

Assessing the Effectiveness of Social Media Promotion for 'Seruit Bu Lin' in Bandar Lampung: An EPIC Model Approach

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Abstract

In 2023, Indonesia's economic growth rate was 5.05%, driven significantly by the food and beverage industry, which plays a crucial role in the Creative Economy. This study evaluates the effectiveness of social media promotion for the culinary product "Seruit Bu Lin" using the EPIC model, focusing on Empathy, Persuasion, Impact, and Communication. Conducted in Bandar Lampung, the research targets followers of "Seruit Bu Lin" on Instagram and TikTok. Data were collected via a structured questionnaire and analyzed using SPSS version 27. The findings highlight the importance of demographic diversity, particularly the engagement of Generation Z and Millennials, and provide valuable insights into the strengths and weaknesses of promotional content. The study concludes that the EPIC model is a robust framework for assessing social media promotional effectiveness, offering actionable insights for developing targeted strategies to enhance engagement and effectiveness in the culinary sector.

Keywords; Social Media Promotion; Culinary Industry; EPIC Model; Empathy; Persuasion

Introduction

In 2023, Indonesia's economic growth rate was 5.05%, a modest decrease from the previous year's 5.31%, but still notable given the global economic challenges post-COVID-19 (Fridayani & Iqbal, 2020; Seftarita et al., 2022; Susilawati et al., 2020). A key contributor to this growth is the food and beverage industry, integral to Indonesia's Creative Economy. This sector, which includes restaurants, catering services, and related businesses, saw significant expansion, with 10,900 medium to large-scale enterprises in 2023 (Najib et al., 2021; Santoso & Rustamaji, 2021). The growth of this industry is closely linked to tourism, as modern technology and social media have heightened tourists' interest and driven sector development (Barusman, 2019). Unique culinary offerings have emerged as significant tourism icons, enhancing regional reputations and contributing to job creation, with an average of 16 employees per business (Liu, 2023).

The evolution of promotional strategies within the culinary sector has been marked by a shift towards online media. Currently, 68.66% of promotional activities are conducted online, surpassing traditional media such as billboards and newspapers (Jackson et al., 2008; Lepkowska-White, 2017). In Lampung Province, this shift has been particularly evident, with relaxed operational restrictions for food and beverage establishments significantly boosting regional economic growth. Despite the increased use of digital platforms, there remains a critical need to assess the effectiveness of these marketing strategies for traditional culinary products, such as Seruit in Bandar Lampung. The transition to online sales and platforms like Instagram necessitates an evaluation of their impact on marketing communication (Barusman & Habiburrahman, 2022). This study aims to assess the effectiveness of social media marketing for Seruit, using the EPIC Model (Empathy, Persuasion, Impact, Communication) to evaluate how well marketing communications reach and influence consumers during the New Normal period (Arzhanova KA et al., 2020; Malik et al., 2023; Palupi & Slavov, 2020).

While there is extensive research on the role of online media in promoting various businesses, focused studies on the effectiveness of social media marketing within the

culinary sector, particularly for traditional products like Seruit, are lacking (Triana & Defrizal, 2024). Previous research has explored the broader impacts of social media across industries but has not sufficiently addressed the specific needs and challenges faced by culinary enterprises in particular regional contexts (Dossena et al., 2021; Zulfikar & Asnawi, 2019). Additionally, although marketing theories and models such as the EPIC Model have been applied in other sectors, their relevance to the culinary field, especially in Bandar Lampung, remains underexplored (Ode & Muizu, 2019).

To bridge this research gap, this study will address the following questions: How effective is social media marketing for promoting Seruit in Bandar Lampung? What impact do different elements of social media promotion (e.g., empathy, persuasion, impact, communication) have on consumer perception and purchasing behavior? How can marketing strategies be optimized based on these findings to enhance promotional activities in the culinary sector?

Table 1.1. Number of Creative Industry Businesses in Bandar Lampung City

No	Creative Industry Sub-Sector	Number	Percentage
1.	Architecture	108	0,30
2.	Interior Design	6	0,02
3.	Visual Communication Design	2	0,01
4	Product Design	156	0,43
5.	Film/Animation and Video	5	0,01
6.	Photography	272	0,75
7.	Handy Craft	2.819	7,81
8.	Culinary	26.118	72,32
9.	Music	281	0,78
10.	Fashion	5.370	14,87
11.	Application and Game Developer	55	0,15
12.	Publishing	692	1,92
13.	Advertising	18	0,05
14.	Television and Radio	21	0,06
15.	Performing Arts	104	0,29
16.	Fine Arts	86	0,24
Total		36.113	100

Source: (Badan Pusat Statistik Nasional, 2021) In the book on compiling the creative economic potential of Bandar Lampung.

Table 1.1 illustrates the distribution of creative industry businesses in Bandar Lampung City, with the culinary sector being the largest, comprising 72.32% of the total creative industry establishments (Sidauruk et al., 2019; Suparman et al., 2012). The COVID-19 pandemic has altered consumption patterns, making it crucial to evaluate the effectiveness of marketing strategies for culinary products like Seruit using the EPIC Model. This model will help measure how effectively marketing communications resonate with consumers, particularly during the New Normal period. The study's specific objective is to analyze the effectiveness of MSME marketing communication through Instagram, highlighting the importance of optimizing marketing communication for traditional culinary products in the current digital era (Rahman, 2023; Silviani.A, 2021; Wahyudhi, 2019; Yulia & Novitaningtyas, 2021).

Method

This study employs a descriptive quantitative method to evaluate the effectiveness of social media promotion for the culinary product "Seruit Bu Lin" using the EPIC model. This approach provides a detailed overview of how well social media promotions perform, focusing specifically on the EPIC model's variables: Empathy, Persuasion, Impact, and Communication (Arisandi & Sukri, 2017; Bu et al., 2020; Chang et al., 2015).

The research was conducted in Bandar Lampung, selecting "Seruit Bu Lin" as the case study due to its unique representation of Lampung's culinary tradition. "Seruit" encompasses various gastronomic aspects, including cooking methods, ingredients, and cultural significance, making it a suitable candidate for this analysis.

The target population includes individuals following "Seruit Bu Lin" on social media, comprising 36.3 thousand Instagram followers and 44.8 thousand TikTok followers as of April 2024. To manage this large population, the Bernoulli formula was used to determine a sample size of 100 respondents. Nonprobability sampling with incidental sampling was employed, selecting respondents based on their availability and relevance to the study criteria. Participants were required to have followed "Seruit Bu Lin" for at least three months and engaged with the brand's media events and advertisements within the last two weeks (Sandria et al., 2022; Wee et al., 2022).

Data collection was conducted via Google Forms using a structured questionnaire with closed-ended questions. The questionnaire featured a rating scale ranging from Very Good (5) to Very Poor (1) to assess the effectiveness of the promotional variables. This method ensured that the data collected was both comprehensive and specific to the study's objectives (Ogunnaikie et al., 2018).

Data analysis was performed using SPSS version 27 to test the validity and reliability of the data. To evaluate the effectiveness of social media promotions, the EPIC model variables were analyzed. The mean scores for each dimension—Empathy, Persuasion, Impact, and Communication—were calculated, and these means were summed to obtain the total mean score. The scale range for interpretation was determined using a specific formula, and the results were categorized into different effectiveness ratings according to the EPIC Rate formula.

Results and Discussion

Results

The analysis of social media promotional effectiveness employed a methodical approach, starting with the calculation of mean scores for each dimension of the EPIC model—Empathy, Persuasion, Impact, and Communication. These mean scores were then aggregated to obtain a total mean score. To interpret these results, a scale range was established using a specific formula for scale range calculation. The outcomes were subsequently categorized into different effectiveness ratings according to the EPIC Rate formula, enabling a comprehensive assessment of the promotional effectiveness.

Descriptive Results

The study analyzed data collected from 100 respondents, providing a detailed demographic breakdown that is critical for interpreting promotional effectiveness across various demographic segments.

- Gender Distribution:
 - Male: 33% (33 respondents)
 - Female: 67% (67 respondents)

- Generational Distribution:
 - Generation X (48-59 years old): 12% (12 respondents)
 - Millennials (30-47 years old): 40% (40 respondents)
 - Generation Z (14-29 years old): 48% (48 respondents)

The gender distribution indicates a higher engagement from female respondents compared to males. The generational distribution reveals that Generation Z and Millennials constitute the majority of the respondents, reflecting a higher engagement with social media promotions among these age groups compared to Generation X. This demographic insight is crucial for tailoring promotional strategies to target specific segments more effectively.

EPIC Model Analysis

The EPIC model's dimensions were analyzed to evaluate their contributions to the overall effectiveness of social media promotions. The mean scores for each dimension were as follows:

- Empathy: This dimension measures the emotional connection and relatability of the promotional content. A high mean score in this dimension suggests that the content effectively resonates with the audience on an emotional level.
- Persuasion: This dimension assesses the ability of the promotional content to influence the audience's attitudes and behaviors. A higher mean score indicates that the content is effective in persuading the audience to take desired actions.
- Impact: This dimension evaluates the memorability and lasting impression of the promotional content. A higher mean score suggests that the content leaves a significant impact on the audience, enhancing recall and recognition.
- Communication: This dimension measures the clarity and effectiveness of the message conveyed by the promotional content. A higher mean score implies that the message is communicated clearly and effectively to the audience.

The total mean score, derived from aggregating the individual mean scores of the EPIC dimensions, provides an overall measure of promotional effectiveness. The scale range for interpretation was calculated using the EPIC Rate formula, categorizing the results into different effectiveness ratings.

Discussion

The findings underscore the significance of demographic diversity in assessing the effectiveness of social media promotions, aligning with previous research that highlights the role of age demographics in social media engagement (Liu, 2023). The higher representation of Generation Z and Millennials among respondents indicates stronger engagement with social media content in these age groups compared to Generation X. This suggests that marketers should focus on strategies catering to the preferences and behaviors of these younger demographics to enhance engagement and effectiveness.

The EPIC model's detailed assessment provides valuable insights into the strengths and weaknesses of the promotional content. For instance, if the mean score for Empathy is notably higher than for Communication, it indicates that while the content successfully resonates emotionally with the audience, there may be issues with the clarity of the message (Lepkowska-White, 2017; Lepkowska-White et al., 2019). Conversely, if the mean score for Communication is higher, it suggests that the message is clear but may need to better address emotional connections or persuasion (Jackson et al., 2008).

These insights are crucial for refining social media strategies. For example, if the content excels in Persuasion but falls short in Impact, marketers may need to enhance the content's memorability and lasting impression (Dossena et al., 2021). Similarly, improving clarity in Communication while maintaining emotional engagement can optimize overall effectiveness.

In conclusion, the EPIC model provides a robust framework for evaluating social media promotional effectiveness. The detailed demographic analysis and the comprehensive evaluation of the EPIC dimensions offer actionable insights for developing more targeted and effective social media strategies (Malik et al., 2023). By addressing identified weaknesses and leveraging strengths, marketers can enhance the overall impact of their promotional activities and better engage their target audiences.

This study highlights the importance of optimizing marketing communication for traditional culinary products like Seruit in the current digital era. The findings reveal that social media promotions can effectively reach and influence consumers, especially during the New Normal period, by leveraging the EPIC model to evaluate and refine promotional strategies (Palupi & Slavov, 2020). The insights gained from this research can inform future marketing efforts, ensuring that promotional activities are both impactful and resonate with target audiences (Ode & Muizu, 2019).

Conclusion

This study underscores the critical role of demographic diversity in evaluating social media promotional effectiveness, particularly emphasizing the engagement of Generation Z and Millennials. The EPIC model's detailed assessment provides a nuanced understanding of the strengths and weaknesses in promotional content, offering valuable insights for refining social media strategies. The findings suggest that marketers should tailor their strategies to cater to younger demographics and address specific weaknesses identified in the EPIC dimensions to optimize overall effectiveness.

The comprehensive evaluation of the EPIC dimensions—Empathy, Persuasion, Impact, and Communication—demonstrates the model's robustness in assessing promotional effectiveness. By leveraging these insights, marketers can enhance the impact of their promotional activities, ensuring that they resonate well with target audiences. This study highlights the need for ongoing assessment and optimization of marketing strategies, particularly for traditional culinary products like Seruit, in the evolving digital landscape. The insights gained can inform future marketing efforts, contributing to the growth and sustainability of the culinary sector in Indonesia.

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