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Original Article

The Role of TikTok as A Mood Booster on Employees' Performance in the Trade Sector during the COVID-19 Pandemic in Tebing Tinggi, Indonesia

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Abstract: This study determines the role of TikTok Media as a Mood Booster in Improving the Performance of Trade Sector Employees in Tebing Tinggi City during the COVID-19 Pandemic. Humans are one of the crucial factors in a company. To improve employee performance, companies need to pay attention to the state of their employees. The research method used is qualitative, with primary and secondary data collected from interviews, observations, and documentation, including five informants. The analytical method used in this research is method triangulation, data triangulation, and theory triangulation. Interviews in this study indicate that employees of the trade sector at the HP Warehouse experienced a decrease in performance. The results of this study indicate that the company and its employees have a new strategy, namely promotion using the TikTok application so that TikTok becomes a mood booster and can improve employee performance.

Keywords: Tiktok; social media; mood booster; employee performance; COVID-19 Pandemic.



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1. Introduction

Indonesia is in the 4.0 revolution era, namely technological advances that significantly impact the internet and are supported by networks, smartphones, or gadgets. It has resulted in the emergence of phenomena on the internet, namely unique applications, and has become a public attraction. The only way to find out and get information from the outside world is to use the internet. It was getting information related to COVID-19, studying, working, entertainment even using existing mass media and easy to get. The world is being hit by an outbreak of the Corona Virus Disease 2019 (COVID-19), including Indonesia; COVID-19 was detected in 2019. Initially, this virus appeared identified from the common cold in 1960. Until 2002, this virus could not be considered a severe virus. However, after discovering SARS-COV (Severe et al.) in the State of China, researchers focused on the causes of these new coronavirus forms (Utami, 2021).

A company or business entity expected to show its existence positively means good performance in the eyes of outsiders, especially the community. High employee performance increases will make employees more loyal to the organization and motivated, and high job satisfaction will increase the possibility of achieving high productivity (Laila & Asmarany, 2015). When doing a job has the potential to harm yourself, namely boredom at work, it can trigger laziness. The stress problem at work has become an important symptom to be observed since the demands for efficiency at work began. Employees must entertain themselves in their free time using applications that can entertain and benefit employees, including the TikTok application. The current phenomenon is the emergence of applications with many downloads, namely the TikTok application. The TikTok application is a social media music video platform originating from China which was first inaugurated in September 2016 by Zhang Yiming, the founder of the TikTok application.

On the basis of Playstore application data in 2021, over 100 million downloads and active users worldwide have existed. With the emergence of a virus, namely COVID-19, which is endemic worldwide, the number of TikTok users has increased to 2 billion. The number exceeds the total number of users downloading the Instagram application, 1.5 billion globally. This application during the COVID-19 pandemic, more and more people use it as a medium of entertainment, a way to express annoyance, and generate creativity for its users. The content in the TikTok application starts from lipsing music, videos, and visuals, to dance and unique filters in it. The TikTok application can also help government officials, medical personnel, employees, and influencers convey messages or information through appeals and how to use positive and exciting content targeted to be disseminated by the government, medical personnel, employees, and influencers to the public. So, this TikTok application becomes a diversion for them to feel bored while working. From the research results, the researchers obtained results stating that this TikTok application can be a Mood Booster to improve sales performance at the Tebing Tinggi City HP Warehouse.

| Informant(s) | Opinion(s) | |
|-------------------------|--|--|
| Friska Febriani Permadi | She used the TikTok application because he feels entertained when bored at work, with various exciting filters and unique lips. | |
| Sarah Maharani | As a cellphone promoter who uses the TikTok application because she creates interesting content about selling cellphones with exciting music to attract the attention of customers who see the content. | |
| Annisa Anggraini | I am making the TikTok application to market mobile phone products with exciting content. | |
| Fadma Ariska | Only the application and see the content on the veranda to entertain boredom while working. | |

Table 1. List of Informants and their opinion related to TikTok

Table 1 displays that the four respondents have different opinions. Using the TikTok application requires self-awareness to filter out the positive effects of technological advances. The presented content can bring users a good mood (good atmosphere).

2. Literature Review

2.1. Definition of Social Media

Social Media is a media platform that focuses on the existence of users who complement them in their activities and collaborations. Social media is an online facilitator that connects users as a social bond (Rulli Nasrullah, 2016). While Kotler Philip (2016) defines Social Media as a medium consumers use to share text, images, sound, and video information with other people and companies. In this regard, (Rulli Nasrullah, 2016) said that social media is one of the platforms that appear in today's media. Therefore, the existing social media is not much different from the characteristics of cyber media. The characteristics of media are:

- 1. Network Characteristics of social media, namely forming a network between users, regardless of whether in the real world (offline) the users know each other or do not know each other, but the existence of social media makes it easy for users to connect as a whole with technology. A network formed in the end forms a community of people who, consciously or not, will create values that exist in society.
- 2. Information Information becomes an essential tool for its users in social media. Information is a collection of facts presented and managed into something valid for the recipient.

- 3. Interaction Basic characteristics of social media, namely the formation of a network between users. The emergence of an interaction between one user and another when using social media, such as when updating status and then other users like it by giving and with an emoticon symbol thumbs up (like).
- 4. Archive social media provides tremendous access to storage. When using social media to find the desired information, social media users can save the information through an archive of documents on the smartphone or computer used by the user.
- 5. Social simulation real awareness by users is decreasing and being replaced by the real thing. This condition is caused by an imagination presented by the media continuously.
- 6. User-Generated Content This shows that the user or the official account holder wholly owns social media to see the content presented on social media.

Chris Heuer, founder of the Social Media Club and new media innovator, published in the book Engage (Solis, 2011) mentioned that social media indicators are:

- 1. Context: "How we frame our stories" is how to form and process a message or information, the form of the message itself, the use of language, and the content of the message.
- 2. Communication: "The practice of sharing our story as well as listening, responding, and growing." They share stories and messages (information) by responding in various ways that make users feel comfortable and convey messages well.
- 3. Collaboration: "Working together to make things better, more efficient, and effective." That is working together between an account and its users on social media to make things better, more effective, and more efficient.
- 4. Connection: "The relationship we forge and maintain." That is maintaining the relationship that has been built. You can do something sustainable so that users feel closer to an account or company that uses social media.

2.2. Definition of TikTok

TikTok is a media application that can provide unique effects that application users can use easily to create short videos that attract the attention of people who see them (Marini, 2019). Meanwhile, according to (Eka Putri, 2009), the TikTok application is a short video social application that has a lot of music support so that users can perform their performances with dance, freestyle, and many more to encourage the creativity of users to become content creators. Based on the previous understanding, it can be concluded that the TikTok application is one of the platform video applications that entertain its users with various exciting and unique video features. TikTok is in use; there are two factors, namely, Internal and external factors. Internal factors such as feelings, attitudes and characteristics of individuals, prejudice, desire and hope, attention, learning, physical values, and needs are also of interest and external motivation. Factors such as family background, the information received, knowledge and needs, intensity, size, novelty, and known or unfamiliarity with an object (Deriyanto & Qorib, 2018)

2.3. Factors Affecting the Use of Application TikTok

Internal factors are factors that come from within a person, such as feelings. The feeling is a psychological state experienced with pleasure or not about subjective events. The internal factor is very influential in the use of TikTok applications. Internal factors also can say a learning process in the use of social media, including the use of the TikTok application. So, using social media such as applications, ticktock is not only entertainment but can also learn how to interact with others. TikTok application usage can lead to the creativity of each person who uses it wisely. TikTok Application Indicators as social media indicators can be classified as follows:

- 1. There are positive and negative impacts in using the TikTok application.
- 2. The emergence of creativity in the use of the TikTok application
- 3. There is a feeling of being entertained and changing the *mood* for the better in using the TikTok application.

2.4. Definition of Mood Booster

Mood Booster can change a person's mood or feeling to be more enthusiastic about doing something. Mood boosters can be anything, be it objects or living things. Mood Booster objects are books, musical instruments, gadgets, and others (Andaryani, 2019). Meanwhile (Saputra et al., 2020) stated that mood is a state of awakening with two dimensions, namely the affective valence or activation dimension and the dimension of engagement. Many factors, including atmosphere, color, music, weather, and social media, influence the mood. Based on this understanding, it can be concluded that mood boosters are feelings that tend to change due to situations and conditions experienced. These situations and conditions can affect a person's pleasure, sadness, or anger.

2.4.1. Factors Affecting Mood Booster

Factors that can affect mood boosters include the component of STORC (situation, thoughts, organ/physical/body, response, reaction).

- 1. Situation
 - Situation or situation focuses on a person's place, condition, and things that involve a person in certain circumstances and times that can cause a mood booster (mood).
- 2. Thought pattern (Cognitive Component)
- 3. Patterns that are taught as an understanding of the surrounding situation will affect the feelings that arise. A different mindset will lead to different feelings.
- 4. Organ Experience (Physical or Bodily Component)
- 5. What happens in a person's organs can affect their feelings. The feeling that arises is a direct response to the sensations felt in the body.
- 6. Response patterns (Behavioural Component) Response patterns are how a person responds to situations, thought patterns, and bodily stimuli. Different behavioral reactions will produce different feelings.
- Consequences (Environmental Reactions)
 A person's social situation or environment will react to how to respond to a person's behavior.
 The consequences of this way of responding can affect a person's feelings.

2.4.2. The Indicator of Mood Booster

Khasanah et al. (2019) explain that there are four indicators of a mood booster, namely:

- Positive energy, namely enthusiastic, proud, alert, and active.
- Tiredness, i.e., sleepy, bored, lazy, tired.
- Negative activation, namely fear, anger, anxiety, depression, and hostility.
- Relaxation, which is relaxed, satisfied, calm, and undisturbed.

2.5. Employee Performance

The term comes from work performance or Actual Performance (achievements to real) that are associated with all the activities in an organization of work (Qaeda et al., 2020). Performance is a description of the level of achievement of implementing a policy program or activity in realizing the goals, objectives, vision, and mission of the organization that is expressed through planning (Gani & Tewal, 2018). Based on the previous understanding, it can be concluded that performance records are the results obtained by employees who work to meet the excellent quality obtained from certain job functions during a specific time. Employee Performance Assessment Methods for evaluating employee performance include the following:

- The ranking compares one employee to another to determine who is better.
- Comparison of employees with employees is a way to separate a person's assessment into various factors.
- Checklists are an assessment method that is not an employee but only reports employee behavior, such as relationships with co-workers and relationships with leaders.

Factors that influence the achievement of performance are the ability and motivational factors. Also, the psychological ability factor, competence, consists of potential ability (Q) and reality ability (knowledge + skill). It means that leaders and employees with an IQ above the average (IQ is 110-120), let alone an IQ superior, gifted, and genius with adequate education for their position and skilled in daily work, will be easier to achieve performance. The motivation factor is defined by the attitude of leaders and employees to the work situation in the organizational environment. Those with a more positive attitude towards their work situation will show high work motivation. There are eight indicators for employee performance, among others:

- 1. Innovative behavior is all employee behavior directed to produce, introduce, and apply things that are beneficial to the organizational level.
- 2. Taking the initiative is serious in carrying out duties and responsibilities. Improve work results and have the courage to work independently.
- 3. The level of self-potential is the ability, strength, both unrealized and realized, that a person has but has not yet fully seen.

- 4. Time management is the rate of absenteeism, tardiness, adequate working time, or lost work hours. Time management involves planning, organizing, mobilizing, and monitoring time productivity.
- 5. Achievement of quality and quantity. Quality of work includes accuracy, tidiness, and accuracy in work or quality standards that have been set. The quantity of work is related to the amount of work volume that employees can complete under normal conditions.
- 6. Self-ability to achieve goals is a power a person can use to complete his work. Possess an unusually high skill level for significant time and effort to achieve a high standard.
- 7. Peer-to-customer relationships work with co-workers, superiors, and customers to achieve established goals.
- 8. Knowledge of the company's products is clear about the factors related to their job responsibilities.

3. Materials and Methods

This exploratory study is designed using a qualitative approach through triangulation data. According to Sugiyono (2017), an exploratory study is aimed at describing the position of variables that analyze the effect of one variable on other variables. The research used is descriptive qualitative research. Descriptive qualitative research is in the form of research with a case study. Research Focus is helpful for restrictions on the object of research appointed for other benefits so that researchers are not trapped in the amount of data obtained in the field. Determining the focus of research is more directed at the level of updating of information that will be obtained to limit qualitative studies and limit research to choose which data are relevant and which are irrelevant. The focus of this research includes:

- 1. What is the background of the trade sector employees using TikTok media users in Tebing Tinggi City during the COVID-19 pandemic?
- 2. How is the performance development of trade sector employees in Tebing Tinggi City during the COVID-19 Pandemic?
- 3. How to use the TikTok application as a mood booster in improving employee performance in the trade sector in Tebing Tinggi City during the COVID-19 pandemic?

In order to simplify data into a form that is easier to interpret and often uses qualitative descriptive as a tool, data analysis generally uses the triangulation method to ensure the data's credibility.

| Desserab Question | Data Collection | |
|--|---|--|
| Research Question | Interview | Observation |
| How are employees of the trade sector during a COVID-19 pandemic? | Employees experiencing saturation in work due to reduced customer come and incentives received uncharacteristically. | Since the COVID-19 pandemic, at least customers who come to buy, and the company experienced a decrease in revenue, so the company had to decide to reduce employees and reduce employee incentives. |
| How was the performance of the trade sector employees during COVID- 19? | During the COVID-19 pandemic, which resulted in not achieving the revenue targets desired by the company and its employees, the company decided to reduce employees. The existence of a reduction in employees makes the surviving employees less enthusiastic due to reduced customers and turnover. It is a decrease in the level of employee performance. | Even though the employee's performance is declining and the employees lack enthusiasm, the company has a new strategy to improve the performance of the employees to achieve the desired target. |
| How to use the TikTok | There is a sense of saturation at | The employees and superiors work |
| application as a mood | work due to reduced customers | together to improve performance. |
| booster in improving the | and decreased company turnover. | Promoting new brands using the |

| Table 2. Summary of Research Questions | , Data Collection Techniques |
|--|------------------------------|
|--|------------------------------|

| Research Question | Data Collection | |
|---|--|---|
| | Interview | Observation |
| performance of trade sector employees during the COVID-19 pandemic? | Employees are expected to be able to create attractive promotional tools with the TikTok application and to entertain themselves. It can also relieve boredom at work. | TikTok application is one of the creative and innovative things, creating engaging video content with unique and exciting music and effects. The TikTok application is widely used by the community, especially during the pandemic, to entertain themselves, improve performance and become a mood booster for users. |

4. Results

4.1. Triangulation of data sources

Triangulation of data sources is a step to re-check the data obtained from informants by asking for the truth of data or information from one informant to another. The researcher used two informants to check. In this study, there were two primary informants.

| Questions | Informants | |
|--------------------------|------------------------------------|---|
| How are the conditions | Informant 1 (Sarah Maharani) | Informant 2 (Annisa Anggraini) |
| of trade sector | Due to the current COVID-19 | During the COVID-19 pandemic, the |
| employees during the | pandemic, employees experience | company reduced employees and cut |
| COVID-19 pandemic | boredom and work stress due to | salaries and employee incentives |
| | reduced customers. | resulting in a lack of work enthusiasm. |
| How was the | The development of employees | Having difficulty getting customers and |
| performance of the trade | during the COVID-19 pandemic, | not achieving work targets resulting in |
| sector employees during | employees had difficulty getting | reduced enthusiasm and decreased |
| the COVID-19 | customers, which resulted in not | performance level |
| pandemic? | achieving the desired targets and | |
| | decreasing performance. | |
| How the use of the | TikTok can increase morale. When | Entertain yourself when bored working |
| TikTok application as a | using the TikTok application, you | in your free time, which can boost your |
| mood booster in | feel entertained so that it | mood, such as using social media with |
| improving the | increases performance to achieve | exciting videos that can be used as a |
| performance of trade | the desired target. TikTok is also | means of promotion so that the mind |
| sector employees during | used as a means of promotion. | becomes free to increase performance |
| the COVID-19 pandemic | | again. |

4.2. Theory of Triangulation

Triangulation assumes that one or more theories cannot verify facts. Moreover, it can be implemented with an explanation of the appeal (rival explanation).

| Question | Result | Theory |
|------------------------|------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| How are the conditions | The decline in company turnover, | In the state of the COVID-19 |
| of the trade sector | which resulted in reduced | pandemic, the company has a way to |
| employees during the | employees and the difficulty of | maintain the performance of its |
| COVID-19 pandemic | interacting, was due to the social | employees. According to Ayu |
| | restrictions imposed by the | Widaningsih (2020), during the |
| | government. | COVID-19 pandemic, companies must |

Table 4. Comparison of the triangulation outcome and theory

| | The current situation makes service sector employees engaged in trade down and the lack of performance of each employee. | have ways to maintain performance, namely Training during the COVID-19 pandemic, Division of tasks when the number of employees is limited, and optimizing work. |
|---|--|--|
| How is the performance of trade sector employees during the COVID-19 pandemic declined? | The employee performance levels during the COVID-19 pandemic with a decrease in the number of customers and a decrease in turnover, whereas in the pre- pandemic period, it was more profitable to increase employee performance. | Performance can measure the condition of individual employees both inside and outside the company. Measurement of employee development during the COVID-19 pandemic is crucial to ensure that these employees can compete with other employees. During this COVID- 19 pandemic, many employees' performance decreased due to a decrease in profits (Putu et al., 2020) |
| How to use the TikTok application as a mood booster in improving the performance of trade sector employees during the COVID-19 | The pandemic until now has not ended, resulting in companies in the trade sector continuing to decline. With this happening, employees can develop and promote it through social media video platforms. It can also entertain themselves. | COVID-19 is overgrowing in Indonesia, resulting in a decline in the Indonesian economy, one of which is in the trade sector. So digital-based work management is needed to improve marketing, service, and finance. Using marketing with digital- based media or I media can also entertain and increase the employees' enthusiasm. |

4.3. The Situation of Trade Sector Employees during the COVID-19 Pandemic

According to an employee named Fadma Ariska, the stress conditions she experienced resulted in a lack of enthusiasm at work, one of which was the lack of customers who came to buy products because they were in a state of the COVID-19 pandemic. Usually, before the pandemic , there were always customers who came every day because, in a situation like this, it is difficult to interact with others. Based on the research results, the state of the trade sector employees in Tebing Tinggi City during the COVID-19 pandemic experienced boredom and work stress due to not achieving the desired target. Therefore, the employees developed strategies and looked for ways to get up and excited at work, find things to do new things and come up with unconventional strategies while entertaining themselves.

4.4. Performance Development of Trade Sector Employees during the COVID-19 Pandemic

According to an employee named Sarah Maharani, as the promoter of vivo, for the condition of employee development during the COVID-19 pandemic as it is today, every employee and supervisor must be able to work together and interact with each other to find new ideas so that the company is always in good condition. The employees in it feel satisfied if the ideas to be implemented achieve the desired goals. Job satisfaction that has been achieved can establish a good sense of family which is proven to create a comfortable, harmonious working atmosphere with other co-workers. This research reveals that the development of trade sector employees in Cliff Tinggi City during the COVID-19 pandemic did not develop well due to the decline in performance levels, but they have ways to improve it. Even though the employees' income has decreased during the pandemic, they work together to motivate each other to keep them motivated at work, and the company provides facilities that support the work to achieve the desired goals.

They are using the TikTok Application as a Mood Booster in Improving the Performance of Trade Sector Employees in the City of Tebing Tinggi During the COVID-19 Pandemic. According to an employee named Annisa Anggraini, the promoter of OPPO, conditions like this currently affect work because the lack of customers who come causes a lack of enthusiasm and a sense of saturation, so this is a problem. What they do is entertain themselves in their spare time using social media through applications that are self-entertaining and are currently trending, such as the TikTok application, which has positive things to motivate

it, now the TikTok application is used as a means of promoting new brands by a variety of music and exciting effects in it until the TikTok application can be a mood booster and increase the performance of employees.

This research reveals that the use of the TikTok application as a mood booster in improving the performance of the trade sector employees in Tebing Tinggi City during the COVID-19 pandemic has a positive influence because the TikTok application, apart from being an entertainment media, can also help companies to promote products more attractively so that they cannot become the attraction of the community and help restore employee performance, so this TikTok application becomes a mood booster to improve performance and employees. Informants are people who can provide information about the object of research, and informants are chosen because they are considered to understand the situation and conditions regarding the background of the research in providing answers when interviewed. This study indicates that during the COVID-19 pandemic, experienced a reduction in employees, reduced salaries and incentives, which resulted in boredom, work stress, and decreased performance. If this continues, it can have implications for the high unemployment rate in Tebing Tinggi City. In the trade sector in Tebing Tinggi City during the COVID-19 pandemic, there was a reasonably high decline in performance, one of which was in the HP Warehouse. It was seen that almost all employees were unable to achieve the target.

5. Conclusions

In conclusion, this study found that the condition of employees in the trade sector in the City of Tebing Tinggi during the COVID-19 Pandemic experienced boredom and stress at work due to decisions to reduce employees, decrease salaries, and reduce incentives received by employees. It resulted in not achieving the desired target and decreased performance. The development of performance of employees in the trade sector in Tebing Tinggi City during the COVID-19 pandemic did not develop properly because there was a significant decline in performance, and almost all employees did not reach the desired targets. The TikTok application is a mood booster in improving the performance of trade sector employees in Tebing Tinggi City during the COVID-19 pandemic. The TikTok application is a self-entertaining application. It becomes a mood booster that can improve employee performance. The TikTok application is also a promotional tool to increase sales potential.

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