

MSME STRATEGY ANALYSIS OF DAPURNYA SUBUR'S SAMBAL BUSINESS EXPANSION TO ASIA

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University Surabaya, Indonesia^{1,2}firdausdafi55@gmail.com, rr.nurika@uinsby.ac.id**Abstract**

This study aims to analyze the internationalization strategy employed by Dapurnya Subur in expanding its sambal products into Asian markets. This study employs a descriptive qualitative method, with data collected through interviews and documentation. The findings show that Dapurnya Subur's internationalization process has developed gradually through the use of social media, relationships with buyers, and flexible business adaptation strategies. Instagram is used not only as a promotional medium but also as a means of building communication and trust with overseas consumers and buyers through simple and authentic content. Relationships with buyers contribute to maintaining repeat orders, obtaining information about market needs, and developing business networks. In addition, Dapurnya Subur adapts its products by adjusting flavor levels, packaging, and product variations according to customer needs. These findings indicate that MSME internationalization can develop through business experience, market learning, continuous communication, and adaptability. From the perspective of the Uppsala Model, this process demonstrates that Dapurnya Subur's international market knowledge develops through experience and direct involvement in international business activities.

Keywords: *MSME internationalization; market expansion; social media; buyer relationships; Uppsala Model*

Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis strategi internasionalisasi yang dilakukan Dapurnya Subur dalam memperluas pasar produk sambal ke negara-negara Asia. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode kualitatif deskriptif dengan pengumpulan data melalui wawancara dan dokumentasi. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa proses internasionalisasi Dapurnya Subur berkembang secara bertahap melalui pemanfaatan media sosial, hubungan dengan buyer, dan strategi adaptasi bisnis yang fleksibel. Instagram tidak hanya digunakan sebagai media promosi, tetapi juga sebagai sarana membangun komunikasi dan kepercayaan dengan konsumen dan buyer luar negeri melalui konten yang sederhana dan autentik. Hubungan dengan buyer berperan dalam mempertahankan pesanan, memperoleh informasi mengenai kebutuhan pasar, serta mengembangkan jaringan bisnis. Selain itu, Dapurnya Subur melakukan adaptasi produk melalui penyesuaian tingkat rasa, kemasan, dan variasi produk sesuai kebutuhan pelanggan. Temuan tersebut menunjukkan bahwa internasionalisasi UMKM dapat berkembang melalui pengalaman bisnis, pembelajaran pasar, komunikasi yang berkelanjutan,

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dan kemampuan beradaptasi. Dalam perspektif Uppsala Model, proses tersebut menunjukkan bahwa pengetahuan pasar internasional Dapurnya Subur berkembang melalui pengalaman dan keterlibatan langsung dalam aktivitas bisnis internasional.

Kata kunci: internasionalisasi UMKM; ekspansi pasar; media sosial; hubungan buyer; Uppsala Model

1. INTRODUCTION

Introduction : The development of economic globalization has prompted significant changes in the dynamics of international trade in various countries. Under these conditions, international trade is no longer only dominated by large scale multinational companies, but also begins to involve micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSME) as part of global economic activities. The development of digital technology has also accelerated the involvement of MSME in cross border trade because it allows business actors to reach international markets more easily than before. The OECD explains that globalization and digitalization open up new opportunities for MSME to connect with international trade chains through the use of digital technology and wider market connectivity (Chundu et al., 2017).

Advances in digital technology have changed trade patterns and business strategies in various business sectors. In the context of MSME, the use of digital technology is becoming increasingly important because it can help expand market access at a relatively lower cost than conventional marketing methods. Saragih Research. shows that digital marketing provides opportunities for MSME to increase product visibility and expand market access, including to international markets. Therefore, the development of economic digitalization indirectly encourages the emergence of new opportunities for MSME to be involved in international trade activities (Lenti Susana Saragih et al., 2024)

In Indonesia, MSME have a great contribution to the national economy, both in the absorption of labor and the growth of domestic businesses. However, although the number of MSME in Indonesia is very large, the sector's contribution to national export activities is still relatively low. Most MSME in Indonesia are still oriented towards the domestic market and have not been able to take advantage of international trade opportunities optimally.

The internationalization of MSME is influenced by business capability, market knowledge, adaptability, and international business networks. Ardiyanti and Kahfi explained that understanding of exports, the ability to build business networks, and access to international markets are important factors that determine the success of MSME exports in Indonesia (Ardiyanti & Kahfi, 2023). This shows that the internationalization of MSME is not only related to the ability to sell products abroad, but also concerns the readiness of business actors to face global trade dynamics that are more complex than the domestic market.

One of the main challenges that MSME often face in export activities is limited access to international business networks. Unlike large companies that generally have a more established distribution system and market relations, most MSME still have difficulties in building relationships with buyers, distributors, and foreign business partners. to gain access to global. Tambunan explained that many MSME in Indonesia are still experiencing difficulties in maintaining export activities even though they have received institutional support, especially due to weak marketing capacity and limited international business networks (Tambunan, 2019).

In addition to market access issues, MSME also face challenges in maintaining the sustainability of business relationships with foreign buyers. Many MSME are able to export in the early stages, but have difficulty maintaining market demand and building long term business relationships. In international trade, the success of a business depends not only on the quality of the product, but also on the ability to build trust and sustainable business relationships with overseas business partners.

Sedyastuti's research shows that the competitiveness of Indonesian MSME in the global market is still influenced by limited technological mastery, low access to market information, and weak international market development capabilities (Sedyastuti, 2018). This shows that the involvement of MSME in export activities cannot be understood as a simple process, but as a process that requires comprehensive business readiness.

On the other hand, the development of social media has begun to change the pattern of internationalization of MSME in Indonesia. Social media has developed into an instrument for MSME to promote products and build relationships with consumers and buyers. The use of digital platforms allows business actors to build direct interactions without having to go through complex distribution mechanisms. Pradiani's research shows that the use of social media in marketing activities has a significant influence on increasing market reach and the competitiveness of MSME (Pradiani, 2018). However, most of the use of digital marketing in MSME still focuses on product promotion and increasing sales, while the use of social media as a means of building international business relationships is still relatively limited.

This phenomenon can be seen in the business practices of Dapurnya Subur, a culinary MSME from Pakisaji, Malang Regency engaged in the production of chili sauce and processed foods. The business owned by Noviana Rahmawati has managed to reach the international market in several Asian countries such as Singapore, Hong Kong, Taiwan, and Malaysia. The export activities of the Subur Dapurnya Subur are interesting to study because they develop through a relatively simple business approach compared to the general pattern of internationalization of MSME in Indonesia. In its development, Dapurnya Subur not only seeks to expand the international market, but also maintains business relationships with foreign buyers that have been established during the export process.

Unlike most MSME that rely on formal branding, institutional support, and intensive digital marketing strategies, Dapurnya Subur shows a more flexible and hands on experience based approach to carrying out international business activities. The strategy implemented emphasizes more on the sustainability of business relationships, the ability to adapt to market needs, and the building of trust with foreign buyers. The use of social media by Dapurnya Subur also shows a different approach compared to the digital marketing pattern of MSME in general. While most MSME use social media to build a product's visual image intensively, Dapurnya Subur actually emphasizes more on presenting simple and authentic content to build consumer trust. The approach shows that digital marketing strategies are not always oriented towards increasing social media engagement alone, but can also be used to strengthen business relationships and maintain the sustainability of international markets.

Based on this background, the development of the Dapurnya Subur business that is able to reach the international market is an interesting phenomenon to be studied further, especially in seeing how local businesses can expand the market through flexible strategies and based on business relationships. Therefore, this study seeks to understand the process of business internationalization carried out by Dapurnya Subur's in expanding the international market. Research on the internationalization of MSME and market expansion strategies through digital media has developed quite significantly in recent years. Most studies show that digital marketing has an important role in increasing the competitiveness and expansion of the MSME

market. Research by Bayu Bagas Hapsoro, Palupiningdyah, and Achmad Slamet shows that the use of digital marketing is able to increase MSME income through expanding market reach and increasing interaction with consumers (Hapsoro et al., 2019). Rostiana's research also explains that the use of digital media provides opportunities for MSME to strengthen business marketing and improve competitiveness in the midst of increasingly competitive market competition (Rostiana et al., 2025).

However, most previous research has focused on digital marketing as an instrument for promotion, increasing sales, and developing business competitiveness in general. Research on the internationalization of MSME also discusses more formal approaches such as export training, institutional support, business capacity building, and the development of structured business networks. Meanwhile, discussions on how MSME can sustain international market expansion through informal business relationships, business strategy flexibility, and trust based interactions with overseas buyers are still relatively limited.

In fact, in practice, there are MSME that are able to maintain the existence of the international market through a simpler and more flexible approach. These strategies can be in the form of personal communication with buyers, adjusting product distribution based on market needs, and using social media authentically to build long term business relationships. This condition shows that the internationalization of MSME does not always take place through formal structured mechanisms, but can also develop through practical experience and adaptive business relationships.

Based on these conditions, this study aims to analyze the strategies used by Dapurnya Subur in expanding the market to Asian countries in 2021. This research also aims to understand how the flexibility of business strategies and the development of business relationships with foreign buyers contribute to the sustainability of the expansion of the international market of Dapurnya Subur.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

1. Internationalization and MSME Market Expansion

MSME internationalization involves the process of expanding business activities from domestic to international markets. This process is influenced by firm capabilities, export readiness, market knowledge, and business networks. In the Indonesian context, the internationalization of small and medium enterprises is supported by factors related to firm capabilities and access to international business networks (Sari et al., 2021). Furthermore, marketing, innovation, and networking capabilities contribute to the export performance of small firms (Gupta & Chauhan, 2021). Business and social networks also provide SMEs with knowledge, information, and opportunities that support internationalization, particularly in emerging markets (Bai et al., 2021). Business Therefore, MSME internationalization involves not only the ability to export products but also the capabilities and networks developed by the business.

2. Internationalization Strategies and MSME Market Development

The internationalization process also requires appropriate strategies to enter and develop foreign markets. Firm capabilities can influence internationalization orientation and export intention, indicating the importance of internal readiness in developing international business activities (Wibisono & Sitorus, 2021). In addition, knowledge of foreign market entry can help

SMEs select international markets and develop network capabilities that support their international performance (Zahra et al., 2022). The use of social media and digital platforms can further strengthen SMEs' international orientation by providing access to information and international business interaction (Lee et al., 2022). Thus, MSME internationalization strategies involve the combination of internal capabilities, foreign market knowledge, networking, and digital experience.

3. Digitalization and MSME Expansion into International Markets

Digitalization has created new opportunities for MSMEs to expand their businesses into international markets. Research on Indonesian creative-industry SMEs demonstrates that export-oriented businesses can develop internationalization strategies based on their business characteristics and market conditions (Pratama et al., 2022). Social media also enables small businesses to communicate with international consumers and develop opportunities beyond domestic markets (Fonseca et al., 2023). Furthermore, digitalization can facilitate SME participation in international trade by improving access to information and foreign markets (Añón Higón & Bonvin, 2024). In Indonesia, digital marketing and digital leadership have also been identified as important components of export-based MSME internationalization strategies (Mala et al., 2024). These studies indicate that digitalization can function not only as a promotional tool but also as part of a broader strategy for international market expansion.

3. RESEARCH METHODS

Research Methods: This study uses a qualitative research method with a descriptive approach and a case study research type. The qualitative approach is used because this research aims to deeply understand the business internationalization strategy carried out by Dapurnya Subur in expanding the international market. This research does not focus on statistical measurement, but on understanding business processes, experiences, and strategies. A descriptive approach is used to systematically describe the business activities, marketing strategies, and business relationships built by Dapurnya Subur's in product export activities (Fadli, 2021). Meanwhile, the case study was chosen because the research only focused on one research object, namely Dapurnya Subur, so that it allowed the researcher to explore the phenomenon in more depth (Yin, 2018).

The focus of this research is directed at three main aspects. First, the use of social media as a means of marketing and business communication with international consumers and buyers. Second, the flexibility of business strategies in adapting products, marketing, and international market needs. Third, business relationships with buyers are an important part of expanding the market network and maintaining export activities. The three focuses were chosen because they are directly related to the process of internationalization of the Dapurnya Subur business. The data sources in this study consist of primary data and secondary data (Nuridin & Sri Hartati, 2019). Primary data was obtained through interviews with business owners of Dapurnya Subur as the main informant of the study. Business owners are chosen because they have direct knowledge and experience of the business development process, marketing strategies, export activities, and business relationships with international buyers. In addition to interviews, primary data was also obtained through observation of business activities and social media of Dapurnya Subur. Observations were made to see firsthand how the business uses social media as a means of marketing and builds interaction with consumers and buyers.

Secondary data was obtained through literature studies in the form of scientific journals, academic articles, official news, and various other written sources related to the internationalization of MSME, digital marketing, and export strategies of small and medium enterprises. Secondary data are used to support analysis and strengthen understanding of research phenomena.

The data collection techniques in this study were carried out through interviews, observations, and documentation. Interviews were conducted with the business owners of Dapurnya Subur to obtain information about business history, marketing strategies, export experience, and business relationships with international buyers. Observations were carried out by observing social media marketing activities, interactions with buyers, production processes, and business branding activities. The researchers also observed how Dapurnya Subur built marketing simply through social media and word of mouth promotion.

The documentation technique is carried out by collecting various supporting documents such as product photos, business photos, production process photos, export documentation, product catalogs, and social media uploads related to business marketing activities. Documentation is used to strengthen the data from interviews and observations.

The data analysis technique in this study uses the Miles and Huberman interactive analysis model which consists of data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing (Umrati & Wijaya, 2020). At the data reduction stage, the researcher selects and simplifies the data obtained from interviews, observations, and documentation according to the focus of the research. Furthermore, the data is presented in the form of a descriptive description to make it easier to understand and analyze. At this stage, the researcher identified key themes such as social media strategy, business flexibility, and business relationships with international buyers. The last stage is drawing conclusions to understand the patterns and relationships between phenomena found during the study.

To maintain the validity of the data, this study uses the source triangulation technique. Triangulation is carried out by comparing data from interviews, observations, and business documentation. This technique is used to ensure that the data obtained is consistent and in accordance with conditions in the field so that the research results have a stronger level of credibility (Luthfiyanti & Murhayati, 2024).

Conceptual Framework

This research uses the concept of business internationalization as the main foundation in understanding the process of market expansion carried out by Dapurnya Subur until reaching the international market. Internationalization can be understood as a process when a business expands its business activities from the domestic market to foreign markets through various strategies, business relationships, and adaptation to the needs of the international market. In the context of small and medium businesses, internationalization is not always carried out through large expansion or international investment, but can start from simple export activities, the use of social media, as well as building business relationships with foreign buyers. The concept of internationalization is used in this study because it is in accordance with the phenomenon experienced by Dapurnya Subur as a local business that is able to reach the international market through a flexible business strategy and based on business relationships.

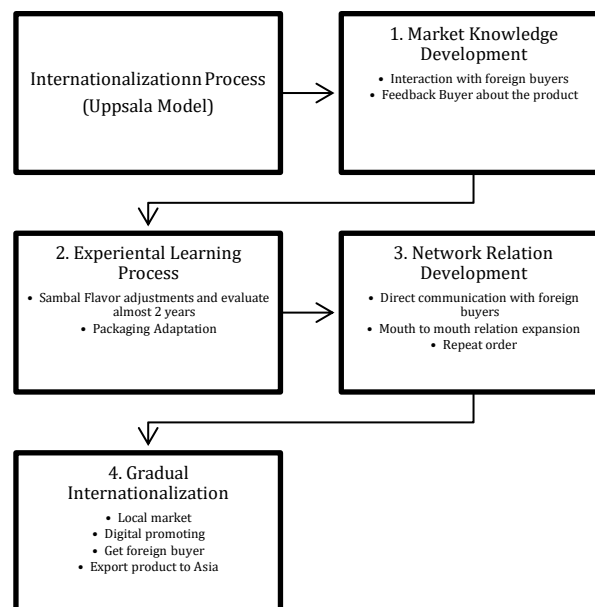
The process of business internationalization in this study is also associated with the Uppsala Model developed by Jan Johanson and Jan Erik Vahlne. This model explains that business internationalization generally takes place gradually based on the company's experience, market knowledge, and business network. In the Uppsala Model, the company initially tends to enter the international market with low risk and limited involvement, then

slowly increase its international activities as it gains experience and understanding of foreign markets. This model emphasizes the importance of experiential learning or experiential learning as the main factor in the process of business internationalization (Johanson & Vahlne, 1977).

Uppsala The relevant model is used in this study because the business development process of Dapurnya Subur shows a pattern of internationalization that takes place gradually. Initially, the business only focused on domestic marketing with a limited business scale. However, through business experience, the use of social media, and relationships with foreign buyers, Dapurnya Subur began to expand its market reach to several countries in the Asian region. This process shows that business internationalization does not occur instantaneously, but develops through business experience and the ability of businesses to build relationships with international markets.

Uppsala Model also emphasizes the importance of market knowledge in supporting the success of business internationalization. In this study, market knowledge can be seen from the ability of Dapurnya Subur to understand the needs of foreign consumers, adjust marketing strategies, and utilize social media as a means of communication and product promotion. Social media is not only used as a marketing tool, but also as a means to obtain market information, build interaction with consumers, and expand business networks with international buyers. This condition shows that the development of digital technology has an influence on the business internationalization process which previously tended to take place conventionally.

Figure 1. Application of the concept to the Dapurnya Subur case study



Source : Analyze by Author From Uppsala Model

4. RESULT & DISCUSS

Result & Discuss : Dapurnya Subur is a culinary business engaged in the production of chili sauce and processed foods that is developing in Malang Regency. Based on the results of interviews with the owner, this business started from a home scale with marketing that is still

simple and limited to the surrounding environment. In the early stages, marketing is done through customer recommendations and word of mouth promotion. The products sold were initially only marketed to local consumers with a limited amount of production. The owner explained that business development does not occur quickly, but through a process that takes place gradually. In the early days of the business, the main focus was more directed to developing the taste of chili sauce and maintaining product quality so that it could be accepted by consumers. In addition, the business also tries to maintain the consistency of taste even though production is carried out on a home scale. According to the owner, maintaining the quality of taste is one of the main challenges because chili sauce products are highly dependent on the composition of ingredients and consumer tastes.

In its development, Dapurnya Subur began to experience an increase in demand from customers. This increase has made businesses start to expand marketing through social media, especially Instagram. The use of social media is done simply by uploading photos of products, production activities, and daily business activities on Instagram @dapurnyasubur. The owner explained that social media was initially only used to introduce products to local customers, but over time began to help businesses reach a wider range of consumers.

In addition to the development of digital marketing, businesses have also begun to establish communication with buyers from outside the region to abroad. Based on the results of the interview, export activities were not planned from the beginning of the establishment of the business. Export opportunities develop through communication with buyers who are interested in the chili products marketed. This condition shows that the development of the international market of the business takes place gradually and develops from the business relationships built during marketing activities. The owner explained that the export destination country is still in the Asian region. Export activities are carried out based on buyer demand and adjust the production capabilities of the business. In some shipping activities, buyers help the distribution process of goods through freight forwarding services. The assistance helps businesses in carrying out export activities even though they do not have a large international distribution system.

The development of the Dapurnya Subur business shows that small businesses can develop towards the international market through a flexible and experience based approach. Export activities are not only influenced by production capacity, but also by the ability of businesses to build business relationships and utilize social media. In addition, the owner explained that business development is also influenced by the ability to adjust products to market needs. During the course of running the business, Dapurnya Subur made several changes to the chili sauce recipe and product adjustments based on customer input. The adjustment was made to maintain customer satisfaction and increase market acceptance.

In the observation of the research, the business environment of the Dapurnya Subur is still shows quite strong characteristics of a home business. Production activities are carried out simply but still pay attention to the cleanliness and quality of materials. Chili sauce products are processed directly by the business team with the supervision of the owner. The results of the study show that the development of Dapurnya Subur is not only influenced by production factors, but also by the ability of the business to maintain communication with customers and buyers. The owner explained that a good relationship with customers helps businesses get promotions indirectly through consumer recommendations.

In addition, business flexibility is also one of the important factors in business development. Dapurnya Subur is able to adjust products, packaging, and marketing strategies based on market needs. This ability helps businesses maintain business sustainability despite facing various challenges in production and marketing activities.

1. Utilization of Social Media in Marketing

Based on the results of research observations, Instagram is one of the main media used by Dapurnya Subur in carrying out marketing activities. The business's Instagram account is used to publish chili sauce products, show the production process, packaging documentation, product delivery activities, and various daily business activities. The uploaded content does not use overly formal visual concepts and tends to be made simple.

Owners prioritize the concept principle of "raw content". This concept means that content is created naturally without too many editing processes or complex visual settings. The content uploaded shows the actual business conditions, including the atmosphere of the production kitchen, the chili sauce cooking process, and product packaging activities. According to the owner, the use of the raw content concept is carried out because it is considered more able to build closeness with customers. Natural looking content makes customers feel closer to the business and see the production process firsthand. In addition, this approach is also considered easier to do than creating formal promotional content that requires more costs and production processes.

In the results of observations, Dapurnya Subur's Instagram upload shows daily business activities consistently. The published content contains not only product promotions, but also documentation of production activities and interactions with customers. This shows that social media is used not only as a means of sales, but also as a medium of communication.

In some cases, customers provide input on product tastes, packaging, and menu variations through social media. The information is then used by businesses as evaluation material to make product adjustments. This condition shows that social media helps businesses understand market needs more openly. The owner also explained that some buyers knew about chili sauce products through social media and previous customer recommendations. This shows that social media has an important role in expanding the reach of the business market. Instagram helps businesses show products to consumers outside the region or even abroad without having to use large promotional costs.

In addition, social media helps businesses build a closer and more personal image with customers. Content that is created naturally shows the business conditions in real life so that customers can see production activities directly. This approach helps increase customer trust in the products being marketed. In the observation of the research, the Instagram account of Dapurnya Subur also showed a more flexible marketing pattern than large companies that used a formal branding concept. Published content does not always use professional design, but it is still able to attract customers' attention because it shows business activities authentically. The owner explained that consistency is one of the important factors in using social media. Even though the content is made simply, businesses still actively try to upload business activities so that customers continue to see the development of products and business activities.

The use of social media also helps businesses build long term relationships with customers. Regular interactions make customers feel closer to the business and make it easier to give recommendations to others.

Through Instagram, businesses can reach potential buyers who previously did not know the Dapurnya Subur sambal product. This condition shows that digital platforms have a considerable influence on the development of small businesses. In the observation results, social media is not only used to show the final product, but also the process behind chili sauce production. This shows that Dapurnya Subur prioritizes openness and authenticity in building communication with customers. The use of raw content also shows that the marketing strategy of the business does not rely too much on formal visual concepts. Owners prioritize content that is easy to create but still able to show the quality of products and business activities.

2. Business Relationship with Buyer

Based on the results of research interviews, business relations with buyers are one of the important factors in the development of export activities of Dapurnya Subur. The relationship with the buyer develops through communication that takes place in a personal and flexible manner. The owner explained that the communication is not only related to product purchase transactions, but also includes discussions about market needs, menu variations, product quality, and the distribution process of goods.

In some export activities, buyers provide various inputs regarding the chili sauce products that are marketed. The input is related to the level of spiciness, the taste of the chili sauce, the type of packaging, and the needs of consumers in the destination country. The information provided by the buyer then becomes a business consideration in making product adjustments. In addition, buyers also help businesses understand international product distribution patterns. Based on the results of the interview, several product delivery activities were assisted by buyers through the provision of freight forwarding services. The assistance simplifies the process of distributing goods and helps businesses carry out export activities more efficiently.

The owner explained that the relationship with the buyer is built through communication that takes place gradually. At first, communication was only concerned with the purchase of a certain quantity of products. However, over time, the relationship developed into a more sustainable cooperation. In some cases, buyers provide recommendations to other customers to help businesses obtain new business relationships. This condition shows that a good relationship with buyers has an influence on the development of the business market network. The relationship with the buyer also helps businesses maintain repeat orders. The owner said that maintaining communication and product quality is an important factor in maintaining buyer trust. Therefore, efforts are trying to maintain good cooperative relations through regular communication. In research observations, the business relationships built by Dapurnya Subur tend to take place informally but still professionally. Communication is done directly without overly complex business procedures. This condition shows that MSME export activities can develop through more flexible business relationships.

The owner also explained that several additional menus are made based on customer and buyer requests. The addition of the menu is carried out to adjust market needs and expand the selection of products offered. In the results of the study, the relationship between business and buyers shows that export activities are not only influenced by production capacity, but also by the ability of businesses to build communication and maintain cooperative relationships. Communication that takes place in a personal way helps businesses get direct input on market needs. In addition, a good relationship with buyers also helps businesses face various distribution and marketing constraints. The business relationships established show that small business internationalization activities develop through mutually supportive cooperative relationships. Buyers not only play the role of product buyers, but also help businesses understand the market and expand distribution opportunities.

The owner also explained that maintaining buyer trust is one of the business priorities. Therefore, efforts to maintain product quality and maintain consistent communication.

3. Product Adaptation Strategy

Based on the results of the research, the product adaptation process is one of the important parts in the development of export activities of Dapurnya Subur. The owner explained that in the early stages of international marketing, chili sauce products had received several complaints related to taste. Differences in consumer tastes are the main challenge when businesses begin to enter foreign markets. To overcome this condition, businesses make various adjustments to the chili sauce recipes marketed. The owner explained that the recipe trial and

error process lasted for approximately two years until finding a flavor composition that was considered more in line with market needs. Taste adjustments are made based on sales experience and input from buyers and customers. In some cases, businesses reduce or adjust the level of spiciness to make it more acceptable to certain consumers. The process is carried out in stages while continuing to maintain the flavor character of the chili sauce that is the identity of the product. The owner explained that maintaining a balance between product identity and market needs is one of the main challenges in the adaptation process. The business tries to maintain the characteristics of the chili sauce, but still makes adjustments so that the product can be accepted by international consumers.

In addition to taste adjustment, business flexibility can also be seen from the strategy of using product packaging. The Dapurnya Subur does not always use the logo on the packaging of the chili sauce that is marketed. According to the owner, the decision was made to adjust buyer needs and facilitate the distribution of products in certain markets. In some export activities, buyers have their own needs related to the shape of the packaging. Therefore, businesses choose to use more flexible packaging instead of maintaining rigid formal branding. A strategy without a logo shows that businesses prioritize market adjustment over the visual identity of the product. The owner explained that the main focus of the business is to ensure that the product can be received and distributed more easily.

In the observation of the research, the business production process is still carried out simply but is quite flexible in making product adjustments. Production activities do not use a large industrial system so that recipe changes and menu variations can be done more quickly. The results of the study show that business experience has a great influence on product adaptability. Various customer complaints and feedback are used as evaluation materials to improve product quality.

The owner explained that the adaptation process is not always easy because each market has different consumer preferences. However, through business experience and communication with buyers, businesses begin to understand the patterns of market needs better.

Discussion Analysis

Based on the results of the research, the development of Dapurnya Subur shows that there is a process of business internationalization that takes place gradually. Export activities carried out by businesses do not develop through the strategy of large companies with a formal international system, but develop from business experience, business relations, and the use of social media.

The concept of internationalization is described by Welch and Luostarinen as the process of gradually increasing the involvement of companies in international activities (Welch & Luostarinen, 1988). In the context of this study, the international involvement of Dapurnya Subur can be seen from the change in business that initially only focused on the local market and then began to reach foreign buyers through export activities. The results of the study show that social media is not only used for promotion, but also helps build communication with customers and buyers. This shows that digital developments have a great influence on the pattern of internationalization of MSME.

Digital platforms allow MSME to build direct communication with consumers and introduce products more openly (Keyjia et al., 2024). In the case of Dapurnya Subur, the use of social media helps businesses acquire buyers and expand business relationships. Buyers who are interested in chili sauce products then build communication with businesses until finally conducting export cooperation. This shows that business internationalization develops through a combination of digital communication and business relations. In addition to social media, relationships with buyers also have an important role in the development of business

internationalization. The results of the study show that buyers not only play the role of buyers of products, but also help businesses understand the needs of the international market. Information about the taste of chili sauce, the level of spiciness, and the shape of the packaging is obtained through communication with buyers. In some export activities, buyers also help provide freight forwarding to support product distribution. Buyer relationships function as a source of market knowledge and reduce uncertainty in foreign markets, which aligns with the Uppsala Model.

Dapurnya Subur does not directly export large quantities, but develops according to experience and business ability. Export activities start from a certain amount of buyer demand and then develop slowly. This condition is in accordance with the concept of gradual internationalization which explains that the company will increase its international involvement according to its market experience. Business experience helps businesses understand the needs of international markets while reducing uncertainty in export activities.

The internationalization of Dapurnya Subur business also shows that flexibility is one of the important factors in the development of the international market. Businesses are able to adjust marketing strategies, packaging, and products according to buyer needs. In this study, flexibility can be seen from the business decision not to always use logos on product packaging. The strategy shows that businesses prioritize market adjustment rather than maintaining a formal visual identity. The internationalization characteristics of Dapurnya Subur show that MSME have a different development pattern than large companies.

In addition, personal relationships with buyers are one of the main strengths in small business export activities. Direct communication helps businesses understand market needs faster. In research on the internationalization of MSME, business relations are explained as one of the important factors that help businesses gain access to international markets. A good relationship with buyers helps MSME understand consumer needs while expanding the product distribution network. In the case of Dapurnya Subur, the relationship with the buyer helps the business obtain market information and maintain the sustainability of the cooperation. Repeat orders made by buyers show that the business relationship established has an influence on the sustainability of export activities. Raw content demonstrates that MSME can build international market relationships without relying on formal branding strategies.

The Learning and Adaptation Process in the Perspective of the Uppsala Model

The internationalization process of the Dapurnya Subur can be analyzed using the Uppsala Model developed by Jan Johanson and Jan Erik Vahlne. This model explains that the internationalization of companies takes place gradually through a process of learning and improvement of international market experience (Johanson & Vahlne, 1977). In the Uppsala Model, business experience has an important role in helping companies understand international markets. Knowledge of the market is not acquired instantly, but develops through first hand experience during international business activities. In this study, the business learning process can be seen from the various experiences faced by Dapurnya Subur while carrying out export activities. One of the important experiences found was the existence of complaints in the early stages of international marketing.

The owner explained that sambal products had received a less appropriate response from several foreign consumers due to differences in taste preferences. This condition is a challenge for businesses because chili sauce products have a fairly strong taste character. To overcome this condition, the business makes various adjustments to the chili sauce recipe through a trial and error process that lasts for approximately two years. Adjustments are made in stages based on sales experience and input from buyers. In the perspective of the Uppsala Model, this condition shows the existence of experiential learning or learning based on direct experience.

Johanson and Vahlne explained that companies acquire market knowledge through business activities that are carried out continuously (Johanson & Vahlne, 2009).

In the case of Dapurnya Subur, the experience of dealing with taste complaints helps businesses understand the needs of international consumers. The information obtained from the buyer is then used to make product adjustments to better suit the market. The learning process shows that internationalization is not only related to the ability to sell products abroad, but also the ability to understand international consumer preferences. In addition to adjusting taste, the learning process can also be seen from distribution strategies and communication with buyers. The owner explained that the experience of running export activities helps businesses understand more effective cooperation patterns.

The relationship with the buyer provides information about the most suitable packaging form, specific market needs, and distribution strategies that are considered more efficient. This information helps businesses make adjustments to their business strategy. In the Uppsala Model, business relationships have an important role in reducing the uncertainty of international markets. The higher the experience and market relations the company has, the greater the ability of the business to understand the conditions of the foreign market. The results of the study show that business experience helps Dapurnya Subur reduce various obstacles in export activities. In the early stages, businesses still have difficulty understanding the needs of international consumers. However, through communication with buyers and market experience, businesses begin to understand consumer demand patterns.

Social media also helps the business learning process. Interacting with customers through Instagram allows businesses to get market responses faster than conventional marketing patterns. Customer comments and direct message communication help businesses understand consumer responses to the products being marketed. The information is then used as evaluation material to improve product quality.

Nonetheless, hands on experience remains a major factor in the international business learning process. Trial and error of chili sauce recipes shows that market knowledge is gained through real experience in carrying out export activities. The business learning process can also be seen from the ability to adjust marketing strategies. At first, businesses only used social media simply for local promotion. However, as business relationships develop, social media begins to be used to introduce products to foreign buyers. This condition shows that business experience helps improve the ability of businesses to utilize digital technology to expand the market.

In research on the internationalization of MSME, the ability to learn and adapt is explained as an important factor in maintaining export sustainability. Businesses that are able to understand market needs and make product adjustments have a greater chance of growing.

In the case of Dapurnya Subur, the learning process takes place gradually and is influenced by business experience, communication with buyers, and customer responses. These various experiences help businesses improve product quality and marketing strategies. Thus, the analysis using the Uppsala Model shows that the internationalization of Dapurnya Subur is progressing through a gradual process of market learning, business experience, and product adaptation. The results of the study show that the flexibility of business strategy is one of the important factors in supporting the development of the internationalization of Dapurnya Subur. This flexibility can be seen from the ability of businesses to adjust products, packaging, marketing strategies, and menu variations according to market needs.

In the context of MSME, business flexibility is one of the advantages because it allows businesses to make changes quickly without too complex procedures. Dapurnya Subur is able to make product adjustments based on customer and buyer input. One form of flexibility found in

this study is the business decision not to always use logos on product packaging. According to the owner, the decision was made to make it easier for the product to adjust to the needs of buyers and certain market distribution. A strategy without a logo shows that businesses prioritize market adjustment over formal branding. In some export activities, buyers have certain needs regarding the shape of packaging so that businesses choose to use more flexible packaging. This condition shows that the internationalization strategy of MSME is often pragmatic and oriented towards the sustainability of product distribution. The main focus of the business is to ensure that the product can be accepted by the market and maintain the sustainability of cooperation with buyers.

In addition to packaging, flexibility can also be seen from the ability of businesses to add menu variations according to customer demands. Based on the results of the interviews, several additional products were made due to certain market needs. The addition of the menu shows that the business has a strong orientation to consumer needs. Dapurnya Subur not only maintains existing products, but also tries to adjust the variety of products to stay relevant to market demand. In research on MSME strategies, flexibility is explained as the ability of businesses to adapt to changes in the business environment and market needs. Flexibility helps businesses survive in dynamic market conditions while increasing business competitiveness (Darmiati et al., 2026).

In the case of Dapurnya Subur, flexibility helps businesses maintain relationships with buyers and increase international market opportunities. The ability to change products and packaging quickly is one of the advantages of the business. In addition, the use of social media with the concept of raw content also shows the flexibility of business marketing strategies. The content used is less formal and more shows the real business conditions. This approach shows that Dapurnya Subur is less reliant on large scale professional branding strategies. Businesses prioritize communication that is authentic and easy for customers to understand. Authentic content has a huge influence on customer proximity. Consumers tend to be more interested in content that shows real business activities rather than overly formal promotions.

Research on MSME social media explains that content authenticity helps increase customer interaction and build consumer trust (Fitria, 2026). In this study, the concept of raw content helps businesses show the production process and business activities directly to customers. This approach helps create a more personal relationship with consumers. The flexibility of business strategies can also be seen from the pattern of communication with buyers that takes place informally but is still professional. Communication is carried out directly so that businesses can get market input faster.

Flexible relationships help businesses make more effective product adjustments and marketing strategies. The information obtained from the buyer is used as the basis for business decision making. In addition, flexibility helps businesses deal with limited resources owned by MSME. Dapurnya Subur does not have a large international marketing system, but it is still able to expand the market through an adaptive approach. Adaptability is one of the important factors in maintaining business sustainability. The international market has dynamic characteristics so businesses need to have the ability to adjust strategies quickly. Thus, the flexibility of business strategy can be understood as one of the main factors that support the internationalization of Dapurnya Subur. The ability to customize products, packaging, and marketing strategies helps businesses maintain market sustainability and increase consumer acceptance.

Research on the optimization of MSME social media explains that content consistency and customer interaction are important factors in building digital branding (Widiati et al., 2021) In the case of Dapurnya Subur, business branding is not built through the formal concept of large

companies, but through the proximity of communication and consistency of social media activities. In addition, social media helps businesses acquire buyers through the dissemination of digital information and customer recommendations. This shows that digital platforms have a great influence on the development of the internationalization of MSME.

In the context of internationalization, social media helps reduce the limitations of promotion, which was previously a major obstacle for small businesses. Digital platforms allow MSME to showcase their products to the international market at a lower cost.

However, the success of social media use is not only determined by technology, but also influenced by the ability of businesses to build consistent communication with customers. Dapurnya Subur uses a simple marketing approach but routinely shows business activities to customers. This consistency helps maintain interaction and increase consumer closeness. Additionally, social media helps businesses maintain relationships with existing customers while also reaching new customers. Interactions that take place digitally make market communication faster and more open. The use of social media in this study shows that the internationalization of small businesses in the digital era has more flexible characteristics than traditional business patterns. MSME are no longer completely dependent on formal distribution networks to expand the market.

5. CONCLUSION

Conclusion & Recommendation : Based on the results of the research, it can be concluded that the internationalization process carried out by Dapurnya Subur develops gradually through the use of social media, relationships with buyers, and flexible business adaptation strategies. Export activities carried out by the business do not develop through large formal systems, but through business experience, communication with buyers, and adaptation to market needs. The use of Instagram helps Dapurnya Subur expand its market reach and build communication with overseas customers and buyers. Social media is not only used as a promotional medium, but also helps build trust and maintain relationships with customers through simple and consistent content. The use of raw content shows that authentic communication can help businesses build closer relationships with consumers.

Relationships with buyers are also an important factor supporting the sustainability of export activities. Direct and ongoing communication helps the business understand market needs, maintain repeat orders, and expand its business network. Buyers not only act as product purchasers, but also provide information regarding market preferences, packaging, and distribution. Flexibility is also one of the main strengths of Dapurnya Subur in maintaining its international market. Product adaptation strategies, seasoning adjustments, flexible packaging, and additional menu variations are carried out according to the needs of customers and buyers. This process develops through business experience and trial and error that is carried out gradually.

The perspective of the Uppsala Model further explains that the internationalization process of Dapurnya Subur demonstrates how international market knowledge can be developed through experiential learning and direct business experience. The results of the study show that MSME internationalization can develop through adaptive strategies, authentic communication, and flexible business relationships according to the capabilities and experience of the business. From a managerial perspective, MSMEs seeking to enter international markets can strengthen their digital communication, maintain long-term relationships with buyers, and develop flexible product adaptation strategies based on customer feedback. For policymakers, these findings highlight the importance of supporting MSMEs through digital marketing capacity

building, export knowledge, and market-access facilitation that can help businesses gradually develop their international market capabilities.

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