The Second International Conference on Communication, Language, Literature and Culture (ICCoLLiC 2022)

Social Media Influencer as Marketing Communication of "FORTIVIT" Rice from Perum BULOG

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Abstract. In the era of globalization, digital technology continues to develop. It can be seen by the increasing number of internet and social media users. The development of digital technology also causes changes in consumer behavior, thus requiring companies to be more adaptive to changes and establish their communication strategies. The development of social media as a digital communication tool continues to grow and becomes one of the opportunities as well as challenges for companies to improve their performance. The selection of the right digital media needs special attention, one of which is a digital influencer or Social Media Influencer (SMI). The role of Social Media Influencers (SMI) is increasingly important to shape consumer attitudes and corporate image. This study uses qualitative methods through observation and interviews with informants who meet certain requirements. Perum BULOG, one of the State-Owned Enterprises (BUMN) which is an important sector in the food industry, is the focus of the study. The results of the study indicate that Perum BULOG's marketing communication strategy in selecting Social Media Influencers is based on the credibility of influencers who influence the delivery of messages.

Keywords: digital globalization, social media, social media influencer, digital marketing, marketing communication

1. Introduction

Many challenges arise in digital globalization, where companies must quickly and adaptively face changing business conditions and the uncertain global economy. The Industrial Revolution 4.0 and its transition into Society 5.0, started by the Japanese government to balance digital technologies like Artificial Intelligence (AI), the Internet of Things (IoT), and robot technology with the necessity for people to live independently, are still in progress. MThe internet development in Indonesia today can be seen from the increasing number of social media platforms accessed by people who seem to have become part of their lives. Social interaction and the use of social media have become people's daily activities. The use of social media also has an impact on social changes and the habits of society in general. The current development of social media use can be seen in figure 1 below:



Figure 1. Number of Social Media Users in Indonesia with Forecast Until 2026 (Source: Statista; Statista Digital Market Outlook)

With the internet and social media development, everyone can develop social interactions with anyone, anytime, and anywhere, including with other online communities. Thus, through online media, companies can build good relationships with the public (Zhang & Abitbol, 2019). Online communication available today includes the provision of information, and the provision of services, including relations with the public (Ashcroft & Hoey, 2001). With the ease of access and flexibility available, it encourages companies to continue to be agile, adaptive, innovative, and fast in the face of change. Management needs to establish a strategy, including the right communication strategy, to achieve company goals and compete during these times. A company can be said to be successful, one of which is if it already has value and has a place in people's hearts. Good communication internally will be able to filter, manage, and present information as needed, as well as externally, which will form a good image and reputation in the community. The impact of digital transformation gives rise to various new media or tools in communication, especially in marketing communications. Organizations need to explore opportunities to take advantage of digital media, including the possibility of forming mutually beneficial relationships with online influencers (Allué, 2013). In the food sector or the food industry and the like, gastronomic bloggers, celebrity chefs, and other celebrities provide an important influence and represent an exciting opportunity to develop communication strategies related to the food industry. The effectiveness of sending messages from a communication process can be seen in achieving the message sender's goal. According to Griffin et al (2019), communication is effective if the message transmitted is of high quality and the interpretation of its receipt is consistent with what the sender intended. The success and effective communication strategy in an organization/company depend on how the message is created and delivered to the recipient.

1.1. Marketing Communication

Communication in an organization is related to how communication occurs in a network of interpersonal or intergroup cooperation within an organization or institution (Pawito, 2007). Communication strategy occupies two big spaces: communication planning and communication management. Two significant areas of communication strategy, namely communication planning, and management, can be broken down into

various sections. Communication planning is an integrated activity in formulating strategies to be achieved. Communication planning includes situation analysis, audience analysis, communication strategies for communicators, strategies for designing communication messages, and communication media selection strategies. The second part of the communication strategy is communication management. Communication management includes implementing activities, monitoring, and evaluating communication programs. The better the strategy carried out by the company, the higher the potential for success that can be achieved (*Memahami Strategi Komunikasi*, 2019).

How one manages communication can be analyzed using the message design logic theory, created by Daniel O'Kafee (1988). This theory links communication with the process of forming messages. In other words, people with different views about communication's nature and function will form different messages (*7 Teori Komunikasi Intrapersonal Menurut Para Ahli*, n.d.). Therefore, it is necessary to determine the right communication strategy to receive the message well. Using digital media in communication creates new opportunities and challenges for companies in setting their strategies. The choice of communication media can have an indirect impact on how communications are created and received by the recipient.

Along with the times, the organization continues to grow. Public relations is not only focused on products but has a role in shaping strategic messages and managing relationships with the public. The integrated process of conveying messages to the public, especially consumers, about the existence of a company's products or services is often known as marketing communication. In general, marketing communications aim to build and increase brand awareness, strengthen, clarify and accelerate a brand's message, and stimulate potential target consumers to be interested in the product/service in question (Tulasi, 2012). Thomas L. Harris (2006) explains that building consumer brand awareness of a product or service through marketing communications continues to grow, in which companies communicate the advantages of a brand, both products, and the company itself, in an integrated manner or a combination of imaging and marketing activities (Wahid & Puspita, 2017).

1.2. Social Media Influencer (SMI)

Social Media Influencer (SMI) is one of the media in marketing communication, where companies carry out campaigns or introduce their products through someone who influences the community. Management of marketing communications through digital media, especially social media/networks, is a new strategy apart from mass media, using third-party endorsers or third-party providers. Social Media Influencers (SMI), key opinion leaders, have a strong influence in conveying messages quickly to the public (Girsang, 2020; Uzunoğlu & Misci Kip, 2014). In the digital era, traditional communication models are not the main thing. Digital opportunities must be explored, including the possibility of organizations forging mutually beneficial relationships with online influencers. One is in the food sector; gastronomic bloggers are significant influencers and represent an exciting way to develop food-related communication strategies (Allué, 2013). Freberg et al. (2011) in his research entitled "Who are the Social

Media Influencers?, he added that SMI is a new independent third-party advocate who changes audience sentiments through blogs, tweets, and other forms of social media. The SMI model requires a method that provides precise information about relevant influencers and how the audience perceives them. SMI's persuasive power and technology have been developed to identify and track influencers relevant to a brand or organization. Moreover, several similar studies explain that SMI indirectly affects a company's image or corporate brand. The selection of the right influencer will be able to influence attitudes, and public perceptions, including consumer buying interest to repeat orders for a product (Almaida et al., 2020; Datuela, 2013; Flavi et al., 2021; Girsang, 2020; Jung K et al., 2017; Nafees et al., 2021; Sandy et al., 2020).

Based on the other research, what and how the message is made to the public, received, and understood is an essential factor success of the communication process. The persuasive communication process's effectiveness is expected to change distrust and uncertainty into consumer trust and loyalty (Mirawati, 2021). For the message and information to be well received, the company must know and determine how the characteristics of the target area are targeted because this dramatically affects what media tools will be chosen. Meanwhile, choosing the right Social Media Influencer (SMI) will shape the message and deliver it to the right receipient. Someone will be more easily captivated and persuaded by messages conveyed by influencers who are believed to have good abilities and credibility in the eyes of the public.

1.3. Social Influence Theory

Then (Goodman et al., 2011) identify "conversation points" to which each influencer should pay attention and define aspects such as content, subject, and tone. This information helps us understand how this "person" affects a person and helps companies establish effective strategies. Integrating influencer index data into a holistic social media strategy provides a comprehensive understanding of social media approaches to optimizing brand equity. Analyzing the concept of self-branding from a marketing perspective and showing how the 'celebrity' of self-branding manifests itself in the marketing media has also been carried out (Khamis et al., 2016). Social media influencers have changed the way brands interact positively with consumers. The success that brands hope for is due to this two-way interactive public relations tactic and helps explain why social media influencer marketing is one of the biggest trends (Glucksman, 2017). Communication cannot be separated in human life from the moment we wake up until we go back to sleep. One of the purposes of communication is to influence other people, also called persuasive communication. The principle of persuasive communication is how to influence the communicant. So they act according to the communicator's wants or even be able to change the attitude communicant through a message.

This study uses a social influence theory approach which highlights that changes in attitudes and consumer decision-making are vulnerable to the influence of other people's opinions, beliefs, and attitudes (Cheung et al., 2022). Social media influencers significantly influence modern marketing (Torres et al., 2019). Social influence explains how social interaction in online media occurs in a group of individuals, and there is a

change in behavior which is the impact of receiving social influence (Usman & Okafor, 2019). Social influence, in this case, occurs when consumers draw appropriate conclusions and meanings from personal images and messages conveyed by someone. Communication is fundamental to the social process, making it easier for people to share information. Communication can be persuasive through social influence theory which is often more persuasive than other sources. People influence each other through verbal and nonverbal communication to influence someone. Using the social influence theory from Kelman (1958), companies can measure individual participatory behavior in a community on social media, including three components: consumer perception, predictors of social influence, and decision-making. So the concept of social influence can impact changes in consumer behavior (Usman & Okafor, 2019).

Applying this theory in influencer marketing starts with believing that someone will act according to the perceived benefits. The key is that individuals seen as rational beings will act according to the advantages and benefits of their social relations and social influencer's exchanges. An success depends on how communicating information/messages to the public can attract interest and attention. Influencers are an extension of the company as a communication tool that connects the organization with the public, builds a solid and positive relationship between the two, and is mutually beneficial for the interacting parties. The selection of a marketing strategy using influencers is currently considered quite strategic. However, on the other hand, it can become a boomerang for the company if it is not appropriately managed. Influencers can damage a brand's image if, at the same time, the influencer is marketing a competitor's product, getting involved in a problem/conflict, or speaking negatively about a brand. Therefore, companies need to identify, maintain, and monitor influencer relationships as well as influencer reputations and public sentiment toward those (Greve & Schlüschen, 2018). Successful influencer relationship management can build collaborative relationships with relevant influencers and produce quality content, increasing brand awareness and customer trust and improving company performance.

According to (Singh, 2013), trust is essential in an online community and communication. Each industry has its influencers who aim to build their respective reputations. Therefore, trusted social media influencers significantly impact a larger audience. Social Media Influencers are a marketing strategy that is considered adequate for companies because influencers can provide posts to promote a brand with its image and characteristics, which then have a significant impact on consumers (Hanindharputri & Angga Maha Putra, 2019). This certainly can arouse the enthusiasm of potential buyers and generate significant interest in the product and the business as a whole. Based on this, the purpose of this research, among others, is to explain how the digital marketing communication strategy of Perum BULOG through Social Media Influencers, especially the Fortivit Rice product, which is one of the flagship products of Perum BULOG.

2. Method

This study uses a descriptive qualitative approach, where this research approach aims to provide an overview and understanding of how and why a phenomenon or reality of communication occurs (Pawito, 2007). Qualitative descriptive research aims to reveal events, phenomena, and conditions in the field during the research. This research was conducted at one of the State-Owned Enterprises (BUMN) in the food industry, namely Perum BULOG. The data collection technique is through observation and interviews with company management with capabilities in their fields to get an idea of what is happening. The information in this study will then be validated using triangulation techniques, where variations in sources of information usually have implications for variations in the information obtained (Pawito, 2007). The purposive sampling approach was utilized to identify the sample used in this study, where the selected sample was based on particular considerations by specified criteria to ensure data quality.

3. Result and Discussion

Perum BULOG is a State-Owned Enterprise that is part of the national power to achieve national food sovereignty in terms of staple food supply, affordability, and stability. Perum BULOG, in addition to being a public service organization, is now conducting a commercial operation in the food and processing industry. In its business activities, Perum BULOG views change as a process. The transformation process, especially digital transformation, is carried out continuously. To succeed, a company must transform in all areas, including strengthening Human Resources, systems, technology, and company infrastructure. One of the keys to continuing to achieve a sustainable competitive advantage is the ability of BULOG people to provide values that match or even exceed the expectations of "Stakeholders" and "Stakeholders." In the course of its transformation, Perum BULOG has now developed its business activities through online sales activities through several e-commerce platforms. Digitalization and technology implementation has made companies more effective, efficient, and adaptive to changes in the business environment so that they can continue to create new business value and meet market expectations. In addition to digital transformation, Perum BULOG has also carried out several new product innovations: fortified rice. Rice is an innovation developed in recent years. Fortified rice is reprocessed by adding fortification or kernels containing vitamins that the body needs. The development of this innovation also supports government programs to alleviate stunting in Indonesia. In addition, fortified rice's additional vitamins and nutritional content can increase endurance.

Digital transformation creates new opportunities and challenges for companies to be more adaptive and innovative. The use and selection of social media are part of the company's communication strategy to introduce its brand to the public, starting with introducing products/services, prices, sales locations, and all activities that create a positive image of the company with the public. Likewise, Perum BULOG is transforming into BULOG Go Digital, where all business processes are integrated into the system. Based on this phenomenon, Perum BULOG utilizes Social Media Influencers (SMI) to introduce its products to the public. Social Media Influencers (SMI) use digital social media such as Instagram, YouTube, Twitter, and Facebook to create content that promotes specific brands to increase followers and brand awareness. They promote the brand through their personal life and make it acceptable to most consumers (Dana et al., 2017; Glucksman, 2017).

At a fundamental level, influencer marketing is a type of social media marketing that uses endorsements and product labels from influencers, i.e., individuals with a dedicated social following who are seen as experts in their field. Influencer marketing is successful because of the high trust social influencers build with their followers. Their recommendations serve as social proof to potential customers' brands. According to (Ismail, 2018), there are several types of Social Media Influencers (SMI) based on their size and scope: 1. Mega - Influencers, i.e., people with many followers on social networks. There are no rules yet on the boundaries between different types of followers, but the standard view is that a mega-influencer has more than a million followers on at least one social platform. Many mega-influencers are celebrities who became famous offline, such as movie stars, athletes, musicians, and even reality TV stars. However, some mega-influencers have gained much support through online and social activities. 2. Macro-Influencers; one step ahead of mega-influencers. Those with a customer base ranging from 40,000 to 1 million social media followers can be considered a macro impact. This group comprises successful online professionals with a much larger following than the average micro-influencer: 3-Micro-Influencers; i.e., someone who has 1,000 to 100,000 followers. Micro-influencers focus on a particular field or area and are generally considered experts. Micro-influencers have stronger relationships than regular influencers. Micro-influencers are not celebrities or average influencers and often have a uniform audience. 4. Nano-Influencers, the latest type of influencer, gain public recognition. These influencers have few followers but tend to be experts in their field or highly specialized. In most cases, they will have less than 1,000 followers, but they will be followers who are interested and willing to engage with nano-influencers and listen to their opinions.

The interviews in this study were conducted either directly or indirectly with 5 (five) informants who were related and involved in making decisions regarding the determination of the Social Media Influencer (SMI) election strategy, as follows:

Table 1. List of informants		
No	Position	
1	Head of Sub Division of Marketing Communication	
2	Chief Business Officer	
3	Head of Promotion and Branding section	
4	Head of E-Commerce section	
5	Head of Retail Sales Admin section	

Several inquiries have been made about Perum BULOG's method for managing social media influencers, which has considerably increased public brand awareness of Fortivit Rice. In contrast, the observation is made by reviewing the documentation of completed social media marketing operations. Therefore, the results of observations and interviews

can be concluded as follows, Perum BULOG is one of the state-owned enterprises in the food industry whose activities require special attention. In addition to getting an assignment in the PSO (Public Service Obligation) field, Perum BULOG is currently carrying out commercial business activities that are required to be adaptive and quickly follow the developments of the current digital marketing world. So that in its publication and promotion activities, Perum BULOG does not only go through offline media but also online. The growing commercial business of Perum BULOG today, the broader its consumers reach.

Along with the development of the digital world, the selection of digital communication media is also increasingly diverse. In a communication process, it is necessary to select media so that communication becomes more effective. For example, the existence of social media is currently very close to the community and has been widely used. According to Mark Poster's New Media Theory, many businesses utilize social media as a marketing communication strategy, where the communication process is carried out by merging information technology, communication networks, and media content. People will be able to obtain information more easily and at any time thanks to the usage of new media or digital media. One of Perum BULOG's marketing communication strategies is to use social media to introduce its products and improve branding, specifically for products and corporations. One of the social media managers of Perum BULOG is under the coordination of the Marketing Division of the Marketing Communications Subdivision. In managing its social media content, Perum BULOG chooses to use social media influencers. Social media influencers are selected based on criteria tailored to their market segment and reach.

Social Media Influencers (SMI) were selected based on several considerations, including their credibility/reputation, suitability to the target segment, and accessibility at a reasonable cost. The collaboration model between Perum BULOG and influencers is in the form of a break-up contract or a short-term contract. Some of the influencers chosen by Perum BULOG are health practitioners, celebrity chefs, mom influencers, and food bloggers. These influencers' reach followers are families or millennial mother's familiar with social media. In addition, the credibility/reputation of these influencers are quite positive/sound in the eyes of the public. A nice image and a good reputation of an influencer can improve public trust in the things they promote. As a result, it is believed that the products/services sold by these influencers would be simply and rapidly identified by the public, influencing customers' purchase decisions. The Influencers who have collaborated include Dr. Resya Brotoasmoro , Shahnaz Haque , Chef Imelda , Fitrop , Adelia Pasya , Zaskia Adiamecca , Topic Sudirman , and AkucintaFood Semarang. For example, it can be seen in Figures 2,3 and 4 below:

International Journal of Science and Applied Science: Conference Series

http://jurnal.uns.ac.id/ijsascs

Int. J. Sci. Appl. Sci.: Conf. Ser., Vol. 6 No. 1 (2022)

doi: 10.20961/ijsascs.v6i1.69935









Based on the interview findings, it is clear that it is still important to examine the selection of Social Media Influencer (SMI) for Fortivit Rice, altering the target market, given that the target market for Fortivit Rice is fairly diverse and broad. For the general public, Perum BULOG introduces and campaigns for rice to support a healthy lifestyle by consuming vitamin-rich rice. In addition, Fortivit Beras Rice is a superior product in the stunting prevention and control program in Indonesia today. Therefore, Perum BULOG, together with relevant agencies and government officials' Regional orders, work together to provide Fortivit Rice, especially in areas with high stunting rates through CSR

(Corporate Social Responsibility) programs such as in East Nusa Tenggara, Papua, East Kalimantan, West Java, Central Java, and Greater Jakarta.

It is necessary to evaluate regularly and in the long term, the impact of choosing a marketing communication strategy through influencer social media. The extent to which influencers are successful in marketing their products can be considered when choosing other marketing communication strategies. Publication activities and marketing programs aim to expand networks, build relationships, and increase sales. However, this indirectly has an impact on improving the image of the company or brand. Today's consumer interests and preferences are increasingly diverse, so companies must create unique strategies. Selection of the right media needs to be done so that the targeted market segment is right on target. One effective strategy to reach the target market and improve the company's brand is to combine conservative and digital media to optimize the expected results (Kushwaha et al., 2020). The company's demands and the current state of the world require constant evaluation of the usage of digital media. According to social influence theory, it is also understood that what someone communicates will have an impact on someone else, either directly or indirectly. The knowledge of an influencer, their reliability, and their appeal as a communicator are vital in internet marketing. So that the selection of media and influencers who have good credibility, are known to the public, and are on target will be easier to influence. The better the public's assessment of the influencer, the faster it will increase brand awareness of the product and vice versa, so that the message conveyed by the influencer is conveyed properly. In the process of building trust, there needs to be a meaningful or suitable relationship between the influencer, audience, and product. Detailed information and reviews, repetitive and often useful content, will make it easier for influencers to gain public trust and indirectly create an impression and awareness (Riama, 2021). The use of social media, especially the role of Social Media Influencers (SMI) in marketing communications, greatly affects the company's performance, especially in selling its products. We can see the realization of Fortivit Rice sales in 2021; that there was an increase in the progress of the previous year. In addition, the use of Social Media Influencers (SMI) shows increased community engagement; it is known that there has been an increase in the number of followers on the Instagram @pangankita official social media account by 124.4 percent from January to December 2021. Perum BULOG continues to improve its performance by transforming. With a fairly broad market segment, ranging from agencies to the general public to industry, it is a challenge for Perum BULOG to continue to develop and create innovations. It remains a management concern in implementing a communication strategy because what, how, and when the right message is created are essential things that affect the message well received by the recipient. Knowing the condition of the company can be done by using analysis of internal and external factors based on the reality and conditions experienced by Perum BULOG which is known as a qualitative approach with a SWOT matrix. Internal analysis includes an assessment of the factors of strength (strength) and weakness (weakness). At the same time, external analysis includes opportunities (Opportunities) and challenges (Threats). The results of data analysis based on the SWOT matrix approach can be described as follows:

INTERNAL	OUTSIDE
STRENGTH	OPPORTUNITY
 Publication and promotion of fortivit rice products have been carried out digitally on various online platforms (Instagram, Twitter, Facebook, and Website) and offline (Magazines and Newspapers). 	 Advances in technology in various industrial fields make it easier to carry out marketing activities on various digital media platforms. Many companies have gone through digital transformation, pushing companies to be more adaptive. Types of consumers have very diverse characteristics.
WEAKNESS	THREAT
 Not all platforms reach fortivit rice consumers, especially in remote areas where the internet is still not accessible. Marketing Communication System that has not been integrated with other fields. There are many competitors with similar products. Evaluation of the selection of media/tools has not been evaluated regularly. 	The emergence of hoax news in various media allows a decrease in product image.

Table 2. SWOT Matrix

Agile companies are successful companies, and Agile is based on a deep understanding of market dynamics and consumer behavior, as well as strategic innovation. Social media provides the tools and implementations necessary to process and use this knowledge effectively (Singh, 2013). The results of this study support several similar studies that analyze how a company's strategy through Social Media Influencers (SMI) improves image, reputation, or branding. This research also has several managerial implications for companies to pay more attention to the role of public relations in choosing media or tools, especially in Social Media Influencers (SMI), where SMI is one of the essential factors in building brand image. The selection of the right influencer affects the process of delivering messages to the public. The credibility and background of an influencer can affect the extent to which people are interested in knowing and knowing more about a product. Lou & Yuan (2019) concluded that advertisements promoted by influencers have trustworthiness, attractiveness, and similarity with their followers, which will affect followers' trust in influencer posts, affecting brand awareness and consumer buying intentions. The presence of influencers in current developments is quite significant in society. Not only how the quality of influencers as communicators and the quality of the message conveyed also have an influence in line with research conducted by Cheung et al. (2022), which revealed that the quality and attractiveness of influencer content need special attention. Both micro-influencers, macro-influencers, and mega-influencers need to pay attention to quality content in order to be able to attract consumers' attention and interest in a product (Bonus et al., 2022; Hanindharputri & Angga Maha Putra, 2019).

4. Conclusion

Through the right influencers, it is hoped that they can build good relationships between companies and consumers in introducing their products/services to the public. Some influencers who work with Perum BULOG include the criteria for mega influencers, like celebrities, bloggers, doctors, or chefs whose selection is based on the influencer's relevance to the product being marketed and who has a good reputation. The development of the world of social media has brought changes to consumer behavior, one of which is a phenomenon where people today believe more in what their "idols" say or who are currently known as influencers. Based on social influence theory, social influence, in this case, is when consumers are influenced and interested in messages conveyed by influencers so that it can have an impact on changes in consumer behavior.

The choice of strategy for using influencers as one of the media for promotion and publication is because it is considered to have a wide range of messages and is quickly accepted by the public. In addition, the criteria for influencers, scoring power, content, and the form of the message/content to be conveyed must also be considered according to the targeted market segment. Food products, especially rice, are unique commodities. Apart from having opportunities, they also have many challenges. Demographic, background, and cultural factors between regions influence how the company determines its strategy. Research on the influencer phenomenon as a company strategy in marketing its products has been widely carried out. Still, few have focused on food products, such as rice, sugar, and oil. The limitation of this study is that it only analyzes social media influencers and focuses on only one type of food product. In the future, research can also be done on several tools available on social media, comparing different social media and analyzing the submitted content.

Acknowledgments

The author would like to thank those who have supported the writing of this article, namely the Ministry of Communication and Information Technology and Perum BULOG, especially the Marketing Communication Division, and the informants who have assisted in writing.

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