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The Survival Strategies of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises in the New Normal Era: Insight from Palembang

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Abstract

Adaptation Strategy for *Pempek* Business Actors During the Covid 19 Pandemic in *Pempek* Village 26 Ilir Palembang City which aims to understand and know adaptation strategy for *Pempek* businesses during the Covid 19 pandemic. *Pempek* Village 26 Ilir, Palembang City as a sample to identify adaptation strategies and constraints. Based on the theory of Ahimsa Putra, including Adaptive Behavior, Adaptive Strategies, Adaptive Processes. This research according to the type of data used is descriptive qualitative research with key informants, *Pempek* Business Actors in *Pempek* Village 26 Ilir Palembang City, Consumers or Buyers, totaling 17 people. The research instrument used in-depth interviews, literature study, documentation and observation. Based on the results of the research, first about adaptive behavior, *Pempek* business actors in *Kampung Pempek* 26 Ilir changed sales from conventional to online. The two adaptive strategies of *Pempek* business actors in *Kampung Pempek* 26 Ilir changed payments which were originally direct to virtual online, such as via bank transfers and OVO. The three adaptive processes, namely business actors reducing the amount of production so that business continuity can still survive during the Covid 19 pandemic. Then, the obstacles faced by business actors *Pempek* in *Kampung Pempek* 26 Ilir make adjustments that refer to problems arising from the interdependence of all aspects of culture, where the covid 19 pandemic affects the economy which will inevitably affect the government to carry out large-scale restrictions or social distancing, business actors *Pempek* in *Kampung Pempek* 26 Ilir forced to adapt to situations faced by economic changes, forcing business actors *Pempek* in *Kampung Pempek* 26 Ilir adapt to environmental changes during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Keywords: Adaptation Strategy, Businessmen, Covid-19, Palembang

Abstrak

Strategi Adaptasi untuk Pelaku Usaha *Pempek* Selama Pandemi Covid-19 di Desa *Pempek 26 Ilir*, Kota Palembang bertujuan untuk memahami dan mengetahui strategi adaptasi bagi usaha *Pempek* selama pandemi Covid-19. Desa *Pempek 26 Ilir*, Kota Palembang dijadikan contoh untuk mengidentifikasi strategi adaptasi dan kendala yang ada. Berdasarkan teori Ahimsa Putra, termasuk Perilaku Adaptif, Strategi Adaptif, Proses Adaptif. Penelitian ini, sesuai dengan jenis data yang digunakan, adalah penelitian deskriptif kualitatif dengan informan kunci [1] Pelaku Usaha *Pempek* di Desa *Pempek 26 Ilir*, Kota Palembang, [2] Konsumen atau Pembeli, dengan total 17 orang. Instrumen penelitian yang digunakan adalah wawancara mendalam, studi literatur, dokumentasi, dan observasi. Berdasarkan hasil penelitian, pertama mengenai perilaku adaptif, pelaku usaha *Pempek* di *Kampung Pempek 26 Ilir* mengubah penjualan dari konvensional menjadi online. Dua strategi adaptif pelaku usaha *Pempek* di *Kampung Pempek 26 Ilir* mengubah pembayaran yang awalnya langsung menjadi virtual online, seperti melalui transfer bank dan OVO. Tiga proses adaptif, yaitu pelaku usaha mengurangi jumlah produksi agar kelangsungan usaha tetap terjaga selama pandemi Covid-19. Kemudian, kendala yang dihadapi oleh pelaku usaha *Pempek* di *Kampung Pempek 26 Ilir* adalah melakukan penyesuaian yang mengacu pada masalah yang timbul dari saling ketergantungan semua aspek budaya, di mana pandemi Covid-19 berdampak pada ekonomi yang tak dapat dihindari mempengaruhi pemerintah untuk melakukan pembatasan skala besar atau jarak sosial, pelaku usaha *Pempek* di *Kampung Pempek 26 Ilir* terpaksa beradaptasi dengan situasi yang dihadapi oleh perubahan ekonomi, memaksa pelaku usaha *Pempek* di *Kampung Pempek 26 Ilir* beradaptasi dengan perubahan lingkungan selama Covid-19.

Kata Kunci: Strategi Adaptasi, Pelaku Usaha, Covid-19, Palembang

INTRODUCTION

The Covid-19 pandemic is a natural disaster caused a series of unprecedented events in the form of disease outbreaks. The spread of Covid-19 has significantly impacted Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) in Indonesia. MSMEs are businesses engaged in production that are owned by individuals or business entities that meet the criteria micro business standards (Djarmiko & Pudyastiwi, 2020). The existence of MSMEs plays a crucial and strategic role in the Indonesian economy. They constitute 99.9% of the total business units, amounting to 62.9 million units, and provided employment for 97% of the workforce, with 89% in the micro sectors. Additionally, they contribute 60% to the country's gross domestic product (Bahtiar & Saragih, 2020; Irianto et al., 2020; Nelly, 2021).

During the pandemic, the Ministry of Cooperatives and Small and Medium Enterprises (2020) reported that around 37,000 MSMEs were severely affected, which approximately 56% of these businesses experienced a decline in sales, 22% encountered financing problems, and 15% faced distribution challenges. Prior to the pandemic, MSMEs predominantly sold their products through direct face-to-face interactions (Redjeki & Affandi, 2021). However, due to government policies enforcing social distancing measures,

they are unable to continue this practice (Yovinus, 2018). Nonetheless, MSMEs must adapt to new circumstances to ensure the continuity of their businesses (Sidqi et al., 2021). As a result, MSMEs business actors have been forced to adopt virtual online marketing as an alternative method to sell their products (Nelly, 2021), in order to sustain their businesses have had to adapt to new habits and embrace virtual online marketing as an alternative approach (Redjeki & Affandi, 2021).

Palembang City, the capital of South Sumatra Province, has also been affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, causing impacts on various economic sectors, including individuals, households, micro, small, medium, and large companies. As a result, business actors in Palembang City have shifted towards embracing the digital era for marketing purposes in order to maintain business continuity (Fossati, 2016). The number of confirmed COVID-19 cases in Palembang City continues to rise, leading to the implementation of large-scale social restrictions (PSBB) aimed at breaking the chain of COVID-19 transmission. According to data from the Palembang City Health Office as of February 17, 2021, there were 7,464 confirmed COVID-19 cases, 23,250 suspected cases, 153 probable cases, 5,665 close contacts, 6,076 recoveries, 322 deaths, and 15,057 dismissed suspected cases. The enforcement of PSBB and social distancing measures has significantly impacted the culinary industry, particularly *Pempek* business actors in *Kampung Pempek 26 Ilir*, Palembang City (Palembang City Health Office, 2021).

Table 1. List of UKM in Palembang City in 2020

No	Type of Culinary Business	Number of SMEs	Percentage (%)
1	Pempek, Crackers, and Kemplang	206	40.00
2	Tech and Model	113	25.63
3	Various Cakes	85	16.50
4	Fried Food	53	10.29
5	Mixed Vetetables with the peanut sauce	31	6.02
6	Pindang	8	1.55
Amount		607	100

Source: Palembang City Office of Cooperatives and SMEs (2021)

Palembang City in Indonesia is renowned for its culinary heritage and is an attractive destination for culinary tourism. The food industry in Palembang, particularly the sales of traditional dishes from various regions in Indonesia, has experienced significant growth. This growth encompasses both small-scale and medium-scale businesses, indicating a thriving culinary scene in the city. One of the culinary hubs in Palembang City is *Kampung Pempek 26 Ilir*, located on Jalan Mujahidin in the 26 Ilir area. This area is conveniently close to the Palembang Mayor's Office, making it easily accessible for locals and tourists alike. According to the Palembang City Tourism Office in 2019, three specialties of Palembang cuisine stand out: *Pempek*, *Tekwan*, and *Model*. These dishes have been cherished for a long time and are widely recognized as the culinary highlights of the city. While Palembang's famous culinary delights have gained popularity and have been introduced to various regions

throughout Indonesia, finding authentic versions of these dishes outside of Palembang can be quite rare. As a result, visiting Palembang becomes a must for those seeking an authentic taste experience and an opportunity to indulge in the city's unique culinary offerings.

To gain a comprehensive overview of the culinary landscape in Palembang City, a list of Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) operating in the city in 2020 is provided. This compilation offers valuable insights into the diverse range of businesses that contribute to the vibrant food scene of Palembang City. It highlights the presence of a multitude of culinary establishments, showcasing the city's culinary richness and the entrepreneurial spirit of its residents. Therefore, Palembang City's rich culinary heritage, coupled with its significant potential for culinary tourism, has led to rapid growth in the food industry. With its unique specialties and a wide array of culinary businesses, Palembang offers an authentic and diverse gastronomic experience that attracts both locals and tourists to explore the city's vibrant food scene.

Table 1. List of UMK in *Kampung Pempek 26 Ilir* in 2021

No	SME name <i>Pempek</i>	Since	No	SME name <i>Pempek</i>	Since
1	Pure <i>Pempek</i>	1993	13	<i>Pempek</i> Sing	2010
2	<i>Pempek</i> Cek Aan	1997	14	<i>Pempek</i> Mustika	2012
3	<i>Pempek</i> Ria	1997	15	<i>Pempek</i> Vera	2013
4	<i>Pempek</i> Edy	1997	16	<i>Pempek</i> Arifin	2014
5	<i>Pempek</i> Hesti	1997	17	<i>Pempek</i> Cek Ida	2014
6	<i>Pempek</i> Cek Ima	2000	18	<i>Pempek</i> Linda	2014
7	<i>Pempek</i> Mangcik Alak	2007	19	<i>Pempek</i> Novi	2014
8	<i>Pempek</i> Lala	2008	20	<i>Pempek</i> Dayat	2015
9	<i>Pempek</i> Nayla	2008	21	<i>Pempek</i> Cek Da	2015
10	<i>Pempek</i> Rayhan	2008	22	<i>Pempek</i> Dila	2015
11	<i>Pempek</i> Cek Eka	2010	23	<i>Pempek</i> Arya	2016
12	<i>Pempek</i> Uden	2010			

Source: Compiled by the Authors (2021)

Several problems have been identified in the MSMEs in Palembang, particularly among the *Pempek* business actors in *Pempek 26 Ilir* Village. The sales of these businesses have significantly decreased as a result of government policies, such as social distancing measures, lockdowns, Micro-Scale PPKM, and PPKM Level 4. These policies have led to a drastic decline in people's purchasing power, consequently impacting the income of *Pempek* entrepreneurs. It is worth noting that before the Covid-19 pandemic, the sales of *Pempek* business actors in *Kampung Pempek 26 Ilir* were stable. However, during the pandemic, their

businesses have been severely affected by the reduced purchasing power of the people of Palembang City, specifically concerning culinary consumption. The impact of these circumstances on the income of *Pempek* entrepreneurs in *Pempek* Village 26 Ilir can be observed through the following table:

Table 2. Income of *Pempek* Entrepreneurs in *Pempek* Village 26 Ilir

Sales Conditions	Total Sales per Daya (Before Covid-19)	Total Sales /Day (During Covid019 Covid-19)		
	Lowest	Highest	Lowest	Highest
Quiet	950,000	2,850,000	200,000	850,000
Normal	1,450,000	3,700,000	400,000	1,550,000
Crowded	2,500,000	6,500,000	700,000	1,900,000

Source: Compiled by the Authors (2021)

The Covid-19 pandemic has presented unprecedented challenges to businesses worldwide, particularly for Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs). To navigate through these turbulent times, numerous studies have focused on identifying effective strategies for MSMEs to adapt and thrive. The previous paper discusses from five notable studies conducted by Firdaus et al., Starting, Safitri, Wardani, and Hanifah & Rahadi, which shed light on the adaptation strategies employed by MSMEs during the Covid-19 pandemic. Wahyuddin et al. (2022) analyses how the strategies to improve the conomy during the Covid-19 Pandemic Firdaus et al. investigated strategies to enhance the economy of MSMEs during the new normal in response to the Covid-19 pandemic. The study revealed significant challenges faced by MSMEs, including decreased sales, marketing difficulties, funding issues, reduced production and distribution, and raw material procurement challenges. Strategies recommended for MSMEs included leveraging online platforms to serve consumers, implementing total quality management practices with a focus on hygiene, and adapting temporary business methods to maintain positive financial reports. Additionally, government support in the form of social assistance, tax incentives, credit restructuring, and expanded capital financing was identified as crucial. Another paper, Takeda et all., (2022) emphasized the importance of e-marketing practices for the sustainability of MSMEs in Pekalongan City during the Covid-19 pandemic. The study highlighted the positive impact of e-marketing through online marketplaces on the economic resilience of MSMEs. This impact was attributed to the ability to continue production processes, distribute goods to consumers, and maintain social distancing measures. Technological literacy was identified as a crucial aspect for MSME actors to adapt to post-pandemic new norms and the enhanced use of technology in business activities. Then, Suwarni & Handayani (2021) explored opportunities, challenges, and strategies for MSME development in Indonesia amidst the Covid-19 pandemic. The study revealed a direct decline in sales turnover for MSMEs due to government appeals and the implementation of Large-Scale Social Restrictions (PSBB). To overcome challenges, MSMEs were advised to adopt strategies such as selling through e-commerce platforms, utilizing digital marketing, improving product quality and service, and implementing customer relationship marketing. Additionally, (Alonso et all., 2022) focused on changes in consumer online shopping behavior and proposed strategies for businesses to thrive post-pandemic. The study found a decrease in the number of online shoppers during the pandemic, influenced by economic factors, inventory constraints, and concerns about

virus transmission. However, the frequency and average value of purchases showed an increase. Strategies tailored to the types of products and target consumers were recommended to align with changing consumer interests.

All these aforementioned studies provided valuable insights into the adaptation strategies employed by MSMEs during the Covid-19 pandemic. Implementing e-marketing, leveraging online platforms, improving product quality and service, and embracing technology are key strategies for MSMEs to thrive amidst the challenges posed by the pandemic. Government support and the ability to adapt to changing consumer behaviour are crucial factors for their success. By implementing these strategies, MSMEs can enhance their resilience and contribute to the economic recovery during and post-pandemic.

This paper adopts a behavioural perspective and integrates it with implementation theory, specifically focusing on the behavioural strategies employed by business actors to navigate the challenges brought about by the Covid-19 pandemic (Suryahadi et al., 2012). New adaptation habits have emerged within the community, encompassing adjustments in various aspects of life, institutional arrangements, and behaviours aimed at preventing the spread of the virus and capitalizing on new opportunities that have arisen due to the pandemic (Hashemi et al., 2022; Jiang & Stylos, 2021). These changes reflect the prioritization of health in the overall order of life and human civilization. The health crisis triggered crises in other sectors and compelled individuals to develop new habits, leading to a new normal for *Pempek* business actors. According to Pulakos et al. (2000), adaptation strategies encompass a range of planned efforts undertaken by individuals to meet their basic needs and solve the problems they encounter. These strategies manifest as patterns of behaviour and action. Effective adaptation strategies involve coordinating work teams, establishing clear objectives, identifying driving factors aligned with rational implementation principles, efficient resource allocation, and tactics to achieve goals effectively (Mintzberg, 1994). Adaptation strategies cover a wide spectrum and can be observed in almost all aspects of human behaviour in everyday life (Gignoux & Menéndez, 2016). They can be categorized into adaptive behaviour, adaptive strategies, and adaptive processes. Adaptive behaviour refers to the primary mechanisms or approaches employed by individuals to interact with others, achieve goals, and solve problems. Adaptive strategies are patterns of adjustments made by individuals to acquire and utilize resources while adapting to the challenges they face. Adaptive processes encompass changes that occur over an extended period, involving the repeated implementation of various strategies and adjustments.

Considering the components of adaptation strategies, it becomes evident that the community's adaptation strategies can be observed through adaptive behaviour, adaptive strategies, and adaptive processes. Humans do not simply accept their environment or the changes within it; they learn to respond to the problems present in their surroundings (Nafidah & Anisa, 2017). The paradigm of adaptation strategy suggests that every behaviour can be seen as an effort to adapt to the environment in order to achieve desired goals or overcome encountered problems. Therefore, if the strategy is appropriately planned and structured in response to the Covid-19 pandemic, *Pempek* businesses have a greater chance of survival. Thus, the researchers utilize the theory of adaptation strategy (Ahimsa, 2003), which comprises the three aspects mentioned earlier: adaptive behaviour, adaptive strategies, and adaptive processes. These aspects elucidate the various planned efforts undertaken by individuals to fulfil their basic needs and address the challenges they encounter.

In the context of the Covid-19 pandemic, *Pempek* business actors in *Kampung Pempek 26 Ilir* experienced a decline in revenue. Prior to the pandemic, their sales were stable. However, the implementation of travel restrictions and social distancing measures by

the government resulted in a decrease in purchasing power among the people of Palembang City, particularly in terms of culinary consumption. To adapt to these circumstances, *Pempek* business actors in *Kampung Pempek* 26 Ilir turned to digital platforms for marketing and sales. During these challenging times, online transactions and cashless payments have become the preferred choice for most individuals, as they prioritize health and safety.

In this paper, there are three aspects that researchers want to see from *Pempek* business actor adaptation strategy during the Covid 19 pandemic. First, *adaptive behavior* on how *Pempek* business actors interact with consumers or buyers with the aim of maintaining the continuity of their business. Second, adaptive strategies, how the patterns or methods of *Pempek* business actors which were formed from various adjustments during the Covid 19 pandemic and aimed to obtain and use technological sources to adjust existing problems. Third, adaptive processes, which are changes that occur to both business actors and consumers or buyers in a relatively long period of time which are carried out repeatedly with various strategies or making various adjustments during the Covid 19 pandemic. Fourth, obstacles faced by business *Pempek* in maintaining *Pempek* business continuity.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study adopts a qualitative descriptive design, aiming to provide a comprehensive description of the various conditions existing within the community under investigation. The objective is to draw conclusions based on the obtained information (Creswell et al., 2007). Qualitative research facilitates direct interaction between researchers and subjects, enabling a deeper understanding of the object under study (Zainal, 2007).

To identify the primary focus of this research, interviews were conducted with different members of the community, including individuals involved in *Pempek* business enterprises, *Pempek* business actors, customers or buyers, and various stakeholders responsible for sustaining the *Pempek* business during the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic. The interviews sought to explore the strategies, adaptations, and prospects employed by *Pempek* business actors in the face of the pandemic. Additionally, relevant documentation such as books, journals, and online media pertaining to adaptation strategies of *Pempek* business actors during the Covid-19 pandemic in *Kampung Pempek* 26 Ilir was collected. The research also incorporates qualitative research methodologies and references directly or indirectly related to the research focus, as well as personal files of case study subjects and existing research reports to support its implementation (Daud et al., 2018). Moreover, non-participant observation was utilized, with the objective of observing the adaptation strategies employed during the Covid-19 pandemic by *Pempek* business actors. The subject of observation in this study is the *Pempek* business actors, while the aim of using this observation technique is to uncover phenomena not obtained through interview techniques, thus obtaining factual data that can be compared with information from the informants. Through direct observation, researchers can witness firsthand the conditions necessary to obtain valid data.

With a qualitative approach, the researcher serves as the primary tool for data processing, without relying on additional tools. As a result, the researcher's contribution to the data analysis process is crucial for understanding the collected information (Huberman & Miles, 2002). The researcher collects and examines information through in-depth interviews to gain insights into the survival and maintenance of *Pempek* as Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises in Palembang, particularly from the perspective of *Kampung Pempek*.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Adaptation Strategies to Maintain Business Continuity Conducted by *Pempek* Business Actors During the Covid 19 Pandemic

In today's rapidly evolving world, the realms of technology and business are advancing at an unprecedented pace. Companies across various industries find themselves under constant pressure to innovate, achieve operational excellence, and deliver strong financial performance, all while striving to minimize costs (Zhang & Xu, 2016). Fortunately, the advent of new technologies presents vast opportunities for businesses to confront these long-term challenges successfully. However, it is crucial for companies to not only grasp the potential of these emerging technologies but also to harness their power effectively (Gilboa et al., 2016).

Sinha & Singh (2022) emphasizes, understanding and effectively utilizing new technologies is paramount for companies seeking sustainable growth and competitive advantage. The landscape of technology is continuously evolving, and staying updated with the latest advancements is essential for businesses to remain relevant and thrive in a dynamic market. From cloud computing and artificial intelligence to data analytics and automation, these innovative tools can revolutionize business operations, enhance productivity, and drive transformative change across various sectors. In line to that, implementing new technology effectively requires more than simply adopting the latest tools and solutions. It necessitates a comprehensive understanding of the organization's unique needs, strategic alignment with business goals, and a clear roadmap for implementation (Szász et al., 2022). By conducting thorough assessments and strategic planning, companies can identify the areas where technology can make the most significant impact and develop tailored strategies for implementation.

One key aspect of leveraging technology effectively is ensuring that it aligns with the specific objectives and challenges of the organization. This may involve streamlining processes, improving customer experience, enhancing supply chain management, or creating innovative products and services. By carefully integrating technology into these areas, companies can achieve operational efficiencies, drive revenue growth, and gain a competitive edge in the market. Moreover, the effective utilization of technology requires investment not only in infrastructure and tools but also in developing the necessary skills and capabilities within the workforce. Companies must prioritize ongoing training and upskilling programs to equip employees with the knowledge and expertise to leverage technology effectively (Taher & Wagey, 2022). This enables them to adapt to changing circumstances, embrace digital transformation, and capitalize on the full potential of new technologies. Therefore, the rapid advancement of technology offers immense opportunities for businesses to address long-term challenges and achieve sustainable growth. However, success lies in companies' ability to understand and utilize these technologies effectively. By staying abreast of emerging trends, aligning technology with strategic objectives, and investing in the development of skills and capabilities, organizations can unlock the full potential of technology to drive innovation, operational excellence, and financial performance in today's dynamic business landscape (Mariyanti & Mahfudz, 2016).

Adaptive Behavior

Each element of sales and communication plays a crucial role in formulating an effective sales strategy. Online business systems offer convenience and flexibility, requiring minimal initial investment and operational costs. A reliable internet connection is the primary requirement to establish and operate an online business. The online market is highly dynamic, necessitating swift adaptations and strategic responses to ensure the survival of products and services during the Covid-19 Pandemic.

Changes in society are inherent and natural phenomena. In this sense, society is not a static but, rather a constantly evolving process characterized by varying degrees of speed, intensity,

rhythm, and tempo (Thorburn & Kull, 2015). Change is expected to lead to improve situations and conditions, but it is also recognized that sometimes it can bring about unfavourable circumstances (Rizaldy, 2012; Setiawan & Barrett, 2016).

In line with Sinha & Singh (2022) viewpoint, adaptation strategies serve as planned patterns of various human efforts aimed at fulfilling their minimum requirements and addressing the challenges they encounter. These patterns encompass behavioural and action-oriented strategies. An effective strategy involves coordinating work teams, establishing clear themes, identifying driving factors aligned with rational implementation principles, efficient resource allocation, and employing tactics to achieve goals effectively (Abidin, 2015; Ponamon, 2014). Adaptation covers a broad spectrum and encompasses almost all aspects of human behaviour in daily life. Therefore, *Pempek* business actors in *Kampung Pempek 26 Ilir* make necessary adjustments to address problems stemming from the interdependence of cultural aspects. The impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on the economy, which consequently led to large-scale restrictions and social distancing measures enforced by the government, compelled *Pempek* business actors in *Kampung Pempek 26 Ilir* to adapt to the changing economic landscape. As a result, the behavior of *Pempek* business actors shifted from conventional sales to online platforms, exemplified by businesses like *Pempek Murni*, *Pempek Cek Aan*, *Pempek Ria*, *Pempek Edy*, *Pempek Hesti*, *Pempek Cek Ima*, *Pempek Mangcik Alak*, *Pempek Lala*, and *Pempek Nayla*. These business actors adopted strategies such as sharing images of their *Pempek* products, models, and *tekwan* on Instagram, and accepting orders through WhatsApp messages to communicate and facilitate customer transactions (Aziz, 2017).

Adaptive Strategies

Transactions have been a fundamental aspect of human activities, facilitating exchanges between individuals or between individuals and groups to fulfil desired needs and achieve various goals. Technological advancements have led to the development of payment systems that support everyday transactions. One notable innovation is electronic money, which can be utilized through electronic platforms connected to the internet. The implementation of Large-scale Social Restrictions (PSBB) in Palembang City has restricted people's movement and the flow of goods, necessitating individuals to stay at home. As a result, operational activities of *Pempek* business actors in *Kampung Pempek 26 Ilir* have been limited, and there has been a decline in the number of consumers who can shop directly compared to normal days. Consequently, *Pempek* business actors in *Kampung Pempek 26 Ilir* must adapt and make changes to their business strategies in order to sustain their operations during this pandemic. One effective approach is leveraging technology in their buying and selling activities.

During the Covid-19 pandemic, the number of social media users has significantly increased due to the implementation of PSBB policies, prompting people to conduct their activities online (Irianto et al., 2020). Therefore, social media platforms such as Instagram, Facebook, and WhatsApp offer valuable opportunities for the development of MSMEs, particularly in marketing endeavours (Sidqi et al., 2021). The utilization of social media provides promising prospects for increasing sales figures for *Pempek* business actors in *Kampung Pempek 26 Ilir*. Digital marketing serves as an online platform for buying and selling, facilitating the process, and enabling consumers to directly interact with the owners of *Pempek* businesses.

According to Salehie & Tahvildari (2009), adaptation strategies can be understood as planned efforts made by humans to meet their essential needs and address challenges they encounter. These strategies encompass behavioural and action-oriented patterns. A well-designed strategy involves coordinating work teams, establishing clear themes, identifying

driving factors aligned with rational implementation principles, optimizing funding efficiency, and employing effective tactics to achieve goals. In light of this, *Pempek* business actors in *Kampung Pempek 26 Ilir* make necessary adjustments to tackle problems arising from the interdependence of cultural aspects. The Covid-19 pandemic's impact on the economy has inevitably led to large-scale restrictions and social distancing measures enforced by the government. As a result, *Pempek* business actors in *Kampung Pempek 26 Ilir* are compelled to adapt to the changing economic landscape. Notably, there have been changes in the payment behaviour of *Pempek* business actors, transitioning from direct payments to virtual online methods such as bank transfers and mobile payment platforms like OVO.

Adaptive Process

Culinary business in Palembang showcase specialties from diverse regions, catering to the growing number of culinary enthusiasts. This phenomenon not only contributes positively to the city economy but also serves to introduce unique regional cuisines through these businesses. Therefore, *Pempek* business presents promising prospects for long-term success and stands as one of the most favourable opportunities in the culinary industry.

Despite the increasing number of entrepreneurs entering the culinary business, the market opportunity remains vast, and the demand for *Pempek* shows no signs of diminishing. This ever-growing market demand has encouraged entrepreneurs to pursue their ventures with unwavering determination. *Pempek* production has transitioned from being merely a pastime to a lucrative endeavour (Juardi et al., 2018). The success of the *Pempek* business can be attributed to several factors. Firstly, the unique and distinct taste of *Pempek* has captivated the palates of many, fostering a loyal customer base. Additionally, the versatility of *Pempek* allows for various innovations and menu diversification, catering to different preferences and culinary trends. Furthermore, the increasing popularity of *Pempek* is also attributed to effective marketing strategies, both offline and online, which have significantly expanded its reach.

In recent years, the digital landscape has played a crucial role in promoting and expanding the *Pempek* business. The rise of social media platforms and online marketplaces has provided entrepreneurs with valuable opportunities to showcase their *Pempek* offerings to a wider audience. Through enticing visuals, engaging content, and convenient ordering systems, *Pempek* business owners can effectively attract customers and ensure a seamless purchasing experience. As the culinary market continues to evolve, *Pempek* business owners must stay abreast of the latest trends and adapt to changing consumer preferences. Continuous product development, exploring new flavours or variations, and incorporating customer feedback are essential aspects of maintaining a competitive edge in the culinary industry. Furthermore, cultivating strong relationships with suppliers, ensuring high-quality ingredients, and maintaining hygiene standards are crucial to meeting customer expectations and building trust. The culinary business sectors in Palembang, particularly *Pempek* has witnessed remarkable growth and success. The vibrant culinary scene, coupled with the entrepreneurial spirit of *Pempek* business owners, has propelled the industry forward. Therefore, by embracing innovation, leveraging digital platforms, and continuously adapting to changing market dynamics, *Pempek* businesses in Palembang are well-positioned for long-term success and further contributions to the city's economy.

Table 4. Opening Hours of *Pempek* Business Actors in *Pempek* Village 26 Ilir

No	Store Name	Food for Sale	Open-Close Hours
1	<i>Pempek Lala</i>	Various <i>Pempek</i> , Martabak, Srikaya, Otak-Otak, Lenggang, Various Drinks, Model, Tekwan, Various Crackers	09.00 – 22.00
2	<i>Pempek Edy</i>	Various <i>Pempek</i> , Srikaya, Otak-Otak, Lenggang, Various Drinks, Model, Tekwan, Laksan and Various Crackers.	09.00 – 22.00
3	<i>Pempek Nyayu</i>	Various <i>Pempek</i> , Srikaya, Brains, Models, Tekwan, Laksan, Lenggang, Various Drinks and Crackers.	09.00 – 22.00
4	<i>Pempek Dayat</i>	Various <i>Pempek</i> , Otak-otak, Model, Tekwan, Lenggang, Various Beverages	09.00 – 22.00
5	<i>Pempek Rla</i>	Various <i>Pempek</i> , Srikaya, Brains, Models, Tekwan, Lenggang, Various Drinks and Crackers.	09.00 – 22.00
6	<i>Pempek Cek Ima</i>	Various <i>Pempek</i> , Srikaya, Brains, Models, Tekwan, Lenggang, Various Drinks and Crackers.	09.00 – 22.00
7	<i>Pempek Arifin</i>	Various <i>Pempek</i> , Srikaya, Brains, Models, Tekwan, Lenggang, Various Beverages.	09.00 – 22.00
8	<i>Pempek Alak</i>	Various <i>Pempek</i> , Srikaya, Brains, Models, Tekwan, Laksan, Lenggang, Various Drinks and Crackers.	09.00 – 22.00
9	<i>Pempek Rohan</i>	Various <i>Pempek</i> , Otak-otak, Model, Tekwan, Lenggang, Various Drinks and Crackers.	09.00 – 22.00
10	<i>Pempek Linda</i>	Various <i>Pempek</i> , Brains, Models, Tekwan, Lenggang, Various Drink	09.00 – 22.00

Compiled by the Authors (2022)

The presence of these *Pempek* business actors in *Kampung Pempek* 26 Ilir has made it a sought-after destination for both domestic and foreign tourists. Additionally, these shops have established themselves as centers for purchasing souvenirs that are unique to Palembang City. This strategic positioning allows buyers who visit one shop to conveniently find and purchase a diverse range of food items without the need to visit multiple stores. Such convenience and variety attract customers and contribute to the overall appeal of the *Pempek* business sector in *Kampung Pempek* 26 Ilir.

Table 5. Selling Price of *Pempek Pempek* Business Actors in *Pempek* Village 26 Ilir

Menu	Price
Little <i>Pempek</i>	IDR 2.000,-
<i>Pempek</i> Lenjer	IDR 15.000,-
<i>Pempek</i> Lenggang	IDR 10.000,-
Submarine <i>Pempek</i>	IDR 1.000,-
Tekwan	IDR 8.000,-
Model	IDR 8.000,-
Crackers and Kemplang @ 1/2 kg	IDR 25,000-IDR 35,000

Source: Compiled by the Authors (2021)

From the presented table, it is evident that the most of *Pempek* business actors in *Kampung Pempek* 26 Ilir offer their products at similar prices. These entrepreneurs go beyond selling a variety of *Pempek* dishes; they also offer other culinary delights such as models, tekwan, kemplang, crackers, srikaya, lenggang, otak-otak, and an assortment of beverages. The table further provides insights into the average income of *Pempek* businessmen in *Kampung Pempek* 26 Ilir based on different conditions, allowing for a comprehensive understanding of their financial standing. By diversifying their product offerings and adapting to varying market demands, these business actors strive to cater to the preferences of their customers while generating a sustainable income.

Table 6. Average Income of *Pempek* Entrepreneurs in *Pempek* Village 26 Ilir Based on Conditions

Sales Conditions	Total Sales (Rp/Day)	
	Lowest	Highest
Quiet	750,000	2,000,000
Normal	1,250,000	3,000,000
Crowded	2,000,000	6,000,000

Source: Compiled by the Authors (2022)

The existence of the Covid-19 pandemic has provided new behavior for business actors *Pempek* in *Kampung Pempek* 26 Ilir and attractiveness makes consumers turn to online media. This can be seen before Covid 19 hit and the Covid 19 pandemic hit, as follows:

Table 7. Average Income of *Pempek* Entrepreneurs before Covid 19 Strikes and the Covid 19 Pandemic Period

Before the Covid 19 Pandemic			During the Covid 19 Pandemic	
Sales Conditions	Total Sales (Rp/Day)		Total Sales (Rp/Day)	
	Lowest	Highest	Lowest	Highest
Quiet	750,000	2,000,000	100,000	750,000
Normal		1,250.000	500,000	1.750,000
Crowded	2,000,000	6,000,000	800,000	2,500,000

Source: Compiled by the Authors (2022)

It can be seen, that from table 1.5 above during the Covid 19 pandemic, business actors *Pempek* in *Kampung Pempek* 26 Ilir experienced a decrease in income, before the covid 19 pandemic hit the sales of business actors *Pempek* in *Kampung Pempek* 26 Ilir is stable. During the Covid 19 pandemic, business actors *Pempek* in *Kampung Pempek* 26 Ilir hit by a decrease in the purchasing power of the people of Palembang City for consumption of culinary food because the government prohibits traveling and the government also enforces social distancing.

Table 8. The amount of *Pempek* production according to the conditions during the Covid-19 Pandemic

No	Sales Conditions	Total Production (Items)
1	Normal	15,000
2	PSBB	8,000
3	PPKM Micro	4,000

Source: Compiled by the Authors (2022)

The table above explains that during the Covid 19 pandemic businessmen *Pempek* in *Kampung Pempek* 26 Ilir experienced a decline in sales because of it, business men *Pempek* in *Kampung Pempek* 26 Ilir must think creatively in making changes to sales methods. Utilization of social media by businessmen *Pempek* in *Kampung Pempek* 26 Ilir be a way out with the government policy that is enforce social distancing.

Ahimsa (2003), adaptation strategies can be defined as patterns of various efforts planned by humans to be able to meet the minimum requirements they need and to solve the problems they face there. The patterns here are patterns of behavior or action. A good strategy is coordinating work teams, having themes, identifying driving factors that are in accordance with the principles of implementing ideas rationally. Efficient in funding and tactics to achieve goals effectively (Oktaria & Alexandro, 2021). Therefore, adaptive behavior. The two adaptive strategies, in this case the adaptive strategy of *Pempek* business actors in *Kampung Pempek* 26 Ilir, have changed payments which were originally direct to virtual online, such as via bank transfers and OVO. The three adaptive processes, namely

business actors reducing the amount of production so that business continuity can still survive during the Covid 19 pandemic.

Obstacles faced by *Pempek* business actors to maintain business continuity during the Covid 19 Pandemic

The outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic has had a profound impact on countries worldwide, testing their readiness and resilience across social, economic, political, and national security domains. As a modern nation, Indonesia is intricately connected to the global community, relying on mutually beneficial cooperation with other countries to advance its national interests and improve the general welfare of its citizens (Widagdo et al., 2016). However, Indonesia's financial condition remains vulnerable due to the weakening global economic landscape (Purnawan, 2021).

The Covid-19 pandemic has ushered in a new normal, transforming the way business continuity is approached. Amidst the pandemic, there has been a significant increase in the mobility of people, goods, and services, facilitated by advancements in digital technology. Furthermore, the pandemic has hastened the emergence of new structures of social and economic inequality (Mariyanti & Mahfudz, 2016). Despite these challenges, it is believed that opportunities for transformation and the establishment of a more equitable society can arise. In this line, business actors have been compelled to seek strategies that ensure their continuity amidst the Covid-19 crisis (Setiawan & Barrett, 2016). The pandemic has triggered changes in various aspects of life, including individual behaviour, community responses, economic practices, state governance, and global relations. As a response to the emergency period, regulations such as community-level lockdowns, social distancing, work-from-home arrangements, and distance learning have become new norms. These adjustments have become ingrained habits in society (Azwardi & Sukanto, 2014).

Adapting to the community's conditions, individuals and institutions have implemented new life adjustments and behaviours to prevent and mitigate the impact of Covid-19. The pandemic has also brought about new opportunities for change and innovation. From an economic perspective, the prioritization of health and well-being has led to a cascade of crises in other sectors of life, prompting changes in business behaviour, including those in the *Pempek* industry in 26 Ilir Palembang City. Conventional *Pempek* businesses have transitioned into online platforms to meet the demands of the new normal.

In line with Ahimsa (2003) concept of adaptation strategies, *Pempek* business actors in 26 Ilir Palembang City have employed various patterns of behaviour and action. They have coordinated work teams, established themes, identified driving factors aligned with rational implementation principles, and adopted efficient funding and tactics to achieve their goals. Leveraging digital spaces, these businesses have utilized websites and social media platforms to promote their products to existing and new customers. Cashless transactions have become increasingly preferred as individuals prioritize their health, leading to a shift from conventional to online business transactions.

The Covid-19 pandemic has necessitated rapid adjustments in business behaviour, particularly for *Pempek* businesses. By embracing digital platforms and leveraging the power of online transactions, these businesses have adapted to the changing circumstances, ensuring their continuity and catering to the evolving needs of customers. In this challenging landscape, *Pempek* business actors in 26 Ilir Palembang City have displayed resilience and innovation, demonstrating their ability to navigate and thrive in the face of adversity.

Table 9. Income of Pempek Entrepreneurs in Kampung Pempek 26 Ilir in June 2020 Before Covid 19 Strikes and the Covid 19 Pandemic Period

Before the Covid-19		During the Covid-19	
Sales Conditions	Total Sales (Rp/Day)	Total Sales (Rp/Day)	
	Lowest	Highest	
Quiet	750,000	2,000,000	100,000
Normal	1,250,000	3,000,000	500,000
Crowded	2,000,000	6,000,000	800,000

Source: Compiled by the Authors (2022)

The data presented in Table 1.1 clearly demonstrates the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on the income of *Pempek* business actors in *Kampung Pempek 26 Ilir*. Prior to the pandemic, these business actors enjoyed stable sales figures. However, with the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic, they experienced a significant decrease in income. This decline can be attributed to various factors, including the restrictions imposed by the government, such as travel prohibitions and the enforcement of social distancing measures, which directly affected the purchasing power of the people of Palembang City, particularly in terms of culinary consumption. The government's measures to combat the spread of the virus, though necessary for public health and safety, inadvertently impacted the culinary sector, including *Pempek* businesses. The restrictions on travel and the implementation of social distancing measures led to a decline in consumer demand for culinary food products. People were discouraged from going out to dine or explore different culinary experiences, causing a noticeable decrease in the purchasing power of the local population.

The Palembang City Government has implemented a new policy aimed at controlling and interrupting the transmission of Covid-19 in the area. This policy, outlined in Mayor Circular Letter Number 25/SE/Dinkes/2021, focuses on extending the Micro-Based PPKM (Community Activity Restriction) and optimizing post measures for handling and controlling the spread of the virus at the *kelurahan* (sub-district) level. The evaluation of the PPKM Micro implementation involves the active participation of all government and societal elements. However, this policy poses new challenges for *Pempek* business actors in *Kampung Pempek 26 Ilir*, Palembang City. Therefore, *Pempek* business actors in *Kampung Pempek 26 Ilir* necessitate adjustments due to the interdependence of cultural aspects. The Covid-19 pandemic has profoundly impacted the economy, leading to large-scale restrictions and social distancing measures implemented by the government. Consequently, *Pempek* business actors in *Kampung Pempek 26 Ilir* are compelled to adapt to the changing economic landscape. The utilization of social media platforms becomes crucial in ensuring the economic viability of these business actors, as it enables them to navigate the challenges posed by the Covid-19 pandemic.

By embracing social media, *Pempek* business actors in *Kampung Pempek 26 Ilir* can effectively adapt to the environmental changes brought about by the pandemic. Leveraging social media platforms offers opportunities to reach a wider audience, engage with customers, and maintain economic sustainability amidst the prevailing circumstances. These platforms provide a means for *Pempek* business actors to promote their products, attract customers, and

facilitate online transactions, ensuring the continuity of their business operations during these challenging times. In this essence that, the policy implemented by the Palembang City Government, as well as the economic changes triggered by the Covid-19 pandemic, have necessitated adaptation and strategic adjustments for *Pempek* business actors in *Kampung Pempek 26 Ilir*. The utilization of social media platforms has emerged as a vital tool to navigate these challenges, enabling business actors to maintain their economic viability and respond effectively to the evolving needs of their customers. By embracing these changes and leveraging digital solutions, *Pempek* business actors can continue to thrive amidst the constraints imposed by the pandemic and contribute to the economic resilience of the Palembang City community.

CONCLUSIONS

During the Covid-19 pandemic, *Pempek* business actors in *Kampung Pempek 26 Ilir* implemented an adaptive behavior strategy to ensure business continuity. They shifted from conventional sales to online platforms, changing their payment methods from direct transactions to virtual online methods like bank transfers and OVO. Additionally, they reduced production to adapt to the challenging circumstances. However, these adaptive strategies were not without obstacles. Social restrictions led to a decrease in the number of buyers, production capacity, and business operating hours, resulting in a decline in income for *Pempek* business actors. Therefore, in light of these challenges, several suggestions can be proposed for the adaptation strategy of *Pempek* business actors in *Pempek 26 Ilir Village*, Palembang City during the Covid-19 pandemic. Firstly, it is essential for MSME entrepreneurs, particularly micro and small businesses, to seize the momentum of the pandemic by quickly adapting and developing product innovations aligned with market demand trends, while also embracing e-commerce and online applications. Secondly, the government should implement policies to protect MSMEs and ensure their competitiveness amid the ongoing pandemic, considering the decrease in capacity and income faced by these businesses. Finally, this thesis serves as a platform for readers to delve deeper into the changes in business behavior during the Covid-19 pandemic in Indonesia, fostering a better understanding of the current landscape.

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