

Strategies for Applying Women's Social Capital in Small and Medium Enterprises in North Sulawesi, Indonesia

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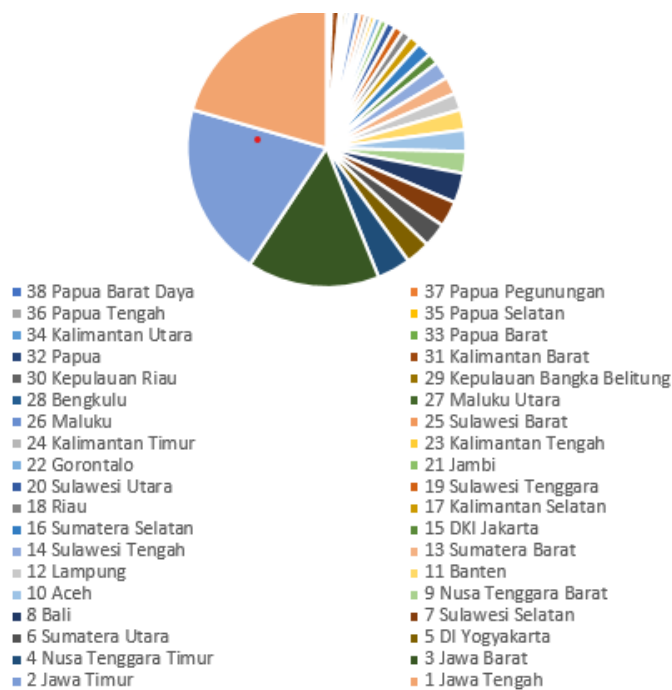
Abstract:

This study aims to reveal the strategies for applying social capital and its benefits in small and medium enterprises (SMEs) managed by women, particularly in the restaurant sector. This research employs a qualitative approach with in-depth interview methods on respondents selected through purposive sampling. Respondents consist of female restaurant owners who have been running their businesses for 5-15 years and have managed to survive during the COVID-19 pandemic. The respondents for this study are 12 female owner of Rumah Makan around Universitas Negeri Manado, Sulawesi Utara which meet the sampling criteria. The interview was carried out from May to June 2024. The data obtained were analyzed thematically to find out how social capital patterns are applied in business start-up strategies, marketing strategies, and business sustainability strategies, as well as the economic benefits obtained. The results show that trust, networks and communication, as well as values or norms, play a crucial role in the success of SMEs. Trust is built through improving product quality and service, while effective networking and communication with suppliers and customers help expand market reach and ensure operational and revenue stability. Values such as honesty and responsibility are also important in building reputation and customer loyalty. The economic benefits of applying social capital include increased customer numbers, wider market reach, and stable income. The use of social media and online applications has proven very effective in increasing sales, while good relationships with suppliers and loyalty programs help ensure stable income. This study provides a deep perspective on the importance of social capital in institutional economics in supporting the success and sustainability of SMEs managed by women in the context of Indonesia's economic development.

Keywords: Social Capital, SMEs, Women, Strategy, Economic Benefits

INTRODUCTION

Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) play a significant role in Indonesia's economy. According to BPS (2018), SMEs serve as the backbone of the economy, not only creating jobs but also driving innovation and entrepreneurship at the local level. The existence of SMEs helps reduce poverty and economic inequality by providing economic opportunities to various segments of society. Indonesia's business world is still dominated by Micro and Small Enterprises (MSEs), accounting for more than 26 million businesses or 98.68% of the total non-agricultural enterprises in Indonesia. These enterprises also employ over 59 million people or about 75.33% of the total non-agricultural workforce. When the crisis hit Indonesia around 1997-1998, MSEs proved resilient while larger businesses fell. The advantages of MSEs in weathering crises include producing consumer goods and services close to community needs, not relying on imported raw materials, and utilizing local resources. These strengths make MSEs less affected by global crises typically marked by sharp currency depreciation. Below is a diagram ranking SMEs per province in Indonesia based on BPS data from 2024:



Based on the data, North Sulawesi ranks 20th in the number of SMEs owned. The province with the highest number of SMEs is Central Java, and the lowest-ranking is Southwest Papua. Although the position of North Sulawesi is slightly better than its neighbouring Province. Gorontalo, which ranks 22nd, it still indicates that compared to Central Java, SMEs in North Sulawesi need further development and support for growth.

This becomes important considering that SMEs often face challenges in sustaining their business amidst tight competition and rapid economic changes (Belyaeva & Levis, 2022; Malmkjær,

2004; Rao et al., 2023). SMEs are also vulnerable to economic instability and frequently changing government policies (Saad et al., 2021; Sharma et al., 2024). In Indonesia, SMEs face various challenges such as limited access to financial resources, lack of managerial skills, barriers to accessing broader markets, and technological limitations (Hidayati & Rachman, 2021; Kurniasari et al., 2023; Nareswari et al., 2023; Nugroho, 2023). Therefore, the role of various parties in supporting the existence of SMEs is very necessary, including the role of women (Akpuokwe et al., 2024; Cakranegara et al., 2022).

Women play a significant role in Indonesia's SME sector. Many SMEs are managed by women, either individually or in groups. Women serve not only as business owners but also as economic drivers for their families and communities (Bauweraerts et al., 2022; Ogundana et al., 2021; Sallah & Caesar, 2020). In this context, women, in addition to economic capital, also empower social capital as part of their business strategy. Social capital, which includes trust, networks, communication, and social values, is considered a key factor that can help SMEs overcome their challenges (Dar & Mishra, 2020; Pongtanalert & Assarut, 2022). Social capital can enhance cooperation, expand market networks, and build strong relationships with suppliers and customers (Boudreaux et al., 2021). Theories of social capital by Coleman (1988) and Putnam (2000) state that social capital can increase social and economic productivity through increased trust and cooperation within communities. This understanding highlights the importance of a deeper understanding of social capital practices among women SME entrepreneurs.

Although numerous studies have been conducted on the role of social capital in SMEs, few specifically focus on how social capital is applied in business start-up strategies, marketing, and sustaining businesses managed by women. Previous research by Putnam (2000) and Coleman (1988) highlights the importance of social capital in building trust and cooperation but seldom addresses its application in the context of women-managed SMEs. Moreover, studies by (Fukuyama, 1996) and Granovetter (1973) show that social networks and values can provide vital support and resources for small businesses. However, these studies often do not focus on the gender aspect of social capital application. Therefore, this research aims to fill this gap by exploring the strategies for applying social capital in SMEs managed by women.

This study aims to reveal the strategies for applying social capital in small and medium enterprises managed by women. The specific objectives of this research are to identify and explore the application of social capital as strategies for starting a business, for marketing expansion, and for sustaining a business, as well as to assess the impact of social capital application on the economic benefits. By achieving these objectives, this research is expected to provide deeper insights into the role of social capital in supporting the success and sustainability of women-managed SMEs in Indonesia. Additionally, it aims to offer practical recommendations for female entrepreneurs to utilize social capital in overcoming their challenges and enhancing their economic well-being.

METHOD

Research Design

This research employs a qualitative research design (Creswell (2013) explains that qualitative research aims to understand social phenomena or human problems from the perspective of those experiencing them. This study focuses on exploring the strategies for applying social capital in small and medium enterprises (SMEs) managed by women in the restaurant sector. As qualitative research, the researcher acts as the main instrument in collecting and analyzing data (DEWI, 2021; Ruslin et al., 2022). The researcher's direct involvement in the data collection process allows for a deep understanding of the experiences and perspectives of the respondents.

Data Collection

As a qualitative study, the primary data comprises words or expressions obtained from the data collection process (O’Kane et al., 2021). The primary data in this research were obtained through in-depth interviews with respondents selected using purposive sampling. The selection criteria for respondents were female restaurant owners who have been running their businesses for 5-15 years and managed to survive during the COVID-19 pandemic. The selection of respondents with these criteria is expected to provide relevant insights into the application of social capital. The interview was conducted from May to June 2024 with 14 *Rumah Makan* or small and medium culinary business around Universitas Negeri Manado, North Sulawesi that meet the sampling criteria. The interviews were based on main questions designed to uncover how social capital is applied as a strategy to start, run, and sustain a business, and what economic benefits are obtained from applying social capital.

Data Analysis

The data obtained from the interviews, consisting of expressions or responses from the respondents, were analyzed thematically. Thematic analysis is a systematic method for identifying, analyzing, and reporting patterns (themes) within the data (Dawadi, 2020; Lester et al., 2020). The thematic analysis process follows these procedures: familiarization with the data, coding, theme identification, theme review, defining and naming themes, and drawing synthesis or conclusions (Xu & Zammit, 2020). This analysis process allows researchers to delve deeply into the qualitative data and answer the research objectives.

FINDINGS

Based on the data obtained and analyzed using thematic analysis, it was found that small and medium-sized restaurant businesses managed by women all use elements of social capital in their efforts to start or run their businesses, which impacts the profits received. The social capital patterns applied and the benefits obtained are explained as follows:

A. Social Capital Strategy Patterns in SMEs

1. Business Start-Up Strategies

At the business start-up stage, social capital such as trust, networks, communication, and values or norms play a crucial role. The main themes that emerge are as follows:

- a. **Trust:** Maintaining quality and good service is key to building trust with new customers. Entrepreneurs prioritize the quality of their products and provide the best service to ensure customers have a positive and satisfying experience. A concrete example can be seen from Ayam Kuning Lalapan tante Vonn, who always maintains the quality of their fried chicken taste and provides friendly service. Consistency in product quality also helps build long-term trust. Entrepreneurs like Rumah Makan Muslim Nabila also emphasize the importance of honesty in business to gain customer trust from the beginning. By using keywords such as "maintaining taste quality," "good service," "consistency," and "honesty," these entrepreneurs are able to create a strong foundation for their business.
- b. **Networks and Communication:** Building good relationships with suppliers and employees is also a key factor in starting a business. Entrepreneurs like in Ar Glou Kuliner focus on fostering long-term relationships with suppliers to ensure the supply of quality raw materials. This is also reflected in the strategy of Rumah Makan Muslim Nabila, which builds good relationships with suppliers to get more competitive prices. Effective cooperation with suppliers and employees creates a harmonious and productive work environment, supporting the operational stability of the business. Keywords such as "good relationships," "cooperation," and "effective communication" illustrate the importance of building a solid network.
- c. **Values or Norms:** Honesty and consistency in product quality and responsibility are highly upheld by entrepreneurs. This is reflected in their commitment to providing high-quality products and consistent service. Entrepreneurs like in RM. MUSLIM and Teras Pink emphasize the importance of honesty in all aspects of their business to build a good reputation and gain customer trust. Honesty not only in products but also in daily interactions with customers and employees. Keywords such as "honesty," "consistency," and "responsibility" emphasize the importance of these values in building a successful business.

In summary, social capital in the form of trust, networks and communication, as well as values or norms, plays a crucial role in starting a business. Trust is built through quality products and good service, effective networks and communication with suppliers and employees, as well as values of honesty and responsibility. Entrepreneurs who successfully apply social capital in their start-up strategies tend to have a strong foundation for sustainable business growth.

2. Marketing Strategies

In marketing strategies, social capital is used to expand market reach and increase sales. The main themes that emerge are:

- a. **Trust:** Using social media and online applications for marketing is very effective in reaching more consumers. Many entrepreneurs, like in RM Blessy and Warung Wifi, use platforms such as Facebook, WhatsApp, and food delivery applications like GrabFood and GoFood to promote their products. This not only helps in reaching a wider customer base but also builds trust by providing transparent information about their products. Transparency in promotions and product information ensures that customers feel safe and confident in making purchases. Keywords such as "social media," "online applications," "promo," and "discount" show how trust is built through effective marketing strategies.

- b. **Networks and Communication:** Promotion through social media and online applications also allows entrepreneurs to communicate directly with their customers. For example, Rumah Makan Muslim Nabila uses applications like Grab and Gojek to make it easier for customers to order food. Good communication with customers through these platforms helps build stronger relationships and customer loyalty. With two-way communication, customers feel valued and heard, ultimately increasing customer satisfaction. Keywords such as "social media," "promotion," and "online applications" illustrate the importance of networks and communication in marketing strategies.
- c. **Values or Norms:** Promo and discount strategies are commonly used to attract new customers and retain old ones. Entrepreneurs like in Teras Pink and Vat Burger regularly offer discounts and promotions to attract customer attention and increase sales. Honesty and responsibility in delivering true promotions are also important for building long-term trust. Customers who feel they are getting more value from promotions and discounts are likely to become loyal customers. Keywords such as "promo," "discount," and "product quality" show how values of honesty and responsibility are applied in marketing strategies.

In other words, social capital in the form of networks and communication, trust, and values or norms is very effective in marketing strategies. The use of social media and online applications helps in expanding market reach and increasing sales. Honesty in delivering promotions and two-way communication with customers helps build trust and customer loyalty. Marketing strategies that utilize social capital enable entrepreneurs to achieve better results and increase product visibility in a broader market.

3. Business Sustainability Strategies

To sustain a business amidst challenges, entrepreneurs use social capital to ensure revenue stability and retain customers. The main themes that emerge are:

- a. **Trust:** Maintaining good relationships with customers and ensuring product quality are the main ways to sustain a business. Entrepreneurs like in Ayam kuning lalapan tanta Anna and RM. MUSLIM maintain the quality of their products and provide quick and responsive service. Maintaining consistency in product and service helps build customer loyalty. Customers who are satisfied with the quality and service tend to become loyal and regular customers. Keywords such as "good relationships," "quick service," "product quality," and "consistency" illustrate how trust is built and maintained in this strategy.
- b. **Networks and Communication:** Building good relationships with suppliers and consumers is also very important. Entrepreneurs like in Rumah Mbak Putri and Warung Wifi maintain good communication and cooperation with all parties involved in the buying and selling process to ensure smooth business operations. Good relationships with suppliers ensure a stable and quality supply of raw materials, while good relationships with employees increase productivity and service. Good communication also helps in identifying and addressing problems quickly and effectively. Keywords such as "good relationships," "communication," "cooperation," and "quality materials" emphasize the importance of networks and communication in business sustainability strategies.

c. **Values or Norms:** Honesty and good service are the foundations for building customer loyalty. Entrepreneurs like in RM Blessy and Vat Burger emphasize the importance of maintaining honesty in all aspects of their business and providing the best service to their customers. Customers who feel valued and treated honestly are more likely to return and recommend the business to others. Good service includes quick responses to customer complaints and needs, which increases satisfaction and loyalty. Keywords such as "honesty," "good service," "product quality," and "consistency" illustrate the importance of these values in sustaining a business.

Thus, it can be stated that to sustain a business amidst challenges, social capital in the form of trust, networks and communication, and values or norms is very important. Maintaining good relationships with customers, suppliers, and employees, and providing consistent and quality service helps entrepreneurs sustain stable revenue. Honesty and responsibility in business also play a key role in building customer loyalty and a good reputation. Entrepreneurs who successfully apply social capital in business sustainability strategies tend to be more resilient to market fluctuations and have a loyal customer base.

B. Patterns of Economic Benefits Gained by Entrepreneurs

The economic benefits gained by restaurant entrepreneurs from the application of social capital demonstrate the significant role that social capital plays in enhancing business success. Social capital in the form of trust, networks and communication, as well as values or norms, has been proven to assist entrepreneurs in various business strategies, including starting a business, marketing, and sustaining a business. The following is a descriptive-analytical analysis of the economic benefits gained by entrepreneurs from the application of social capital.

1. Increasing Number of Customers and Revenue

The most significant benefit resulting from the application of social capital is the increase in the number of customers and revenue, mentioned with the highest frequency by entrepreneurs. By maintaining quality taste and good service, entrepreneurs like Ayam Kuning Lalapan tante Vonn and Rumah Makan Muslim Nabila have successfully attracted more customers and increased their revenue. Social capital in the form of trust, built through consistent product quality and service, helps these entrepreneurs gain customer trust and create customer loyalty. This is very advantageous in business start-up, marketing, and sustaining strategies.

2. Wider Market Reach Through Social Media and Online Applications

Marketing strategies involving the use of social media and online applications such as GrabFood and GoFood have proven to be very beneficial. Many entrepreneurs, like those at RM Blessy and Warung Wifi, report that their market reach has become wider thanks to these platforms. Social capital in the form of trust and communication networks plays a role in reaching a broader customer base and building stronger relationships with them. By providing transparent and easily accessible information, entrepreneurs can build customer trust, which in turn increases sales and expands market reach.

3. Revenue Stability and Retaining Regular Customers

Revenue stability and retaining regular customers result from good relationships with consumers and suppliers. Entrepreneurs like RM. MUSLIM and Ayam kuning lalapan tante Anna report that maintaining product quality and consistent service helps them sustain stable revenue. Social capital in the form of networks and communication, as well as values or norms of honesty, allows these entrepreneurs to build mutually beneficial long-term relationships with suppliers and customers. This is very important in business sustainability strategies, especially amidst dynamic market challenges.

4. Increased Revenue Through Discounts, Promotions, and Low Prices

Strategies using discounts, promotions, and low prices have also proven effective in increasing revenue. Rumah Makan Muslim Nabila and Vat Burger use these strategies to attract more customers and increase sales. Honesty and responsibility in delivering true promotions are crucial for building customer trust and loyalty. The use of social capital in the form of values and norms, such as honesty and responsibility, ensures that customers feel they are getting more value from their purchases, which increases the likelihood of them returning and becoming loyal customers.

5. Increased Sales Through Social Media, Online Applications, and Promotions

Increased sales through the use of social media, online applications, and promotions highlight the importance of networks and communication in marketing strategies. Entrepreneurs like RM. MUSLIM and Teras Pink utilize these platforms to boost their sales. By communicating directly with customers through social media, entrepreneurs can build closer and stronger relationships with customers, ultimately increasing sales and customer loyalty. Social capital in the form of networks and communication enables entrepreneurs to reach more customers and effectively promote their products.

6. Stable Income Through Good Relationships with Suppliers, Consumers, and Loyalty Programs

Good relationships with suppliers and consumers, as well as the use of loyalty programs, help ensure stable income. Entrepreneurs like RM Blessy and Rumah Mbak Putri maintain good relationships with suppliers to ensure a stable and quality supply of raw materials, while loyalty programs help retain regular customers. Social capital in the form of networks and communication, as well as values and norms like honesty and consistency, plays a crucial role in building and maintaining mutually beneficial relationships. This is very important in business sustainability strategies to ensure long-term business continuity.

7. Approximately 20% Profit Increase with GoFood Application

Using the GoFood application by Vat Burger results in a profit increase of approximately 20%. This demonstrates the effectiveness of online applications in increasing sales and expanding market reach. Social capital in the form of trust and communication networks helps this entrepreneur utilize technology to optimize the marketing and sales of their products. By using

this application, entrepreneurs can reach more customers and increase sales, directly impacting profit growth.

The presence of these social capital patterns and benefits shows that the application of social capital in business start-up, marketing, and sustainability strategies has a significant impact on the economic benefits for restaurant entrepreneurs. Social capital such as trust, networks and communication, as well as values or norms, not only helps in building and developing a business but also plays a crucial role in sustaining a business amidst challenges. Entrepreneurs who successfully utilize social capital tend to experience an increase in the number of customers, stable revenue, and wider market reach, ultimately increasing their economic benefits. These findings underscore the importance of social capital in supporting the success and sustainability of small businesses in the restaurant sector.

DISCUSSION

The above findings further indicate some points to reflect in terms of strategies and benefits of applying social capital for small and medium enterprises in North Sulawesi particularly those related culinary business.

Strategies for starting business

In terms of strategies business starting-up, social capital such as trust, networks and communication, as well as values or norms, plays an essential role. Based on the analysis of interview data, trust emerges as the most dominant social capital aspect utilized by entrepreneurs. This trust is built through the quality of products and good service, as exemplified by Ayam Kuning Lalapan tante Vonn, who consistently maintains the quality of their fried chicken and provides friendly service. This aligns with Coleman's (1988) theory of social capital, which states that social capital comprises aspects such as trust, norms, and networks. Putnam's (2000) research also finds that trust is a crucial element in building productive relationships within a community.

Besides trust, networks and communication also play a significant role in starting a business. Entrepreneurs like those at Ar Glou Kuliner focus on fostering long-term relationships with suppliers to ensure a supply of quality raw materials. This is in accordance with Granovetter's (1973) theory of the strength of weak ties, which posits that broad social networks can provide essential information and resources for starting and developing a business. Honesty and consistency in product quality and responsibility are also highly valued by entrepreneurs, in line with Fukuyama's (1995) theory, which emphasizes that social values and norms play a crucial role in creating social capital that can be used for productive purposes.

Therefore, it can be explained that social capital in the form of trust, networks and communication, as well as values or norms, plays a crucial role in starting a business. Trust is built through the enhancement of product quality and good service, effective networks and communication with suppliers and employees, as well as values of honesty and responsibility. Entrepreneurs who successfully apply social capital in their start-up strategies tend to have a strong foundation for sustainable business growth.

1. Strategies for Marketing

In marketing strategies, social capital is used to expand market reach and increase sales. Based on the frequency of mentions in the interviews, networks and communication are the most dominant aspects. Many entrepreneurs, like those at RM Blessy and Warung Wifi, use social media and online applications such as Facebook, WhatsApp, and GrabFood to promote their products. This is consistent with Bourdieu's (1986) theory, which states that social capital includes access to social networks that can be used to gain economic benefits.

Good communication through these platforms helps build stronger relationships and customer loyalty. Rumah Makan Muslim Nabila utilizes applications like Grab and Gojek to make it easier for customers to order food. Coleman's (1988) theory of social capital as a resource that can increase social productivity is highly relevant here, as two-way communication through social media allows entrepreneurs to build closer relationships with customers. Promotions and discounts are also common strategies used to attract new customers and retain existing ones. Teras Pink and Vat Burger regularly offer discounts and promotions. Honesty and responsibility in delivering true promotions are also crucial for building long-term trust, in line with Putnam's (2000) research showing that social norms such as honesty can increase trust levels within a society.

In summary, social capital in the form of networks and communication, trust, and values or norms is highly effective in marketing strategies. The use of social media and online applications helps expand market reach and increase sales. Honesty in delivering promotions and two-way communication with customers helps build trust and customer loyalty. Marketing strategies that utilize social capital enable entrepreneurs to achieve better results and increase the visibility of their products in a broader market.

2. Strategies for Business Sustainability

To sustain a business amidst challenges, entrepreneurs use social capital to ensure revenue stability and retain customers. Maintaining good relationships with customers and ensuring product quality are the main ways to sustain a business. Ayam kuning lalapan tanta Anna and RM. MUSLIM maintain the quality of their products and provide quick and responsive service. This supports Fukuyama's (1995) theory, which emphasizes the importance of trust and social norms in creating strong social capital.

Building good relationships with suppliers and consumers is also very important. Rumah Mbak Putri and Warung Wifi maintain good communication and cooperation with all parties involved in the buying and selling process to ensure smooth business operations. This aligns with Granovetter's (1973) theory, which states that strong social networks can provide the support and resources needed to sustain a business. Honesty and good service are the foundations for building customer loyalty. RM Blessy and Vat Burger emphasize the importance of maintaining honesty in all aspects of their business and providing the best service to their customers. This is in line with Coleman's (1988) research showing that social capital can increase cohesion and productivity within communities.

In other words, to sustain a business amidst challenges, social capital in the form of trust, networks and communication, and values or norms is very important. Maintaining good relationships with customers, suppliers, and employees and providing consistent and quality service helps

entrepreneurs sustain stable revenue. Honesty and responsibility in business also play a key role in building customer loyalty and a good reputation. Entrepreneurs who successfully apply social capital in their business sustainability strategies tend to be more resilient to market fluctuations and have a loyal customer base.

3. Patterns of Economic Benefits Gained by Entrepreneurs

The economic benefits gained by restaurant entrepreneurs from the application of social capital indicate several key advantages:

a. Increasing Number of Customers and Revenue Stability

The most significant benefit from the application of social capital is the increase in the number of customers and revenue, mentioned with the highest frequency by entrepreneurs. By maintaining quality taste and good service, entrepreneurs like Ayam Kuning Lalapan tante Vonn and Rumah Makan Muslim Nabila successfully attract more customers and increase their revenue. Social capital in the form of trust, built through consistent product quality and service, helps these entrepreneurs gain customer trust and create customer loyalty. This is highly beneficial in business start-up, marketing, and sustainability strategies. This aligns with Putnam's (2000) theory that trust within a community can enhance cooperation and economic outcomes. Revenue stability and retaining regular customers result from good relationships with consumers and suppliers. Entrepreneurs like RM. MUSLIM and Ayam kuning lalapan tanta Anna report that maintaining product quality and consistent service helps them sustain stable revenue. Social capital in the form of networks and communication, as well as values or norms of honesty, allows these entrepreneurs to build mutually beneficial long-term relationships with suppliers and customers. This is very important in sustainability strategies, especially amidst dynamic market challenges. This supports Granovetter's (1973) theory of the strength of weak ties, which shows that a broad social network can provide the stability and support needed to sustain a business.

b. Wider Market Reach

Marketing strategies involving the use of social media and online applications like GrabFood and GoFood have proven very beneficial. Many entrepreneurs, like those at RM Blessy and Warung Wifi, report that their market reach has become wider thanks to these platforms. Social capital in the form of trust and communication networks plays a role in reaching a broader customer base and building stronger relationships with them. By providing transparent and easily accessible information, entrepreneurs can build customer trust, which in turn increases sales and expands market reach. This supports Bourdieu's (1986) theory that social capital can provide access to broader economic resources.

Strategies using discounts, promotions, and low prices have also proven effective in increasing revenue. Rumah Makan Muslim Nabila and Vat Burger use these strategies to attract more customers and increase sales. Honesty and responsibility in delivering true promotions are crucial for building customer trust and loyalty. The use of social capital in the form of values and norms, such as honesty and responsibility, ensures that customers feel they are getting more value from their purchases, which increases the likelihood of them returning and becoming loyal customers. This is consistent with

Fukuyama's (1995) research, which shows that social norms like honesty can increase economic efficiency and productivity.

Increased sales through the use of social media, online applications, and promotions highlight the importance of networks and communication in marketing strategies. Entrepreneurs like RM. MUSLIM and Teras Pink utilize these platforms to boost their sales. By communicating directly with customers through social media, entrepreneurs can build closer and stronger relationships with customers, ultimately increasing sales and customer loyalty. Social capital in the form of networks and communication enables entrepreneurs to reach more customers and effectively promote their products. This supports Coleman's (1988) theory, which shows that social capital can increase social and economic productivity.

c. Good Relationships with Suppliers and Consumers

Good relationships with suppliers and consumers, as well as the use of loyalty programs, help ensure stable income. Entrepreneurs like RM Blessy and Rumah Mbak Putri maintain good relationships with suppliers to ensure a stable and quality supply of raw materials, while loyalty programs help retain regular customers. Social capital in the form of networks and communication, as well as values and norms like honesty and consistency, plays a crucial role in building and maintaining mutually beneficial relationships. This is very important in sustainability strategies to ensure long-term business continuity. This supports Granovetter's (1973) theory on the importance of social networks in creating economic stability.

d. Approximately 20% Profit Increase

Using the GoFood application by Vat Burger results in a profit increase of approximately 20%. This demonstrates the effectiveness of online applications in increasing sales and expanding market reach. Social capital in the form of trust and communication networks helps this entrepreneur utilize technology to optimize the marketing and sales of their products. By using this application, entrepreneurs can reach more customers and increase sales, directly impacting profit growth. This supports Bourdieu's (1986) theory that social capital can provide access to broader economic opportunities.

The presence of these social capital patterns and benefits shows that the application of social capital in business start-up, marketing, and sustainability strategies has a significant impact on the economic benefits for restaurant entrepreneurs. Social capital such as trust, networks and communication, and values or norms not only helps in building and developing a business but also plays a crucial role in sustaining a business amidst challenges. Entrepreneurs who successfully utilize social capital tend to experience an increase in the number of customers, stable revenue, and wider market reach, ultimately increasing their economic benefits. These findings underscore the importance of social capital in supporting the success and sustainability of small businesses in the restaurant sector.

Moreover, this research also highlights the use of social media and online applications as marketing and communication tools that can increase market reach and sales, supporting previous findings by Granovetter (1973) and Bourdieu (1986). Overall, these findings support the theory of social capital by Coleman (1988) and Putnam (2000), as well as the institutional economic theory by

North (1990), which emphasizes the importance of institutions and social norms in supporting economic activities. This research provides new contributions by demonstrating practical applications of these theories in the context of small businesses in the restaurant sector, aiming to achieve economic benefits and sustain the business amidst various situations.

CONCLUSION

This research reveals that social capital plays an important role in the strategies of small and medium enterprises (SMEs) managed by women, particularly in the restaurant sector. The analysis shows that social capital, which includes trust, networks and communication, and values or norms, is very effective in business start-up strategies, marketing, and business sustainability. In the context of business start-up strategies, trust is the most dominant social capital element related to efforts to maintain product quality and service. For marketing strategies, the use of social media and online applications is key to expanding market reach and increasing sales. Furthermore, business sustainability strategies involve maintaining good relationships with customers, suppliers, and employees, and providing consistent and quality service. From the application of social capital, benefits such as increased customer numbers and revenue, wider market reach, and stable income, as well as a profit increase of approximately 20%, are achieved. These findings are in line with the main stream social capital theories proposed by Coleman, Putnam, Granovetter, Bourdieu, and North, indicating that social capital strengthens the existence of a business in a dynamic economic environment.

To deepen the understanding of social capital in the business world, further research can be conducted to explore other aspects of social capital in the context of SMEs, such as the impact of social capital on product innovation, the role of social capital in access to financial resources, and the influence of local culture on social capital: this research can examine how local culture affects the formation and utilization of social capital in SMEs in various regions in Indonesia.

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