planning and predict changes in the use of innovations(Damschroder, 2020). Research using this method helps to investigate and reveal respondents' judgments and their relationship to work and experiences(Arcidiacono, et al., 2009).

The selection of qualitative methods is an integral component of implementation research, namely the study of the use of strategies for adopting and integrating evidence-based problem interventions(Hamilton & Finley, 2019). In this paper case studies are preferred because of the many 'how' questions that are asked that relate to a phenomenon and require an in-depth picture(Yin, 2017). In conclusion, the case study method was chosen because it requires a deeper understanding based on the phenomena and experiences of the respondents related to business operations.

Data obtained from interview participants who are owners, employees of restaurant businesses in Central Java. The interview review focuses on three main elements: customer segmentation, health protocol education, and online food ordering. The restaurant businesses participating in the study have innovations that can keep them running in today's economic emergency.

### **3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

Respondents examined in this study amounted to two respondents. Two respondents in this study were Respondent 1 (R1) and Respondent 2 (R2). In this study, it was found that R1 is the owner of a restaurant who has had a restaurant business in the Semarang area, Central Java for a long time, while R2 is an employee who is the manager on duty at the restaurant. Currently, R1 and R2 are trying to maintain the restaurant business with a variety of possible strategies.

#### **3.1 Customer Segmentation**

At the start of the pandemic, the restaurant business was one of the hardest hit businesses. This is due to social restrictions from the government. This restriction causes food ordering to be made online or by courier online. The restaurant is still running and is still trying to adapt to changing situations and regulations. R1 as the owner tries to think of the right strategy for the running of the restaurant.

At the start of the pandemic, the restaurant business was hard hit due to social restrictions from the local government. Therefore, R1 as the owner must make efforts to adjust it to the situation so that the business continues. Segmenting customers is the first step taken by R1 and R2 to see customer characteristics and groupings. Because some customers of R1's restaurant have quite a lot of technology-savvy customers. It is evident from the findings that some customers use digital wallets owned by e-commerce that provide promos every time they make payments, as well as followers of social media accounts. From the observation of ordering and customer data, R1 and R2 conclude that most of their customers already understand a lot about technology.

#### **3.2 Health Protocol Education**

At a time when social restrictions are imposed by the government to reduce the spread of disease, customers are certainly more careful with health-related matters. The food processing process by the restaurant business will certainly be greatly affected because the processing is carried out directly by human hands. Apart from processing, the output products are also consumed so that customers will be very careful if they are not aware of food

processing. This certainly adds to the panic felt by R1 because business turnover has dropped dramatically.

Food processing with good standards and following health protocols such as the use of masks and gloves and hygienic processing equipment will be preferred by customers. R2 proposes to R1 to document food processing with health protocols according to government directives and publish it through the restaurant's social media accounts. This is so that customers from restaurants will still have high confidence that R1's restaurant has followed food processing standards during the pandemic. Apart from the processing side, R2 also proposes to leave business activities for one day a week for routine disinfectant as a whole and partial disinfectant after the restaurant is finished operating. Reduction of visitor capacity by providing the maximum number of seats at each table, provide distance to the arrangement of chairs, and increase the place for washing hands, as well as employees assigned at the entrance to invite visitors to wash their hands and wear masks before entering the restaurant. Then all these activities are published to educate customers and potential customers from the restaurant so they don't hesitate to keep buying food at their restaurant.

### 3.3 Online Food Ordering

The restrictions on social activities imposed by the government will of course result in a decrease in customers at the restaurant. An alternative is needed so that business activities can continue and customers can continue to enjoy food from the restaurant. Online ordering is an alternative that can be taken to keep business activities running.

R1 discussed with R2 to start marketing restaurant menus online by working with instant courier service providers. This step is taken to maintain business activities and increase income in addition to visitors who come because of the reduction in volume. That way food products sold are not only purchased from customers who come but also from customers who are at home. This is done to cover the decrease in the amount of income due to the prevailing social restrictions. In addition, the reach of online marketing is also wider than offline.

### 3.4 Product Innovation and Payment Means

During a pandemic, many people experience anxiety about the risk of contracting diseases, which makes people reluctant to leave the house and choose everything that is easy. Convenience includes access and practicality of everything, does not rule out the possibility in terms of food and payment. Simple and practical food menu innovations will be preferred by customers due to changing lifestyles plus rapid changes due to the pandemic.

Seeing the existing phenomenon, R1 then made several menu innovations that would make it easier for customers to enjoy food. Sees an opportunity to sell rice boxes in several variants targeted at office workers. This menu was only created when there was a pandemic so that the basic price of the food menu could decrease and attract buyers because it was more practical in packaging. Of course, this innovation will be able to help the continuity of business activities, because it has a specific target customer.

In addition to innovation in output, R1 also innovates in payments by cooperating with digital wallet providers. In addition to creating a sense of security for customers because they do not use cash which is also a means of spreading disease, customers also feel that they have an advantage over the promos offered by digital wallet providers. In addition to the benefits felt by buyers, restaurants also have advantages in terms of promotion, because digital wallet providers can be a means of advertising for restaurants.



#### 4. CONCLUSION

##### 4.1 Customer Segmentation

Segmentation is an important thing that must be done by company owners in order to understand customer desires. Large-scale social restrictions cause company owners to immediately adjust to the conditions so that the restaurant continues to run according to government regulations. Segmentation is carried out with digital payment opportunities.

##### 4.2 Health Protocol Education

During a pandemic, it is understood that customers have high concerns about food hygiene. Therefore, restaurant owners strive to maintain customer trust by documenting the food manufacturing process so that customers know that health protocols are implemented in the restaurant. Likewise with the cleanliness of the restaurant itself, it is ensured to disinfect the restaurant once a week and restaurant closures are carried out so that customers continue to believe that the restaurant has implemented health protocols and provides education on health protocols through social media.

##### 4.3 Online Food Ordering

The existence of a pandemic makes restaurant owners have to review the delivery of food as well as in restaurant marketing. Therefore, restaurant owners take the initiative to market their products through online service providers or instant couriers. This step was taken to maintain business activities and increase income due to the reduction in the number of customers who came directly to the restaurant.

##### 4.4 Product innovation and means of payment

At the time of COVID19, customers experienced anxiety about the risk of contracting the disease which made customers reluctant to leave the house. Therefore, the owner is trying to understand what customers want during this pandemic. Innovation through a simple and practical food menu becomes a strategy for product innovation. Meanwhile, other product innovations made by business owners are digital dominance. With digital wallets, the risk of transmission can be reduced because customers and business owners or employees are not in direct contact. In addition, promotions can be felt by customers as well as business owners. Customers will get several purchase discount promotions while business owners will indirectly benefit from promotions through digital wallets which will be increasingly recognized by customers.

#### References

- Arcidiacono, C., Procentese, F., & Napoli, ID (2009). Qualitative and quantitative research: An ecological approach. *International Journal of Multiple Research Approaches*, 3 (2), 163–176.
- Cankurtaran, P., & Beverland, MB (2020). Using design thinking to respond to crises: B2B lessons from the 2020 COVID-19 pandemic. *Industrial Marketing Management*, 88, 255–260. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.indmarman.2020.05.030>

- Carnein, M., & Trautmann, H. (2019). Customer Segmentation Based on Transactional Data Using Stream Clustering. *Advances in Knowledge Discovery and Data Mining*, 11439, 280–292. [https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-16148-4\\_22](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-16148-4_22)
- Carracedo, P., Puertas, R., & Marti, L. (2020). Research lines on the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on business. A text mining analysis. *Journal of Business Research*, S0148296320307967. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2020.11.043>
- Damschroder, LJ (2020). Clarity out of chaos: Use of theory in implementation research. *Psychiatry Research*, 283, 112461. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.psychres.2019.06.036>
- Dijk, M. (2020). How entrepreneur resilience impacts the utilization of innovation in dealing with adversities like the COVID-19 pandemic in the restaurant industry in the Netherlands. 12.
- Hamilton, AB, & Finley, EP (2019). Qualitative methods in implementation research: An introduction. *Psychiatry Research*, 280, 112516. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.psychres.2019.112516>
- Jiang, L. (Alice), Yang, Z., & Jun, M. (2013). Measuring consumer perceptions of online shopping convenience. *Journal of Service Management*, 24 (2), 191–214. <https://doi.org/10.1108/09564231311323962>
- Kimes, Sheryl. E., & Laque, P. f. (2011). Online, Mobile, and Text Food Ordering in the US Restaurant Industry.
- Mora Cortez, R., & Johnston, WJ (2020). The Coronavirus crisis in B2B settings: Crisis uniqueness and managerial implications based on social exchange theory. *Industrial Marketing Management*, 88, 125–135. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.indmarman.2020.05.004>
- Nicola, M., Alsafi, Z., Sohrabi, C., Kerwan, A., Al-Jabir, A., Iosifidis, C.,... Agha, R. (2020). The socio-economic implications of the coronavirus pandemic (COVID-19): A review. *International Journal of Surgery*, 78, 185–193. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijsu.2020.04.018>
- Ritter, T., & Pedersen, CL (2020). Analyzing the impact of the coronavirus crisis on business models. *Industrial Marketing Management*, 88, 214–224. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.indmarman.2020.05.014>
- Sheth, J. (2020). Impact of Covid-19 on consumer behavior\_ Will the old habits return or die? *Journal of Business Research*, 4.
- Sumathy, DM, & Kp, V. (2017). Digital payment systems: Perception and concerns among urban consumers. 5.
- Tùng, PT (2019). The Impact Of Burnout On Innovative Work Behavior Under The Influence Of Individual Resilience And Environment Effects. 30.
- Yin, RK (2017). Case study research and applications: Design and methods. Sage publications.