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## Media In the Tobacco Farming Community: An Axiological Study

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**ABSTRACT:** This paper examines the use of social media in tobacco trade management by farmers in Temanggung Regency. The main focus is on the use of the WhatsApp (WA) application by tobacco farmers to obtain price information from factories and to bargain with collectors. The method used is qualitative using several literature reviews. This research highlights how advances in technology and social media, especially the internet and WA, play a role in improving the welfare of tobacco farmers by making it easier to access information and transactions. This shows the importance of media literacy and the use of the internet in empowering farmers.

**KEYWORDS:** axiology, media, farming community, tobacco

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### INTRODUCTION

Axiology comes from the Greek words: axion (value) and logos (theory), which means theory of value (Salam, 1997). Sumantri (1996) states that axiology is a theory of value related to the usefulness and knowledge obtained. According to the Indonesian dictionary, axiology is the use of science for human life, the study of values, especially ethics.

Axiology is a branch of philosophy of science that discusses the purpose of science itself and how humans use this knowledge. So the essence that axiology wants to achieve is the essence of the benefits contained in knowledge. The object of axiological study concerns the issue of the useful value of knowledge because science must be adapted to cultural and moral values so that the useful value of knowledge can be felt by society. Axiology is a theory of values that pays attention to good and bad, right and wrong, as well as procedures and goals (mean and end).

In axiology there are two fundamental components, namely:

1. Ethics.

The term ethics comes from the Greek "ethos" which means custom. In another term, it is called moral which comes from the Latin "mores", the plural of mos which means custom. Ethics is a branch of axiological philosophy that discusses moral issues, behavior, norms and customs that apply to certain communities.

2. Aesthetics.

Aesthetics is a field of human study that questions the value of beauty. Beauty means that within everything there are elements that are arranged in an orderly and harmonious manner in a complete, holistic relationship. What this means is that a beautiful object must not only be harmonious and have a good pattern but must also have personality.

Media is the plural form of "medium" which comes from the Latin "medius" which means middle, while in Indonesian, the word "medium" can be interpreted as "between" or "medium" so that the meaning of media can refer to something that leads or continues information "message" between the source "message giver" and the message recipient. Media can be defined as a form and channel that can be used in a process of presenting information.

The existence of the internet has become something that cannot be separated from human life, including tobacco farmers. Like most farmers, tobacco farmers also have unique characteristics, namely living in rural or mountainous areas. People who live in mountains or rural areas usually have limited internet access. This is in accordance with the results of research by Octavianoor (2020) which states that internet access in terms of infrastructure availability is still minimal.

The above obstacles are one of the problems faced by tobacco farmers in mountainous areas, one of which is Temanggung Regency. However, this is not directly related to cellphone ownership. Based on the author's observations, almost all tobacco farmers in the Temanggung area have cellphones and use the social media WhatsApp (WA) for tobacco trading purposes.

The use of WA in tobacco farmers' trade is usually to obtain information on price changes from factories. So farmers who don't have WA will miss out on information and this will result in losses when haggling over prices with tobacco collectors or bosses.

## Media In the Tobacco Farming Community: An Axiological Study

Based on the previous description, it is important to study the role of social media, in this case WA, on the trade of tobacco farmers, especially in Temanggung Regency.

### METHOD

This paper was written using a qualitative approach, using a literature review. Some of the bibliography used as data is journal data and research results. Journals and research data are used as analysis material. Validity of the data using source triangulation.

### LITERATURE ANALYSIS AND REVIEW

The population profile of Indonesian farmers experienced progress in the early 90s. As stated by Margono Slamet (1995), in general the profile of the Indonesian farmer population has changed positively. Even though the population of farmers has become smaller, the quality has increased. This can be seen from the increasing level of education, greater awareness of technological advances, increasing expectations and needs, as well as their skills and knowledge in the agricultural sector.

However, with the arrival of the 1997 monetary crisis and the reform era that has been running from 1998 until now, Indonesian farmers are again experiencing a period of hardship. The causes of the decline in the level of welfare of farmers in Indonesia are triggered by many things, starting from government policies that are not pro-farmers to the socio-economic life of Indonesian society which has become individualistic.

The development of information technology today has encouraged the emergence of an information boom so that information has become very abundant, especially via the internet. By using the internet, someone can easily access various information without being limited by distance and time. Social media can be a useful tool for tobacco farmers to communicate, obtain information and expand their networks.

The use of media as a means of empowering the community, especially tobacco farmers, naturally follows developments with the times. In the new media era, the presence of the internet inevitably has to become the focus of attention for empowerment actors, because the internet has almost permeated all of people's lives. Starting from children to adults, from workers to officials are now exposed to new media technology, namely the internet.

Tobacco farmers, as part of society who use the internet in their daily activities, are getting used to asking about the price of tobacco on the market using the WA application. Likewise, empowering tobacco farmers, such as training in making organic fertilizer, planting training or safe sales mechanisms, can naturally be done via the internet.

Internet use among tobacco farmers is still limited to the use of social media and is not yet included in the media literacy category. Even though in January 2015, for the first time, the Governor of Central Java inaugurated a cyber village in Campurejo Village, Tretep Temanggung (Parwito, 2015), it has not been used optimally for empowerment. Therefore, it cannot be denied that empowerment through internet media is crucial and it is necessary to study how to empower rich and poor tobacco farming communities through internet literacy.

Based on World Bank data, Indonesia is one of the countries that experiences an increase in the number of internet users every year. In 2009 it was known that internet users in Indonesia were 16,429,083 users. In 2010 internet users in Indonesia increased to 26,193,906 users and in 2011 it almost doubled to 43,618,615 users (The World Bank, 2012). This proves that the progress of information technology in Indonesia is directly proportional to the development of information itself, where information technology such as the internet has become a medium for disseminating information that is able to reach the wider community.

The abundance of information through the presence of internet media cannot yet be used optimally according to the needs of its users. This is because there is a need for special skills in using internet media (media literacy) so as not to create obstacles in life amidst the flood of information exposure.

Literacy can be defined as a person's ability to search, find and use information obtained from various media sources so that it is hoped that it can fulfill one's needs to overcome gaps in one's knowledge.

Media literacy is the ability to access, analyze and create (Silverblatt, 2007). According to Ferrington (2006), media literacy is the ability to read film, television and visual media texts. The simple meaning of reading ability is understanding the source, communication technology, the code used, the resulting message, selection, interpretation and impact of the message (Rubin, 1998).

Media literacy skills, especially the internet, are now a competency that a person must have, especially in exploring information on the internet. A person who has media literacy skills automatically empowers himself to be able to obtain correct information from a lot of information that can be misleading as well as achieving the goal of obtaining and using the information he obtains.

Internet media literacy, when connected with efforts to empower tobacco farmers as stated at the beginning, allows for an increase in the potential ability of tobacco farmers to become more independent and prosperous compared to the current empowerment. Logically, if tobacco farmers have adequate internet literacy, then they will be able to master information related to tobacco (both in terms of crops and trade). So that in cultivating tobacco plants farmers will be more precise and can increase the productivity of their plants, and when harvesting or selling farmers can access information both about prices and regarding the

## Media In the Tobacco Farming Community: An Axiological Study

existence of sub graders, in this case tobacco buyers, more quickly and precisely, and in the end the prosperity and independence of farmers will increase.

### CLOSING

Utilization of the internet as a development medium has become common practice, considering the widespread application of the internet in all walks of life. The use of social media in tobacco trading by tobacco farmers is quite helpful in expanding the network so that there are many tobacco price references and prices cannot be arbitrarily determined by collectors. This is because farmers can know the basic price from the factory which increases every time during the tobacco harvest season.

With technology and information that benefits farmers, it provides more value so that it maximizes farmers' tobacco price determination, which ultimately results in the welfare of tobacco farmers increasing along with the ease with which they can obtain information regarding tobacco prices.

In practice WA can be used by tobacco farmers in several concrete ways . The following are several examples of concrete use of WA in tobacco farmer businesses:

1. Order agricultural materials: Tobacco farmers can use WA to order agricultural materials such as seeds, fertilizer, pesticides or agricultural equipment. They can contact suppliers or farm shops via WA messages, send order lists, and arrange delivery or pick-up of goods.
2. Consultation with agricultural experts : If tobacco farmers face problems or challenges in farming, they can use WhatsApp to consult with agricultural experts. By sending a picture or description of the problem via WA message, farmers can ask for advice and guidance from agricultural experts who can provide solutions or suggestions for overcoming the problem.
3. growth monitoring : Tobacco farmers can use WA to monitor the growth of their plants by sharing photos or videos of plants via messages. They can discuss plant progress with group members or agricultural experts, who can provide input on plant health, pest control , and care recommendations.
4. Price and market updates: WA can be used to receive tobacco price updates in local or regional markets. Tobacco farmers can join WA groups involving tobacco traders or processing factories, where price and market demand updates can be provided in real-time.
5. Exchange of information about best practices: Tobacco farmers can form WA groups with other farmers to exchange information about best practices in growing tobacco. They can share experiences, successful techniques, or effective management strategies, thereby learning from each other and increasing their productivity.
6. Marketing and selling products: WA can be used as a communication channel to market and sell tobacco products. Tobacco farmers can send product images, descriptions and prices via WhatsApp messages to potential buyers. They can also arrange product delivery or pickup by coordinating via WA.

It is important to note that social media must be used wisely and critically. Tobacco farmers need to verify and validate the information they obtain through social media, as well as ensure that they comply with the guidelines and regulations related to agriculture and tobacco that apply in the region, in this case the Temanggung Regency area.

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