



## SURVIVAL STRATEGIES OF PAJAK IKAN LAMA AS ONLINE MARKETS RISE

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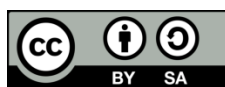
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### ABSTRACT

*This research focuses on the survival strategies applied by traders in Pasar Ikan Lama, Medan, who have been operating traditionally for at least five years. Pasar Ikan Lama is a well-known textile market in Medan City, which attracts not only local people but also visitors from other regions such as Aceh, Padang, and Riau. In the face of challenges from the proliferation of online shopping, traders in the Pasar Ikan Lama must adapt to the rapid changes in information and communication technology. This study identifies various strategies used by traders to attract buyers, such as providing discounts and utilizing online sales. Data analysis was conducted through interviews and note collection to understand more about the strategies implemented by merchants. The research also highlights the importance of understanding existing digital tools, where digital optimization can provide a more personalized experience for customers. However, the challenge faced is the need to learn and invest in new technologies. Overall, this research provides insights into how traditional market traders can remain relevant and competitive in the digital age, as well as the importance of integrating digital strategies in their businesses to achieve long-term success.*

**Keywords:** *Survival Strategy, Traditional Traders, Digital Era*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The Pasar Ikan Lama is one of the famous textile markets in Medan city, located in the Kesawan area. This market is located near Merdeka Square which is the center of Medan City itself, which is certainly very easy to reach by buyers. Pasar Ikan Lama is dominated by textile traders who sell various types of goods, ranging from raw materials to finished materials, Muslim clothes and prayer equipment, to all Arabian accessories. The Old Fish Market is not only visited by people in Medan, but also attracts migrants from Aceh, Padang and Riau. The structure of the shops in the Old Fish Market is actually similar to most markets in Medan, with some occupying shophouses on the side of the road and others in long, branching alleys. When entering the alleys in the market, there are many

vendors selling their wares. Many of the vendors watch people pass by and occasionally offer their goods.

But the market that was once full of hustle and bustle between traders and buyers now only leaves traders sitting quietly while waiting for buyers. Activities that were once very lively are now fairly quiet and almost deserted, very rarely are buyers seen in this market now. The change in circumstances that is so pronounced makes traders almost discouraged to sell their wares. The transition from the covid period to this fairly difficult economic period is a big stone that makes many traders stumble and almost paralyzed. Many ways have been done by traders to attract buyers, such as some stores providing discounts on each product and selling many discounted items. There are also some stores that have followed the times, such as optimizing online sales. However, there has not been much buying and selling activity in the Pasar Ikan Lama since the rise of online shopping in Medan City. Many of the shoppers have switched to shopping from home with prices that tend to be cheaper and of course many of the products sold at the Pasar Ikan Lama are in the online market. Without having to leave the house, buyers can buy the same goods as those in the Pasar Ikan Lama, and this is what makes the Pasar Ikan Lama less able to compete with the Online market.

Online markets have changed the way transactions and interactions take place in many sectors, including the textile market sector. In Medan City, the development of information and communication technology has created many new opportunities for traders, but there are also significant challenges for traditional market traders such as Pasar Ikan Lama. Market vendors who have been operating for years with traditional methods must now adapt to the rapid changes in information and communication technology to compete and survive. The growth of online markets in major cities in Indonesia cannot be underestimated, including in Medan City. According to a report from the Indonesian Internet Service Providers Association (APJII), internet access in Indonesia continues to increase, which will certainly encourage the development of e-commerce platforms and buying and selling applications. This will certainly be a very serious threat to Pasar Ikan Lama traders who are unable to adapt to these changes.

Many of the traders in the Pasar Ikan Lama still use traditional buying and selling methods to run their businesses. They usually sell their merchandise directly to the market by relying on the stock they provide. However, with the increasing interest from consumers for new styles of goods and the increasing interest from consumers to shop online with the many variations offered in it, traders are thought to need to learn and continue to explore many new strategies in order to survive. The main challenge that many Pasar Ikan Lama merchants face is the shift in consumer behavior. Almost all consumers now choose to shop from home which makes traditional traders lose their market share. Of course, adaptation to information and communication technology can be a problem-solver to increase the competitiveness of small traders in the midst of an increasingly competitive online market. Pasar Ikan Lama traders must understand consumers and consumer behavior that changes along with the development of existing technology.

Another obstacle that many Pasar Ikan Lama traders face is the lack of knowledge and skills in the field of technology and information. Many of the merchants are not familiar with the use of digital platforms as a place to market their merchandise. Therefore, the right training and education program is needed to be the best solution to improve their ability to adapt in today's modern era. On the other hand, the government can also assist

the development of Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) by developing official market websites and so on.

Research conducted by (Febriani et al., 2023) with the title -Strategy of Survival of Conventional Traders in the Middle of Online Shop Development (Case Study of Conventional Traders in Belinyu Market). Related research discusses what strategies are used by conventional traders to survive amid the development of Online Shop (case study on conventional traders in the Belinyu market), where traders are still loyal to maintaining the business they are running even though they have to compete in the midst of rampant online shopping. Furthermore, other research was conducted by (Islam & Rifai, 2024) with the title Survival Strategy of Conventional Clothing Traders in the Middle of the Rise of Online Shop (Case Study of Traders in Panorama Bengkulu City). The study aims to find out how the reality of the lives of conventional clothing traders in the Pasar Bengkulu Panorama and the impact of the rise of online shopping on the business of conventional traders and the survival strategies of conventional traders in the Pasar Panorama of Bengkulu City amid the rise of online shopping. Finally, research conducted by (Adelia et al., 2024) with the title -Strategy of Survival of Clothing Traders in the Pasar Traditional of Nagari Ujung Gading in the Middle of E-Commerce Development in Islamic Economic Perspective. The study aims to see how the consequences of the development of E-commerce on traditional market traders who sell clothes in Nagari Ujung Gading, as well as see what survival strategies are used by traders in the review of Islamic economics.

## 2. RESEARCH METHOD

The type of research used is descriptive qualitative. The research approach used is a sociological approach. The sociological approach is a research approach whose object of discussion involves individuals or communities: This research only focuses on traders in the Pasar Ikan Lama which operates traditionally precisely at JL. Railway Station, Kesawan, Kec. Medan Bar, Medan City, North Sumatra. The sociological approach is used by researchers to find out the impact of the rise of Online Markets in Medan City on Pasar Ikan Lama traders and the survival strategies carried out by market traders in facing competition with Online Markets (online stores).

## 3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

### Description of Research Location

This research was conducted in Medan city at the Pasar Ikan Lama. The Pasar Ikan Lama is a prominent textile center in Kesawan, Medan City. From Fish to Textiles, the Pasar Ikan Lama was originally a hive for fish, meat and vegetable traders during the Dutch colonial era. The market originally sold an abundance of fish, from wet fish to preserved ones like anchovies and salted fish. However, the third generation of cloth shop owners there, after the military aggression and the departure of the Dutch, the market metamorphosed into a textile center. This change in function from a fish sales center to a textile market has an interesting history. The majority of migrants from Singapore, India and Arabia brought their textile wares with them. Their presence along with the presence of many tailors in the area gave impetus to the development of the textile business in the Pasar Ikan Lama. The Pasar Ikan Lama was once the main trading center of Medan City.

The area became a meeting place for people from various regions, with the harbor behind it connecting the downstream and upstream rivers. The name “Pasar Ikan” also implies a place to sell fish from the ocean.

The textile business has a stronger staying power than fish sales. Fabrics do not spoil easily and can be stored for a longer period of time, making it a more business-stable option. This explains why this market has slowly shifted its focus to the textile industry. Pasar Ikan Lama is not just a name, it also tells the story of Medan's trading history. From its rich history of transitioning businesses from fish to textiles, we can see how the diversity of culture and trade has shaped the city. This market, despite its changing functions, is still an important part of Medan's historical impression. However, as it continues to transform, its existence still reminds us of the traces of the past that shaped the face of the city into what it is today. The Pasar Ikan Lama is not only a place of commerce, but also a story of change and adaptation in the ever-changing world of commerce over time.

### **Survival Strategies That Can Be Applied By Pasar Ikan Lama Traders In Medan City Amid The Rise Of Online Markets**

With declining incomes and ever-increasing needs, merchants have to figure out how they can continue to make money in the internet market era. The Pasar Ikan Lama traders still use several strategies, including Price discount strategy.

The price reduction offered to customers from the normal price of a product listed on the product label or packaging is known as a discount price. A discount pricing strategy is a deliberate pricing approach adopted by businesses to stimulate sales and attract customers by offering goods and services at discounted prices. The primary goals of a discounting strategy often revolve around increasing short-term sales, depleting stock, attracting new customers, or rewarding loyal customers. This tactic is a powerful tool for increasing market presence and revenue, making it a staple in sales and marketing strategies. In the research conducted, there are several strategies carried out by traders in the Pasar Ikan Lama. One of them is providing discounted prices, this is as stated by Buk Lita as a headscarf trader in the Pasar Ikan Lama as follows:

“Of course, I give a discount but only per purchase of 3 pcs, because I can't take a lot of profit, which should be in 3 pcs, I can get a profit of 15 thousand now it's 10 thousand” (Interview: Lita, 2024).

The information above shows that Ms. Lita provides a discounted price for buyers who buy at least 3 pieces of goods, and from the strategy she does she only takes a small profit due to the difficulty of getting buyers in the midst of the current online market, with the discounted price Ms. Lita hopes that buyers will be interested in buying her merchandise and stabilize her income again.

Apart from Ms. Lita, other traders such as Ms. Jannah as a Muslim clothing trader in the Pasar Ikan Lama also set a price discount strategy, as stated as follows:

“To increase my income now in the era of many online markets, I give discounts, like the price of the koko shirt that I display in front of me, which is from 125 thousand, I discount it to just 100 thousand” (Interview: Jannah, 2024).

From the above description in the midst of the rise of the online market, the strategy chosen by Mrs. Lita and Mrs. Jannah is to give discounts to their buyers with this strategy

Mrs. Lita and Mrs. Jannah hope that buyers can come back and buy in large quantities and increase sales volume.

In today's digital era, the market also faces many changes and problems. Both positive and negative, digital technology has affected the market and its merchants. On the one hand, digital technology offers opportunities to improve market performance, efficiency and competitiveness, but it also poses a threat to markets, especially conventional markets such as the Pasar Ikan Lama, which are still lagging behind in terms of innovation and adaptation.

Therefore, for both traditional and contemporary market traders, digital optimization is crucial and important. The process of using digital technologies to improve the quality and quantity of services, products, and business processes in a market is known as digital optimization. Digital optimization can be achieved in various ways, such as:

1. Using an app or online platform to promote, sell, and deliver products to customers;
  2. Using digital payment systems to speed up and simplify transactions;
  3. Using digital tools such as barcode scanners, printers, or cameras to record and track sales, inventory, or sales; and
  4. Using social media or websites to communicate with others.
5. Nonetheless, digital optimization also poses some challenges for both traditional and modern market traders

### **Challenges Faced By Pasar Ikan Lama Traders Amidst The Rise Of Online Markets**

Merchants lack digital skills and knowledge. Many merchants are not accustomed to or do not understand how to use digital technology correctly and efficiently, which causes confusion, distrust, or mistakes when transacting with these technologies. This is as stated by Mr. Rahmad as a peci and Muslim clothing trader at the Pasar Ikan Lama as follows:

“The era is already online, you also want to follow the times but you are not good at playing social media” (Interview: Rahmad, 2024).

From the explanation conveyed by Mr. Rahmad as a business actor in the Pasar Ikan Lama, it shows that there is still a lack of knowledge of traders regarding the use of digital platforms to market their wares more broadly, so this is the biggest challenge for traders to compete in the current online market era. But this does not apply to wholesale traders who trade in the Pasar Ikan Lama, because wholesale traders have long been marketing their wares online such as WhatsApp stories as stated by Mr. Anwar as a batik clothing trader in the Pasar Ikan Lama as follows:

“In my personal opinion, I just hope that the subscriptions that we have built up so far are just that, yes, we also use digital partly but I don't use shopee, the name of our relationship is there is data in the cellphone, such as the telephone number, we just have to share it like through WA status, that's all the anticipation, and then they will market their merchandise again, like a reseller” (Interview: Anwar, 2024).

From the results of the interview above, Mr. Anwar explained that as a gosiran trader in the current online market era, he only expects the relationships that have been established with his store's subscriptions / resellers by uploading status via WA so that with this Mr. Anwar feels that the challenges in this online market do not have a significant effect on his income as a trader at the Pasar Ikan Lama in Medan City.

From the explanation above, we can see that online marketplaces also provide traditional and modern market traders with the opportunity to significantly increase the visibility and reach of their business through online platforms, which can help in attracting new customers and increasing sales.

#### 4. CONCLUSION

In the internet age, competition in the market has become more intense. Companies have to compete with many competitors online, which requires innovative marketing strategies. Traditional market traders need to learn and adopt digital technology to stay relevant. The challenge is to learn and understand the digital tools at hand. Digital optimization allows merchants to provide a more customized and personalized experience for their customers, but it also requires an investment of time and resources. So, traditional and modern market traders need to understand these potential opportunities and challenges, and wisely integrate digital strategies into their business to achieve long-term success.

Merchants should create an online store or join an e-commerce platform. This allows them to reach a wider range of customers and simplify the buying process. Conduct market analysis to understand customer preferences. Use the data to design more effective marketing campaigns, including special offers for repeat customers. Collaborate with local farmers or other businesses to create more diverse and interesting products. This can also strengthen community networks.

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