

PERSUASIVE COMMUNICATION OF *SINTUWUGO* GREEN HYDROPONIC COMMUNITY IN COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT EFFORTS IN PALU CITY

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ABSTRACT. Hydroponic plants are one of the alternative planting methods that are currently quite popular. For people who are constrained by land that is not so large and the soil is not fertile, the hydroponic method can be one of the options for profitable farming business, which can improve the welfare of the community. As a new system, the promotion requires a lot of effort to persuade the society adopt the method. This study will look at the Persuasive communication used to reach and attract public participation in Hydroponic method. The research uses qualitative descriptive research, which focus on the *Sintuwu Gogreen* community as a research subject. The result shows that to persuade people participating in hydroponic planting, the government use some experts which not only expert in hydroponic but also as a public speakers. Social media is also better used as an alternative medium for persuasive communication because of its unlimited nature and can be accessed anywhere and anytime. The Sintuvu Go Green Community uses any kind of social media such as Facebook and Instagram. This two media has been actively promote their products and their activity. This way will attract not only hydroponic product buyers, but also new farmers.

KEYWORDS: hydroponic; Community; persuasive Communication

1 INTRODUCTION

Indonesia is rich in natural resources with a very high population. However, this potential is not comparable to the welfare of the average Indonesian people. This condition is almost evenly distributed in various regions of Indonesia, including Central Sulawesi. Moreover, the COVID-19 pandemic, which has lasted for two years, has had an economic impact on almost the entire community.

Various efforts have been made by the government to improve the welfare of the community, one of which is by disbursing Direct Cash Assistance for Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (BLT UMKM). However, it is not an easy thing to invite people to seek to improve their welfare only by disbursing cash. As in previous years, these financial aids often just 'evaporate' and do not last long due to the community's lack of skills in managing businesses. Therefore, efforts are needed in seeking empowerment, so that the community has resilience in global competition (Damsar, 2016).

Community empowerment is a process to facilitate and encourage communities to be able to position themselves proportionally and become the main actors in utilizing their strategic environment to achieve sustainability in the long term. Community empowerment has a close relationship with sustainable development. That is the main prerequisite that will lead the community towards a dynamic economic, social and ecological sustainability

Palu City, which is known as a five-dimensional city because of its complete natural landscape, including valleys, oceans, rivers, mountains and bays (<https://traveling.bisnis.com/read/20160623/224/560506/palu-kota-5-dimensi-di-timur-indonesia>), become a separate capital in carrying out empowerment efforts, coupled with advances in information and communication technology which have been proven to be able to assist in business improvement, especially in the field of business and product promotion.

Various communities have emerged and have become pioneers in helping the government seek to improve people's welfare. These groups are scattered in the community with various uniqueness of

each. One community that has played a large role in community empowerment efforts is the Hydroponic Community, which is a group of plant lovers. This group is spread over several regions and even consists of several groups.

Of the several hydroponic communities, the Sintuvu Go Green Community is one that is actively undertaking community empowerment efforts, which consists of about 50 people. This community has been designated as a Pilot Project for the Implementation of Urban Farming by the Bank Indonesia Representative Office for the Province of Central Sulawesi. Community groups in this program have received assistance in the form of a hydroponic circuit(channelsulawesi.id, 2021).

Therefore, this research is aimed to answer the following questions:

- 1.How the *Sintuvu* Go Green Community persuade people to involve in the community
- 2.How is the form of community empowerment carried out by the community?

In general, the urgency of this research is to try to provide alternative activities as an effort to empower the community, including persuasive strategies carried out in these efforts. The results of this research can be a recommendation for policy makers and the community in terms of improving people's welfare.

2 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Persuasive Communication

Persuasion comes from the Latin, namely persuasion, which is another word from persuader which means to persuade, invite or seduce. Persuasion can be done by someone rationally and emotionally. In terms of rationality, a person's cognitive components such as ideas and concepts can be affected. Meanwhile, in terms of emotion, what needs to be touched is the affective aspect, which is related to one's emotional life(Megawati, 2018).

According to Perloff (1993) cited in Novianti et al. (2020) Persuasive communication involves a symbolic process in which communicators try to convince others to change their attitudes or behaviours regarding an issue through the transmission of messages in an atmosphere of free choice. Persuasive communication requires a lot of interaction in the dialogue, where the perceived trustworthiness and credibility of the communicator can influence the success of influence or compliance techniques(Teven, J. J., & McCroskey, 1999).Mood and age differences can also affect persuasion due to differences in value or topic relevance, successful communicators modify their approach to suit the audience. The determining factor is the persuasiveness of the Communication context(Warren et al., 2017)

In persuasive communication, the focus of attention is on efforts to change and strengthen the attitudes or beliefs of the audience or on efforts to invite them to act in a certain way. In other words, persuasion is an attempt to change attitudes through the use of messages and focuses on the characteristics of communicators and listeners(Devito, 2011).The targets of persuasive communication are very diverse, this can be seen from demographic characteristics such as age, gender, social status, economic status, marital status, educational status, and others.

2.2 Hydroponic Community

According to Aref et al. (2010) cited in (Gunawijaya & Pratiwi, 2018; Sekarrini & Siswanto, 2020)a community is defined as a group people living or working within the same environmental area with some shared cultures or common interests.Similarly, Wheat (2021)defined community by geographic location, particularly in a rural setting. In urban and suburban areas, a community may be defined by location, but also maybe defined by specific characteristics. More details, A community is characterized by the presence of some collective dimensions such as emotional connectedness and solidarity, trust, and civic values(Di Napoli et al., 2021).

Although, the community is considered a small organization but is able to provide a big influence for its members (Ayuningtyas & Abdullah, 2018). Referring to Manski (1993), one of the effects of community involvement is the correlation of the influence of community behavior on individual behavior (Armananti & Asteria, 2019).

Based on the definition of community mentioned above, the hydroponic community is a group of people who have a special interest in one method of planting in agriculture, namely hydroponics. In addition, the Hydroponic Community is an effort by a group of people to foster economic independence for the community, so that the community is able to increase the annual income.

For some people farming and gardening are synonymous with rural communities, and are more in demand by parents. The interest of the younger generation is decreasing in the agricultural sector (Maghfiroh et al., 2019). As a result, the agricultural sector is dominated by the older generation who are generally resistant to change. In addition, in the youth's view, farming is a traditional job that is less prestigious and the results are not immediately available but are also relatively inadequate (Chaidir & Kamelia, 2018). This is where the Hydroponics community takes a role in changing the perception of some of these people.

3 RESEARCH METHOD

This research uses qualitative descriptive research, which focus on the *Sintuwu Gogreen* community as a research subject. A qualitative research is an iterative process in which improved understanding to the scientific community is achieved by making new significant distinctions resulting from getting closer to the phenomenon studied (Aspers & Corte, 2019). The descriptive method analyzes the data collected in the form of words, pictures, and not numbers. The data collection taken from interviews, scripts, field notes, photos, video tapes, personal documents, notes or memos, and other official documents.

4 DISCUSSION

Hydroponic plants are one of the alternative planting methods that are currently quite popular. For people who are constrained by land that is not so large and the soil is not fertile, the hydroponic method can be one of the options for profitable farming business (Christianingrum, 2019; Foster et al., 2021). The process of seedling nursery and its care does not take a long time, so it is economically very profitable for capital turnover. The results can also be a solution to the food security – related problem and are very helpful in improving people's nutrition with quality food products because they do not use pesticides and other chemicals.

Of all the benefits, however only few people adopt this method due to the lack of understanding and low communication approach. Persuasive communication is one best approach to promote this practice. *Sintuwu Go Green* Community is one of Hydroponic communities in Palu, South Sulawesi which actively conduct hydroponic planting system. The community that established since 2019 has become the pioneer of Urban Farming in Central Sulawesi.

According to Nanda Andriana the founder of the community, this planting system has been proven to help increase the family income. Hydroponic crops are used for public consumption and sold to increase household income. Moreover, this hydroponic program is one way to increase productivity and community cooperation.



Figure 1: Selling hydroponic vegetables

At the time of introducing the hydroponic method, many people were hesitant to join because of a lack of knowledge about hydroponic farming. The most effective way of influencing people to participate in a hydroponic planting program is to ensure that the method will change their standard of living. To convince the society, the local government involved some experts to provide training to the community, also provide some hydroponic tools and greenhouses to the society. Mas'ad, a housewife living in the area around the greenhouses states that before being introduced to hydroponic, she was only a housewife without any income, but now she can help her husband to fulfil the family needs.

Social media is also better used as an alternative medium for persuasive communication because of its unlimited nature and can be accessed anywhere and anytime. The Sintuvu Go Green Community uses any kind of social media such as Facebook and Instagram. This two media has been actively promote their products and their activity. This waywill attract not only hydroponic product buyers, but also new farmers.

5 CONCLUSION

In conclusion, In order to persuade people participating in hydroponic planting, the government use some experts which not only expert in hydroponic but also as a public speakers. Social media is also better used as an alternative medium for persuasive communication because of its unlimited nature and can be accessed anywhere and anytime. The Sintuvu Go Green Community uses any kind of social media such as Facebook and Instagram. This two media has been actively promote their products and their activity. This way will attract not only hydroponic product buyers, but also new farmers.

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