

UTILIZATION OF SOCIAL MEDIA AS A MANAGERIAL EDUCATIONAL MEDIUM FOR ENHANCING BROILER CHICKEN FARMING CAPACITY

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Abstract

The broiler chicken farming sector in Indonesia faces significant managerial challenges, particularly among small- and medium-scale farmers with limited access to information and formal training. This study aims to identify the potential, constraints, and optimization strategies for utilizing social media as a managerial educational medium to enhance farmers' capacity. A descriptive qualitative approach was employed through non-participant online observation of broiler farmer communities on Facebook and educational content on YouTube, followed by thematic analysis of interactions and shared materials. The findings indicate that social media accelerates the dissemination of managerial information, strengthens collaboration, and expands farmer networks. However, limited digital literacy and unequal internet infrastructure remain major barriers to effective utilization. This study concludes that optimizing social media for managerial education requires tiered digital literacy training, the development of locally relevant content, and improved internet accessibility to support sustainable digital transformation in the broiler farming sector.

Keywords: social media; managerial education; broiler chicken farming; digital literacy; capacity building

INTRODUCTION

Social media has demonstrated a significant role in driving digital transformation within the agricultural and livestock sectors. Previous studies indicate that farmers who actively utilize social media platforms tend to exhibit higher levels of agricultural technology adoption compared to those who rely solely on conventional extension services (Mwangi & Kariuki, 2015). Social media facilitates rapid information exchange, peer-to-peer learning, and broader access to innovations, thereby supporting capacity building among farmers in a cost-effective and flexible manner.

In the context of poultry farming, recent research by OT et al. (2024) revealed that the use of digital platforms such as WhatsApp and Facebook among broiler farmers in Nigeria improved farm management effectiveness, expanded access to market information, and strengthened networking among farmers. These findings highlight the potential of social media as an informal learning medium that supports managerial decision-making and enhances production performance. Such platforms enable farmers to share practical experiences, discuss challenges, and collectively develop solutions in real time.

Despite this growing body of evidence, the utilization of social media as a managerial educational medium in Indonesia—particularly among small- and medium-scale broiler chicken farmers—remains underexplored. Existing studies in the Indonesian poultry sector predominantly focus on technical aspects such as feed formulation, disease control, and

housing systems, while digital-based managerial education has received limited scholarly attention. Furthermore, empirical research examining the dynamics of digital farmer communities, the forms of learning that emerge within these communities, and the contextual factors that facilitate or hinder effective knowledge exchange is still scarce. This gap in the literature suggests the need for a more comprehensive investigation into social media-based managerial learning in the local context.

From a theoretical perspective, the use of social media in non-formal education can be explained through the lenses of community-based learning and social constructivism. These approaches emphasize social interaction and collective knowledge construction as central elements of the learning process. Social media platforms enable two-way communication, real-time interaction, and wide geographic reach, making them particularly suitable for farmers who face limitations in accessing formal training programs and conventional extension services. In the livestock sector, such digital learning environments can serve as alternative spaces for continuous managerial education and empowerment.

This study is expected to contribute both practically and academically. Practically, the findings may serve as a reference for policymakers, extension agents, and development practitioners in formulating strategies to empower broiler farmers through digital technologies. Academically, this research seeks to fill the existing gap in the literature on digital managerial education in the livestock sector and to provide a foundation for future studies on community-based digital transformation in agriculture and animal husbandry.

Based on this background, the present study aims to identify the potential, constraints, and optimal strategies for utilizing social media as a managerial educational medium to enhance the capacity of broiler chicken farmers in Indonesia.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Social Media in Agricultural and Livestock Education

The rapid development of information and communication technology has transformed knowledge dissemination processes in the agricultural and livestock sectors. Social media platforms have emerged as important tools for facilitating information sharing, learning, and innovation diffusion among farmers. According to Kaplan and Haenlein (2010), social media enables user-generated content and interactive communication, allowing users to collaboratively create and exchange information. In agricultural contexts, this interactive nature supports informal learning and enhances farmers' access to up-to-date technical and managerial knowledge.

Several studies have shown that social media use positively influences farmers' learning behavior and decision-making. Mwangi and Kariuki (2015) reported that farmers who actively engage with digital communication platforms demonstrate higher adoption rates of agricultural technologies. Similarly, Ansari et al. (2019) found that social media-based learning improves farmers' awareness of best practices, reduces information asymmetry, and strengthens peer learning networks. These findings suggest that social media can function as an effective complementary medium to conventional agricultural extension services.

Managerial Education and Capacity Building in Broiler Farming

Managerial capacity is a critical determinant of productivity and sustainability in broiler chicken farming. Effective management involves planning, organizing, controlling production processes, financial management, and market-oriented decision-making (FAO, 2017). Small- and medium-scale broiler farmers often face challenges related to limited managerial skills, lack of access to training, and insufficient market information, which negatively affect their business performance.

Previous research in the poultry sector has largely focused on technical aspects such as nutrition, biosecurity, and disease prevention (Sujatha & Reddy, 2018). However, studies emphasizing managerial education have demonstrated that improved managerial competencies significantly enhance production efficiency and profitability. For instance, Kahan (2013) emphasized that farm management education plays a key role in improving farmers' ability to adapt to market changes and production risks. This highlights the importance of integrating managerial education into capacity-building programs for broiler farmers.

Social Media as a Managerial Educational Medium

Recent studies indicate that social media platforms can effectively support managerial education in livestock farming. OT et al. (2024) found that the use of WhatsApp and Facebook groups among broiler farmers facilitated knowledge exchange related to farm management, cost efficiency, and marketing strategies. These platforms enable farmers to share experiences, discuss challenges, and obtain immediate feedback from peers and experts.

Furthermore, social media supports continuous learning through community interaction, which is particularly valuable for farmers in remote areas. Aker (2011) argued that digital communication technologies reduce transaction costs and improve access to information, thereby enhancing farmers' managerial decision-making. The flexibility and accessibility of social media make it a practical tool for non-formal managerial education, especially for farmers with limited time and resources.

Theoretical Perspectives: Community-Based Learning and Social Constructivism

The use of social media in managerial education can be theoretically grounded in community-based learning and social constructivism theories. Community-based learning emphasizes learning as a social process that occurs through participation and interaction within a community (Lave & Wenger, 1991). In digital environments, social media communities function as virtual communities of practice where farmers collectively construct knowledge based on shared experiences.

Social constructivism further explains how knowledge is developed through social interaction and collaboration (Vygotsky, 1978). Social media platforms provide spaces for discussion, reflection, and co-creation of knowledge, enabling farmers to learn from each other in real time. In the context of broiler farming, these theoretical approaches support the use of social media as an effective medium for enhancing managerial competencies and fostering sustainable capacity development.

Research Gap

Although previous studies have acknowledged the potential of social media in agricultural education, empirical research focusing on its role as a managerial educational medium in broiler chicken farming in Indonesia remains limited. Most existing studies prioritize technical production aspects and overlook the managerial dimension of digital learning. Additionally, limited attention has been given to identifying the constraints and enabling factors influencing the effectiveness of social media-based managerial education within local farming communities. Therefore, further research is necessary to explore how social media can be optimally utilized to enhance the managerial capacity of broiler farmers in the Indonesian context.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This study employed a descriptive qualitative approach aimed at providing a systematic and in-depth understanding of the utilization of social media as a managerial educational medium in broiler chicken farming. A qualitative design was selected because it allows for the exploration of meanings, contexts, and subjective experiences within farmer communities, particularly regarding the use of digital technology as a form of non-formal learning. This approach is appropriate for examining naturally occurring social phenomena in digital spaces and for capturing the complexity of social interactions, perceptions, and communication dynamics among farmers, extension agents, and industry practitioners in online environments (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

Research Setting and Data Sources

The research focused on digital communities related to broiler farming that actively use social media as a medium for information exchange and learning. Data were collected from online platforms, particularly Facebook groups and YouTube channels dedicated to poultry farming. Observed Facebook groups included communities such as "*Peternak Mandiri Broiler Indonesia*", while YouTube channels containing educational content on broiler farm management, cost of production (HPP) calculation, housing management, and digital marketing were also examined.

Primary data were obtained through online observation of discussions, comment sections, and shared content within these platforms. Secondary data were derived from relevant scientific literature, reports, and previous studies related to social media use, managerial education, and broiler farming.

Data Collection Technique

Data collection was conducted through non-participant online observation. The researcher did not actively engage in discussions or interactions within the observed communities but systematically monitored communication patterns, types of content shared, frequency of managerial topics, and the nature of responses and interactions among community members. This non-participatory approach was adopted to preserve data authenticity and minimize potential bias that could arise from researcher involvement in the digital communities.

The observation process emphasized managerial-related content, including discussions on farm planning, production cost management, risk management, marketing strategies, and decision-making processes. Field notes were recorded continuously and organized to facilitate subsequent analysis.

Data Analysis

The collected data were analyzed using thematic analysis, following the procedures proposed by Braun and Clarke (2006). This method involved several stages: familiarization with the data, initial coding, identification of recurring patterns, theme development, and refinement of themes. Data were then classified into three main analytical categories:

1. The potential of social media as a managerial educational medium for broiler farmers;
2. Constraints and challenges in utilizing social media for managerial learning; and
3. Strategies for optimizing the use of social media to enhance managerial capacity.

This analytical process enabled the identification of dominant themes and relationships among social, technological, and contextual factors influencing social media-based learning.

Research Validity and Trustworthiness

To ensure the trustworthiness of the findings, this study applied data triangulation by combining literature review and observations across multiple digital platforms. Prolonged engagement with online communities and repeated observations were also conducted to enhance data credibility. In addition, detailed documentation of observation procedures and analytical steps was maintained to support transparency and dependability.

Ethical Considerations

Ethical considerations were addressed by observing only publicly accessible content and refraining from collecting personal or identifiable information from community members. The study did not intervene in online discussions, and all data were used solely for academic purposes.

Methodological Contribution

By integrating literature analysis and systematic observation of digital farming communities, this study provides a comprehensive and contextualized understanding of how social media functions as a managerial educational medium in broiler chicken farming. This methodological approach allows for the exploration of social, technological, and cultural factors shaping the effectiveness of social media-based learning in the Indonesian poultry sector.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Potential of Social Media as a Managerial Educational Medium

Based on the thematic analysis of discussions within the Facebook group “*Peternak Mandiri Broiler Indonesia*” and educational content published on poultry-related YouTube channels, the findings indicate that social media possesses substantial potential as a managerial educational medium for broiler chicken farmers. Group members actively shared information related to business planning, financial record-keeping, production cost analysis, and marketing strategies. Notably, practical tools such as Excel-based templates for calculating the Cost of Production (Harga Pokok Produksi/HPP) were frequently shared and could be downloaded and implemented by other farmers within a short period.

This form of peer-to-peer knowledge exchange demonstrates how social media facilitates rapid dissemination of applied managerial knowledge, supporting informal and self-directed learning. These findings align with community-based learning theory, which emphasizes collaborative knowledge construction through shared experiences within a community of practice (Lave & Wenger, 1991).

Networking, Collaboration, and Managerial Efficiency

Social media platforms also enabled collaboration and networking among broiler farmers through features such as “share” and “forward.” These features facilitated collective coordination for feed procurement, information exchange on input prices, and joint marketing initiatives. Such collaborative practices contribute to improved managerial efficiency and cost optimization at the farm level.

These results are consistent with the findings of OT et al. (2024), who reported that the use of Facebook and WhatsApp among broiler farmers in Nigeria enhanced farm management effectiveness, market access, and farmer networking. The similarity of findings across different national contexts suggests that social media plays a universal role in strengthening managerial capacity in small- and medium-scale poultry farming.

Constraints in Social Media Utilization

Despite its considerable potential, several constraints were identified. The most prominent challenge was limited digital literacy among farmers. Many group members experienced difficulties in utilizing advanced platform features such as file sharing, online polling, and live streaming. As a result, the full educational potential of social media was not optimally realized.

In addition, unequal internet infrastructure and unstable connectivity in rural areas hindered access to multimedia content, including tutorial videos and live question-and-answer sessions. These formats are particularly important because visual and interactive content has been shown to improve comprehension and learning outcomes in digital education (OT et al., 2024). These findings reinforce existing literature that emphasizes the importance of technical training and infrastructure readiness prior to large-scale digital technology adoption.

Strategies for Optimizing Social Media-Based Managerial Education

To address the identified challenges, several optimization strategies are proposed. These include the implementation of tiered digital literacy training tailored to farmers' skill levels, the development of locally relevant and context-specific educational content, and partnerships with internet service providers to offer affordable data packages specifically designed for agricultural communities. Such strategies could enhance accessibility, usability, and learning effectiveness, thereby strengthening the role of social media in managerial capacity building.

Overall, the findings indicate that social media can serve as an effective medium for digital transformation in broiler farming management, provided that it is supported by improved digital literacy and adequate infrastructure.

Table 1. Summary of Thematic Analysis Results

Analytical Focus	Key Findings	Supporting Evidence
Potential of social media	Rapid dissemination of managerial knowledge; sharing of HPP templates and planning tools	Active sharing of Excel files, managerial discussions in Facebook groups
Networking and collaboration	Improved coordination in feed procurement and product marketing	Use of "share" and "forward" features among group members
Constraints	Limited digital literacy; poor internet connectivity in rural areas	Difficulty using advanced features; limited access to video and live content
Optimization strategies	Digital literacy training; locally relevant content; internet partnerships	Recommendations based on observed barriers and best practices

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that social media has significant potential as a managerial educational medium for enhancing the capacity of broiler chicken farmers in Indonesia. Through digital platforms such as Facebook groups and YouTube channels, farmers are able to access, share, and apply managerial knowledge related to business planning, financial management, production cost calculation, and marketing strategies in a timely and practical manner. The interactive and community-based nature of social media supports informal learning and facilitates peer-to-peer knowledge exchange, which contributes to improved managerial awareness and decision-making.

The findings also reveal that social media fosters networking and collaboration among broiler farmers, enabling collective actions such as coordinated feed procurement and shared marketing initiatives. These collaborative practices enhance managerial efficiency and align with previous studies that highlight the role of digital platforms in strengthening farm management and market access.

However, the effectiveness of social media as a managerial educational medium is constrained by limited digital literacy among farmers and unequal access to internet infrastructure, particularly in rural areas. These challenges restrict the optimal use of advanced platform features and limit access to interactive multimedia content, which is crucial for effective digital learning.

Therefore, this study emphasizes the importance of integrated strategies to optimize social media utilization, including tiered digital literacy training, the development of locally relevant educational content, and improved internet accessibility for agricultural communities. With adequate support in terms of skills development and infrastructure, social media can serve as an effective driver of digital transformation and sustainable managerial capacity building in the broiler chicken farming sector.

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