

## THE POTENTIAL BENEFITS OF LOCAL ONLINE MARKETPLACE FOR SMES: FOCUS ON WUKIRSARI VILLAGE, BANTUL, YOGYAKARTA

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### **Abstract.**

*This study explores the transformative potential of local online marketplaces for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in Wukirsari Village, Bantul, Yogyakarta. The research aims to understand how digital platforms can enhance SMEs' visibility, foster cultural integration, and drive sustainable economic growth. Using qualitative methods, data were collected through focus group discussions, interviews, and live observations involving SME owners across various sectors such as batik textiles, handicrafts, and local culinary products. The findings indicate that before the introduction of community engagement initiatives, SMEs in Wukirsari faced limited market reach, lacked data-driven decision-making, and struggled to differentiate themselves in the marketplace. Following the implementation of local online marketplaces, SMEs experienced notable improvements in customer engagement, inventory optimization, and brand loyalty. Key enablers included the use of localized storytelling, collaboration with influencers, integration of cultural narratives, and the adoption of analytics tools to better understand consumer behavior. These efforts not only improved operational strategies but also strengthened community pride and participation. Furthermore, the research emphasizes the role of collective action and cultural marketing in reinforcing sustainable development. As SMEs tailored their offerings to reflect local heritage and responded to real-time feedback, they positioned themselves as both economically viable and socially embedded entities. The study concludes that strategic use of local online marketplaces, combined with culturally resonant and data-informed marketing, can significantly boost SME competitiveness while contributing to the resilience and identity of the local economy.*

**Keywords:** *Cultural marketing, Digital transformation, Local online marketplace, SMEs, Sustainable local development*

## I. INTRODUCTION

Local online marketplaces can significantly enhance the visibility and reach of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), fostering growth and sustainability in a competitive digital landscape (Wenzel, 2017). This is particularly relevant for local SMEs in Wukirsari Village, Bantul, Yogyakarta, where traditional businesses can benefit from the digital transformation (Sinha & Singh, 2018). By leveraging local online marketplaces, SMEs in this region can tap into a broader consumer base while promoting their unique products and services (Gengatharen & Standing, 2004).

Moreover, as SMEs in Wukirsari Village embrace local online marketplaces, they can also explore partnerships with local influencers who resonate with their target audience, enhancing brand visibility and credibility (Hee, 2019). This strategic collaboration allows for the co-creation of content that highlights the unique cultural attributes of their products, thereby fostering a deeper emotional connection with consumers (Chen, 2012). For instance, by showcasing traditional crafting methods or local ingredients in their marketing campaigns, SMEs can not only differentiate themselves but also capitalize on the growing consumer demand for authenticity and uniqueness in their purchases.

Research indicates that such individualized product promotion can significantly enhance consumer purchase intentions, particularly when aligned with localized marketing efforts (Riesco, 2014). This approach not only strengthens brand loyalty but also positions these SMEs as integral players in the local economy, driving both community engagement and sustainable growth. Furthermore, the emphasis on local cultural narratives in marketing can enhance the perceived value of products, ultimately leading to increased consumer interest and sales growth in the competitive marketplace (Cleveland, 2006).

This focus on localized marketing strategies is essential for SMEs to effectively compete and thrive within their communities, ultimately contributing to local economic development and sustainability (Hisyam & Fitriyah, 2024). By leveraging local online marketplaces, SMEs can not only enhance their visibility but also contribute to sustainable local economic development through equitable participation and community engagement (Wilson & Polter, 2020). This dual emphasis on visibility and community participation elucidates the transformative capacity of localized online marketplaces for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), especially in augmenting local economic advancement and promoting sustainable practices.

This metamorphosis not only bolsters individual enterprises but also enhances the collective resilience and sustainability of the local economy, thereby embodying the tenets of sustainable local economic development. The particular transformative approach aligns with the principles of sustainable local economic development, emphasizing quality of life, fairness, and community engagement (Wilson & Polter, 2020). By prioritizing these principles, SMEs can create a positive impact on their communities while simultaneously improving their own economic viability and fostering long-term sustainability. This commitment to sustainable practices not only enhances the reputation of SMEs but also fosters a sense of community ownership and pride, ultimately driving further local economic growth (Jansson *et al.*, 2017).

Local online marketplaces can be an encouragement for SMEs in Wukirsari Village to improve their visibility. Many local businesses often struggle to attract customers beyond their immediate geographical area. By utilizing online platforms, they can showcase their offerings to a wider audience, including both local residents and tourists who may be interested in authentic Yogyakarta products. This enhanced visibility is crucial for driving foot traffic to physical stores and increasing online sales. In addition to enhancing visibility, local online marketplaces also provide SMEs in Wukirsari Village with valuable data insights that can inform their business strategies. By analyzing consumer behavior and preferences through these platforms, businesses can tailor their offerings to

better meet the needs of their target audience, ultimately leading to increased customer satisfaction and loyalty (Chu & Wu, 2018).

For instance, understanding peak shopping times and popular product categories can enable SMEs to optimize inventory management and marketing efforts, ensuring that they are well-prepared to capitalize on consumer demand (Oduoza & Xiong, 2009). Furthermore, this data-driven approach can foster collaboration among local businesses, as shared insights can lead to collective strategies that benefit the entire community, thereby reinforcing the principles of sustainable local economic development and enhancing overall economic resilience (Milán-García *et al.*, 2019). As SMEs work together to leverage these insights, they not only strengthen their individual positions but also contribute to a more robust and sustainable local economy (Asproth & Nyström, 2008). In the context of Wukirsari Village, SMEs can harness data analytics provided by local online marketplaces to better understand consumer preferences and behaviors (Miles, 2014).

This understanding allows for more targeted marketing strategies that resonate with local demographics. For instance, businesses can identify which products are popular among local consumers and tailor their inventory accordingly, thus fostering customer engagement and loyalty (Berg, 2014). Additionally, the integration of customer feedback mechanisms within these local online marketplaces can further enhance the ability of SMEs in Wukirsari Village to refine their offerings and marketing strategies.

By actively soliciting and analyzing consumer reviews and suggestions, businesses can gain insights into customer satisfaction and areas for improvement, thereby fostering a culture of continuous enhancement and responsiveness (Mukhopadhyay *et al.*, 2011). This practice not only builds stronger relationships with consumers but also aligns with the principles of co-creation, where customers feel valued and engaged in the development process of products and services, ultimately enhancing brand loyalty and trust (Aluri *et al.*, 2019). Furthermore, as SMEs adapt their strategies based on real-time feedback, they can better navigate challenges and capitalize on emerging trends, ensuring their relevance in a rapidly evolving marketplace.

This dynamic interaction between businesses and consumers enriches the local economic landscape, positioning Wukirsari's SMEs as agile and community-oriented players in the broader economic ecosystem. The integration of local cultural content into product listings is another significant advantage for SMEs in Wukirsari Village. By emphasizing local traditions, crafts, and culinary specialties, these businesses can create a deeper connection with consumers (Bessière, 1998). Studies have shown a correlation between localized marketing efforts and sales growth, suggesting that highlighting the cultural heritage of Wukirsari can enhance consumer interest and loyalty.

Moreover, the incorporation of local cultural narratives into marketing strategies can significantly enhance the storytelling aspect of SMEs' branding efforts (Caboni *et al.*, 2013). By crafting compelling narratives that reflect the rich history and traditions of Wukirsari Village, businesses can engage consumers on a more profound emotional level, fostering a sense of connection and authenticity. This storytelling approach not only differentiates their products in a crowded marketplace but also aligns with the growing consumer trend towards ethical purchasing, where buyers are increasingly motivated by the cultural significance and sustainability of their purchases (Sabur, 2025).

Additionally, as these SMEs embrace their cultural identity, they contribute to preserving local heritage, which can be a vital aspect of attracting tourism, thereby generating additional economic benefits for the community (Valentina *et al.*, 2015). Such synergies between cultural preservation and economic development highlight the multifaceted role of SMEs in promoting both local identity and sustainable growth. The potential for local online marketplaces extends beyond mere visibility (Ger, 1999). For SMEs in Wukirsari Village, implementing effective digital marketing strategies can enhance customer loyalty and drive sustainable growth. By showcasing their unique offerings and

integrating local cultural elements into their marketing strategies, these businesses can improve consumer engagement, which is critical for their long-term success.

## II. METHODS

The designated area for conducting the research was situated within the charming confines of Wukirsari Village, which lies in the district of Bantul, located in the culturally rich region of Yogyakarta, Indonesia. The actual research activities were carried out on the date of May 20th in the year 2025, marking a significant moment in our investigative timeline. Within the aforementioned study locations, we strategically selected small and medium enterprises, commonly referred to as SMEs, as our primary subjects, specifically drawing from the diverse and vibrant community members of the Wukirsari SMEs, who are engaged in a variety of product offerings that include traditional Batik textiles, a Village Library resource center, beautifully crafted knit items, intricate bamboo handicrafts, traditional Wayang puppets, and the delightful local beverage known as Wedang Uwuh.

Our research involved a comprehensive approach to data collection, focusing on the genesis and sources of knowledge within the Wukirsari community. We gathered primary data that is inherently qualitative in nature, allowing us to delve deeply into the lived experiences and perspectives of the community members. To achieve this, we employed a variety of methods. We conducted Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) to facilitate collective dialogue among community members, fostering an environment where participants could share insights and experiences related to their knowledge systems. In addition to FGDs, we engaged in one-on-one interviews, which provided a more intimate setting for individuals to express their thoughts and narratives in greater detail. Our methodology also included live demonstrations, where we observed community members in their natural environment, actively participating in their daily activities. This participant observation allowed us to gain firsthand insights into the practices and traditions that shape their knowledge base. By immersing ourselves in these activities, we were able to contextualize the information gathered and understand the community's practices from an insider's perspective. Throughout our interactions, we took on the role of observant participants, not only observing but also engaging in discussions and asking direct questions to elicit deeper responses. This dual approach enabled us to build rapport with community members, encouraging them to share their knowledge more freely and candidly. Our commitment to conducting in-depth interviews further enriched our data, as we explored the nuances of their knowledge systems, beliefs, and cultural practices. Overall, our multifaceted data collection strategy provided a robust framework for understanding the intricate tapestry of knowledge within the Wukirsari community, allowing us to capture the richness and complexity of their experiences.

By conducting focus group discussions (FGDs) and one-on-one interviews with local SME owners and stakeholders in Wukirsari, researchers can systematically identify and analyze the themes that emerge from their experiences. For instance, common themes might include challenges in accessing resources, marketing strategies, or community support systems. Through coding the qualitative data, researchers can categorize these insights into broader themes, such as innovation, resilience, and collaboration. This helps to uncover shared experiences among SMEs in Wukirsari, providing a deeper understanding of their operational practices and the knowledge that drives their businesses. This method can be particularly effective in Wukirsari, where researchers can observe SMEs in action during live demonstrations, markets, or community events. By analyzing the interactions and behaviors of SME owners, employees, and customers in their natural context, researchers can gain insights into how knowledge is practically applied within these enterprises (Slocinska & Depta, 2015). For example, observing how local artisans engage with customers can

reveal the cultural significance of their products and the informal knowledge transfer that occurs during these interactions. This real-time analysis allows researchers to capture the nuances of behaviors and contextual factors that influence the success and sustainability of SMEs in Wukirsari. By integrating these two methods, researchers can develop a comprehensive understanding of how SMEs in Wukirsari operate, the challenges they face, and the community dynamics that support or hinder their growth. This approach not only enriches the findings from FGDs and interviews but also contextualizes them within the lived experiences of the SME owners and the broader community, ultimately contributing to the development of tailored support strategies for local businesses.

### III. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The research conducted in Wukirsari Village, Bantul, Yogyakarta, provides valuable insights into the transformative effects of local online marketplaces on small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) before and after the implementation of community engagement programs. The findings reveal several key aspects that highlight the impact of these initiatives on community participation, innovation adoption, and overall economic development.

#### Conditions Before Implementation

Prior to the introduction of community engagement programs, SMEs in Wukirsari Village faced significant challenges, particularly in terms of visibility and market reach. Many local businesses struggled to attract customers beyond their immediate geographical area, limiting their growth potential. The lack of awareness among potential consumers, both locally and from outside the region, hindered the ability of these SMEs to showcase their unique offerings, which included traditional crafts and local culinary specialties. Additionally, the absence of data-driven insights meant that businesses could not effectively tailor their products or marketing strategies to meet consumer preferences. This resulted in missed opportunities for customer engagement and loyalty, ultimately stunting the economic growth of the community.

#### Recommendation for Better Implementation

1. **Embrace Local Online Marketplaces:** Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) in Wukirsari Village should take proactive steps to register and prominently display their products on local online marketplaces. By doing so, they can substantially elevate their visibility in the digital landscape, which is crucial for reaching a wider audience. This strategy not only targets local residents who are eager to support community businesses but also attracts potential tourists who are on the lookout for genuine, authentic products that reflect the rich cultural heritage of Yogyakarta. Engaging with these online platforms can facilitate stronger connections with customers, foster brand loyalty, and ultimately drive sales growth, allowing SMEs to thrive in an increasingly competitive marketplace.
2. **Harness the Power of Data Analytics:** Tap into the wealth of data insights offered by various analytical platforms to gain a comprehensive understanding of consumer behavior and preferences. By meticulously analyzing shopping trends, identifying popular products, and pinpointing peak shopping times, small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) can strategically tailor their product offerings and marketing initiatives. This data-driven approach allows SMEs to align their business strategies more closely with the evolving needs and desires of their target audience. As a result, they can foster enhanced customer satisfaction and loyalty, ultimately driving sustainable growth and a competitive edge in the marketplace. By leveraging these insights, SMEs can not only refine their inventory and promotional tactics but also create a more

personalized shopping experience that resonates with their customers, encouraging repeat business and long-term relationships.

3. **Highlight Unique Cultural Attributes:** Integrate rich local cultural narratives and time-honored crafting techniques into product descriptions and marketing initiatives. By showcasing the unique elements that define their offerings, small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) can cultivate a profound emotional bond with consumers. This approach not only fosters brand loyalty but also elevates the perceived value of their products, as customers are increasingly drawn to the stories and traditions that underpin what they purchase. By weaving these cultural threads into their branding, SMEs can differentiate themselves in a crowded market, appealing to consumers' desires for authenticity and connection.
4. **Engage with Local Influencers:** Forge strategic collaborations with local influencers whose values and aesthetics align with your target audience to significantly elevate brand visibility and establish credibility within the community. These partnerships can serve as a powerful catalyst for content co-creation, allowing for the development of authentic narratives that highlight the unique cultural richness of Wukirsari. By leveraging the influencers' established trust and rapport with their followers, you can effectively draw consumer interest, foster deeper connections, and ultimately drive sales. This approach not only amplifies your brand's reach but also embeds it within the local culture, making it more relatable and appealing to potential customers.
5. **Implement Customer Feedback Mechanisms:** It is essential for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) to proactively seek and meticulously analyze customer feedback within the online marketplace. By implementing structured feedback systems—such as surveys, reviews, and direct communication channels—businesses can gather invaluable insights directly from their consumers. This approach not only allows SMEs to fine-tune their product offerings and marketing strategies but also empowers them to adapt to evolving consumer preferences in real time. Moreover, fostering a culture of continuous improvement hinges on this feedback loop, encouraging businesses to remain agile and responsive to customer needs. By actively engaging with customers and demonstrating a commitment to addressing their concerns and suggestions, SMEs can build stronger relationships, enhance customer loyalty, and ultimately drive long-term growth. Embracing this iterative process of feedback and adaptation positions businesses to stay competitive and relevant in an ever-changing market landscape.
6. **Optimize Inventory Management:** To effectively optimize inventory management, it is crucial for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) to leverage data insights that reflect consumer demand patterns. By analyzing sales data, market trends, and customer preferences, businesses can gain a comprehensive understanding of which products are in high demand and which are underperforming. This knowledge enables SMEs to maintain optimal stock levels, thereby minimizing excess inventory and reducing the risk of waste due to unsold goods. Moreover, adopting a data-driven approach allows SMEs to anticipate fluctuations in consumer behavior, such as seasonal trends or emerging market shifts. By aligning inventory with these insights, businesses can ensure they are adequately stocked with popular items while avoiding overstocking less desirable products. This strategic management not only enhances operational efficiency but also improves cash flow, as funds are not tied up in excess inventory. Additionally, effective inventory optimization helps SMEs respond swiftly to customer needs, ensuring that popular products are readily available when demand peaks. This responsiveness not only boosts customer satisfaction and loyalty but also positions the business as a reliable provider in the marketplace.

Ultimately, by harnessing data insights for inventory management, SMEs can create a more streamlined, responsive, and cost-effective operation that is well-equipped to meet the dynamic demands of their customers.

7. **Promote Sustainable Practices:** It is essential to integrate sustainable business practices into your marketing strategies to resonate with the growing number of environmentally conscious consumers. By showcasing your commitment to eco-friendly processes and ethical sourcing, you can effectively capture the attention of a demographic that prioritizes sustainability in their purchasing decisions. This approach not only helps in differentiating your brand in a competitive marketplace but also fosters a deeper connection with consumers who value corporate responsibility. Emphasizing your sustainability initiatives—such as using renewable materials, reducing carbon footprints, or engaging in fair trade practices—can significantly enhance your brand’s reputation. Moreover, transparent communication about these practices can build trust and loyalty among your customer base, encouraging repeat purchases and positive word-of-mouth referrals. In an era where consumers are increasingly aware of the environmental impact of their choices, aligning your brand with sustainable values is not just a marketing tactic; it is a vital component of long-term business success.
8. **Participate in Community Engagement Programs:** Actively immerse yourself in local community initiatives and events that advocate for the utilization of online marketplaces. By doing so, you not only enhance your own understanding of digital commerce but also foster a spirit of collaboration among local businesses. Such engagement provides an invaluable platform for sharing insights, experiences, and best practices, which can lead to the development of collective strategies that benefit the entire community. This collaborative approach not only strengthens individual businesses but also contributes to the overall vitality and resilience of the local economy. By championing these programs, you help create a network of support that empowers entrepreneurs, encourages innovation, and ultimately leads to a more prosperous and interconnected community.
9. **Develop Compelling Storytelling:** Create immersive and captivating narratives that encapsulate the essence of Wukirsari Village, weaving together its rich history, vibrant culture, and cherished traditions. By delving deep into the stories behind each product, you can illuminate the unique craftsmanship and cultural significance that sets them apart from the competition. This storytelling strategy not only elevates the products in a saturated market but also forges a meaningful connection with consumers who seek authenticity and a deeper understanding of the cultural heritage embedded in their purchases. Through these compelling narratives, you can inspire a sense of appreciation and loyalty among customers, allowing them to feel a part of the story and the community that produces these distinctive items.
10. **Invest in Digital Marketing Skills:** Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) should prioritize the development of their digital marketing capabilities through targeted training programs and workshops. By equipping their teams with the knowledge and expertise to navigate the digital landscape, SMEs can significantly enhance their understanding of how to leverage online platforms and social media effectively. This investment in skill development not only empowers employees to create compelling content and engage with audiences but also enables businesses to craft tailored marketing strategies that resonate with their target demographics. Mastering digital marketing techniques can lead to improved brand visibility, as well as heightened consumer engagement, ultimately driving more traffic to their websites and increasing conversion rates.

Furthermore, by staying updated on the latest trends and tools in digital marketing, SMEs can adapt to the ever-evolving online environment, ensuring they remain competitive in their respective industries. In essence, fostering a culture of continuous learning in digital marketing is not just a strategic move; it is a vital step towards achieving sustainable growth and success in the digital age.

By implementing these recommendations, SMEs in Wukirsari Village can not only enhance their visibility in the marketplace but also leverage the broader benefits of digital media to foster sustainable growth, community engagement, and economic development.

### **Analysis of Community Participation and Impact**

The findings indicate that community engagement programs not only empowered SMEs but also fostered a sense of community ownership and pride. As local businesses embraced their cultural identity and integrated local traditions into their marketing strategies, they contributed to the preservation of local heritage. This cultural emphasis resonated with consumers, who increasingly sought authenticity in their purchases, aligning with broader trends in ethical consumerism.

The adoption of innovations, such as data analytics and localized marketing strategies, was a crucial factor in enhancing community participation. As SMEs collaborated and shared insights, they developed collective strategies that benefited the entire community. This collaborative spirit reinforced the principles of sustainable local economic development, ultimately contributing to economic resilience.

## **IV. CONCLUSION**

The analysis highlights a transformative journey for SMEs in Wukirsari Village, demonstrating that community engagement programs can significantly enhance economic viability and foster long-term sustainability. The shift from a limited market reach to broader visibility underscores the importance of digital transformation for traditional businesses.

Furthermore, this research contributes to existing knowledge by emphasizing the role of localized marketing and cultural narratives in driving consumer engagement. The findings suggest that as SMEs adapt to emerging trends and consumer preferences, they not only enhance their own economic positions but also contribute to the overall resilience and sustainability of the local economy.

In conclusion, the research highlights the transformative potential of local online marketplaces for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in Wukirsari Village, Bantul, Yogyakarta.

By embracing digital platforms, SMEs can significantly enhance their visibility, reach broader consumer bases, and foster sustainable economic growth. The integration of local cultural narratives and data-driven insights into marketing strategies not only differentiates these businesses in a competitive landscape but also strengthens community ties and promotes cultural preservation. Furthermore, the collaborative efforts among SMEs, facilitated by community engagement programs, underscore the importance of collective strategies in driving local economic resilience.

As SMEs adapt to the evolving marketplace, their commitment to sustainability and community engagement positions them as vital contributors to the local economy, ultimately fostering a thriving and interconnected community. This research underscores the necessity for SMEs to leverage local online marketplaces, embrace data analytics, and prioritize cultural authenticity to thrive in a rapidly changing economic environment.

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