The Role of Instagram Accounts as a Tax Counseling Tool to Increase Tax Awareness Among MSME Actors

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Article	Abstract
Keywords: *Tax Counseling, Increasing Tax Awareness, Msmes.* **History of Article** Received: January 2025 Reviewed: January 2025 Accepted: January 2025 Published: January 2025	There is an urgent need to raise MSMEs' tax understanding because of the significant role that taxes and MSMEs play in the Indonesian economy. Indonesia has 99.1 million Instagram users in 2024, making it the country with the second-highest number worldwide. With so many users, the purpose of this study is to determine how the Instagram platform functions as a tool for tax dissemination in order to raise MSME tax awareness. This study employs a qualitative, descriptive research methodology. The study's findings suggest that using Instagram is a significant factor in raising tax awareness. The Directorate General of Taxation's (DGT) official Instagram account makes it simpler, quicker, less expensive, and more comprehensive to target MSME actors across Indonesia with various tax-related information. In order to raise public awareness of taxes, DGT should create more creative and engaging content, upload videos more frequently and consistently, and make use of Instagram's paid advertising feature. Another option to make tax dissemination through the Instagram platform significant and influence tax awareness is to work with a tax dissemination content creator specialist.

1. INTRODUCTION

Law No. 20 of 2008 on MSMEs explains that micro businesses are productive businesses owned by individuals or individual business entities that meet the criteria for Micro Businesses as regulated in the Law. Meanwhile, Small Businesses are independent productive economic businesses carried out by individuals or business entities that are not subsidiaries or branches of a business owned, controlled, or part of, directly or indirectly, Small Enterprises as defined in the law. Meanwhile, medium enterprises are independent productive economic businesses carried out by individuals or business entities that are not subsidiaries or branches of businesses owned, controlled, or part of, directly or indirectly, Small or Large Enterprises with net wealth or annual sales as regulated by law.

Artini et al. (2019) explain that Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) have a significant role in the movement of the national economy. MSMEs contribute to increasing national income, absorbing labor, improving the income of lower-middle-income

communities, and increasing the utilization of local raw materials to produce affordable goods and services for the broader public.

Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) are one of the sectors with a strategic role in becoming a mainstay of the national economy. MSMEs are also the largest economic actor group in Indonesia and have proven to be the backbone of the national economy during economic crises. According to data from the Investment Coordinating Board (2020), MSMEs contribute 61.97% to GDP, or the equivalent of IDR 8,500 trillion. However, at the 2020 National Tax Conference, the Minister of Finance of the Republic of Indonesia stated that tax awareness among the Indonesian public, including MSMEs, remains low. Boediono (2018) mentioned that the main cause of this issue is that MSME actors still consider taxes as a burden and feel that the state does not provide contributions in return for the taxes paid.

With the conditions mentioned above, the Directorate General of Taxes (DGT) as the tax authority needs a specific strategy to increase the tax compliance of MSME taxpayers so that their tax contributions can be increased. Improving tax compliance can be done by increasing education and socialization. This aligns with the research findings of Adiatma (2015), which show that education, appeals, and socialization conducted by the Directorate General of Taxes have a positive influence on taxpayer compliance. Liyana (2014) also stated that the more the public knows and understands their tax obligations, the higher their tax compliance will be. Therefore, the Directorate General of Taxes needs to develop a strategy regarding how to educate and communicate with taxpayers.

To conduct tax counseling, appropriate and effective tools or methods are required, so the goal of tax counseling is achieved successfully. In today's digital era, various information becomes easier, faster, and cheaper to deliver to the public through social media.

Instagram is one of the unique social media platforms, distinct from others such as, Facebook, and Twitter. Instagram, as a platform for sharing short videos, has become a favorite of many, especially in an era where people's attention spans are no more than 4 seconds, making Instagram a social media platform favored by the public (Agassi, 2020). TikTok's Shoppertainment model is commerce-based content that prioritizes entertainment and education, while integrating content and communities to create an immersive shopping experience. This approach creates an engaging way for brands to alter their interaction with consumers through a "video-first, sound-on" format. An analysis by BCG (Boston Consulting Group) also predicts that Shoppertainment is expected to grow at a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 63%, with three of the top contributing markets in Asia-Pacific being Indonesia, Japan, and South Korea (Newsroom TikTok, 2022). According to data from Indonesia (2022), Instagram users in Indonesia are the second largest in the world.

This can be seen in Figure 1. Countries with the largest number of Instagram User In Indonesia.

Figure 1: Countries with the Largest Number of Instagram Users in Indonesia.
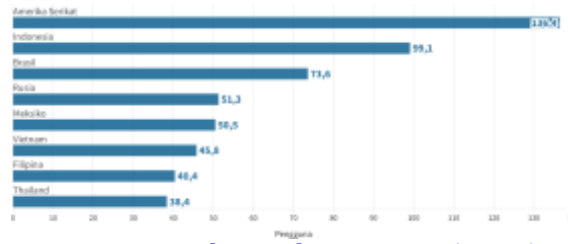
Source: www.dataindonesia.org(2024).

Based on Figure 1, Indonesia ranks second after the United States in terms of the largest number of Instagram users worldwide, with 99.1 million Instagram accounts. With this large number of Instagram users, almost 50% of Indonesia's population, Instagram is certainly one of the communication platforms with promising prospects for utilization. According to CampusDigital.id, this fact has driven MSME actors to eagerly market their products using the Instagram platform. This means more MSME actors are registering as active users of Instagram and using it as a marketing tool. Rasdin et al. (2021) in their study mentioned that Instagram, with its various attractive features and ease of operation, can be effectively and efficiently used as an educational medium. Similarly, Palupi et al. (2021) stated that Instagram is a promising platform for the dissemination of Islamic teachings. This is proven by the positive responses from the public to the da'wah posts on Instagram.

Given the vast potential for tax bases among MSME actors on Instagram, the Directorate General of Taxes (DGT) is attempting to utilize TikTok as a tax counseling medium through the @ditjenpajakri TikTok account to increase tax awareness among the public in general and MSME actors in particular. This account is a verified blue-check Instagram account. As of December 8, 2024, the DJP Instagram account has 135,500 followers. When compared to the number of individual taxpayers, which is 13,360,000, and the number of MSME actors in Indonesia in 2023, which is 64 million people, the number of followers of the @ditjenpajakri Instagram account is still very small. This reflects a large opportunity and space to further utilize Instagram as a platform to raise tax awareness. Based on this, the researcher is interested in studying Instagram as one of the communication media used by the Directorate General of Taxes to disseminate tax rules and policies to MSME actors.

Therefore, the researcher will adopt the title "The Role of Instagram Accounts as a Tax Counseling Tool to Increase Tax Awareness Among MSME Actors". This research will answer three main questions: What is the role of the DJP Instagram account in increasing tax awareness among MSME taxpayers.

2. METHODS

This study uses a descriptive research method with a qualitative approach. The focus of this research is on tax socialization through the Instagram social media platform, which is expected to raise tax awareness among MSME actors. The research was conducted in the South Lampung City.

The data sources used are divided into two categories according to Lofland in Moleong (2007:157), as follows:

a. Primary Data

Primary data was collected using interviews. Interviews were conducted with the following informants:

1) Informant I and Informant II: MSME actors who are followers of the DJP Instagram account @ditjenpajakri.
2) Informant III and IV: MSME actors who are not followers of the DJP Instagram account @ditjenpajakri.
3) Informant V and VI: officials from the Directorate General of Taxes (DGT).
4) Informant VII and VIII: social media activists (as defined by KBBI, an activist is someone who actively engages in an activity or event).

The researcher also conducted observations on the DJP Instagram account as part of primary data collection.

b. Secondary Data

Secondary data was obtained from the DGT (Directorate General of Taxes), library studies, books, and articles from online media using documentation techniques. Arvanitha (2019) explains that documentation involves recording and noting past events. Documentation can include photos, videos, writings, images, works, and others. Documentation in qualitative research is used to complement interview and observation techniques.

To test the validity of the data, source triangulation and technique triangulation were applied. Sugiyono (2012:327) states that technique triangulation means using different data collection methods to obtain data from the same data source. The researcher used observation, interviews, and documentation for the same data sources. Source triangulation means obtaining data from different sources using the same technique. After the data validity is verified, data analysis is performed using Miles and Huberman's theory as cited in Sugiyono (2013), which includes Data Reduction, Data Presentation, and Conclusion Drawing.

3. ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

Based on the results of data reduction from interview transcripts, the findings are as shown in Table 2 below:

Table 1. Final Coding

No	Final Coding
1	Instagram Content
2	Tax Understanding and Engagement
3	Tax Payment Awareness

a. Instagram Content @ditjenpajakri and MSME Actors' Expectations

Based on the researcher's observations of the content on the Instagram account @ditjenpajakri, there are only 3 (three) playlists, namely SPT, NPWP, and PPS. As of August 2023, the account had 130 thousand followers. The video content uploaded

includes how to register for NPWP, how to file the annual SPT online, information about PPS (Voluntary Disclosure of Taxes), and other tax-related content. According to Informant VI, who works as a tax counselor, the content is already in line with tax regulations.

However, according to MSME actors (both followers and non-followers), the current content does not cover enough of what they need or like. They suggest that additional playlists be added to make the information more comprehensive. For example, playlists for DJP Online features, playlists about types of tax forms, playlists on how to calculate taxes, playlists related to income tax (PPh), and so on.

According to Weimann and Masri (2020), content that is popular with Instagram users, both followers and non-followers, will appear on the FYP (For You Page). This is something that the DJP should pay attention to when managing its TikTok content, so that tax content can appear on the feed, not just for followers, given that the DJP Instagram account only has 130,000 followers. This was also stated by Informants III and IV, who mentioned that the @ditjenpajakri Instagram content has never appeared on their FYP. However, Informants I and II agreed that they can use the DJP TikTok account as a source of information, but it still lacks much of the information they need. Informant II also mentioned that they had never seen tax-related content on their FYP.

Therefore, a special strategy is needed to make the tax-related content uploaded by @ditjenpajakri more appealing so that it can be viewed by both users and non-users. As suggested by Informant VIII, DJP should consider investing in paid ads on Instagram to viralize its videos, so that their reach is broader and more targeted. The content should also be made as attractive as possible by following trends and current topics in the social media world. Furthermore, DJP could collaborate with influencers, content creators, and other third parties to help increase followers and engagement with Instagram users.

Informant VII also noted that the Directorate General of Taxes is fairly active in providing tax information through its Instagram account, but the access to this information is still limited, especially when compared to the number of registered individual taxpayers. Informant VII suggested that to gain more followers, DJP should promote its Instagram account on Facebook, informing the public that DJP now has an Instagram account where tax-related content is delivered through engaging videos.

The researcher agrees with Informants VII and VIII, and believes that the Directorate General of Taxes, particularly the public relations and tax outreach department, should allocate a budget for advertising or promoting videos on Instagram to increase views and engagement. Another option is for DJP to collaborate with Instagram Indonesia to help boost the algorithm of positive tax awareness content.

Based on Informant V's information, training has already been conducted on how to become a content creator and how to use social media effectively for tax outreach. However, it was acknowledged that DJP has not yet fully optimized various features,

algorithms, ad tools, and other facilities available on the Instagram app for tax outreach.

From the researcher's observation, it is evident that the Instagram account @ditjenpajakri provides various tax-related information via video. However, the responses in the form of likes, views, and comments for each post are still not optimal when compared to the number of followers on the DJP Instagram account. Especially when compared to the total number of registered individual taxpayers. Therefore, DJP needs to establish a personal branding strategy for managing its Instagram account so that the content is more targeted and engaging.

According to Haroen (2014), personal branding is the image a person wants to project. DJP needs to create an image that fits the type of tax they are targeting. In this way, the content uploaded will be more likely to appear on the social media feeds of the targeted public. Additionally, fresh ideas and attractive content are necessary. Based on observations, one video was able to achieve up to 1.3 million views, while other videos typically only garnered a few thousand views. The researcher observed that the Instagram account @ditjenpajakri, which shares tax knowledge for taxpayers, follows the current laws.

Based on the above description, it can be concluded that Instagram plays an important role in delivering tax knowledge to MSME actors using Instagram. However, it has not yet been optimally utilized as a medium for tax outreach. Instagram holds great potential for playing a significant role in achieving effective tax outreach, which will ultimately raise tax awareness.

b. Understanding Taxation for MSMEs through the Instagram account @ditjenpajakri

Instagram has become one of the platforms that contributed to the successful dissemination of health protocols during the Covid-19 pandemic from 2020 to 2022. According to Sakardi, et al. (2021), the Instagram platform helped increase public compliance with health protocols during the pandemic through content uploaded by the government and influencers. This success should be emulated by other government accounts to ensure that government policies receive public support, including tax content shared by @ditjenpajakri.

However, based on the information from Informants I and II, the content uploaded by @ditjenpajakri has not been able to increase their understanding of taxation. They still need additional supporting information to verify the tax-related content they are seeking. Additionally, the frequency of tax awareness content shared by @ditjenpajakri on Instagram is still insufficient, particularly when it comes to explaining the functions and benefits of taxes.

As explained by Liyana (2014), the taxpayer's knowledge affects their tax compliance. DJP should focus on improving tax literacy by uploading simple tax-related content that can raise awareness rather than complex content that confuses taxpayers.

To that end, content that promotes tax awareness, such as live sessions with games and gimmicks using MSME products, should be emphasized. Informant VII, a social media practitioner, also noted that the number of videos uploaded by the

@ditjenpajakri Instagram account is still insufficient in terms of raising awareness about the importance of taxes, particularly for MSMEs. Informant VII suggested that DJP should frequently upload engaging content and hold live tax outreach sessions with themes highlighting the importance of taxes, incorporating games and giveaways featuring MSME products. This could serve as both a promotional opportunity for MSMEs and a chance to engage with Instagram users, especially MSME actors. The goal is to hold these live sessions daily to increase consistency, which could lead to more FYP exposure, new followers, and increased engagement, ultimately building tax awareness.

Moreover, to enhance engagement with MSMEs, it would be beneficial to create videos featuring MSME figures and community leaders who are popular among netizens and are already compliant with taxes. Also, the intimidating image of DJP should be softened by creating fun and entertaining content. Informants I and II suggested that @ditjenpajakri should provide information about various subsidies for education, health, and other assistance programs for MSMEs in collaboration with influential figures and MSME actors. The goal is to make Instagram users, especially sellers, realize the importance of taxes, as they typically only hear negative information about taxes.

The researcher observed that there is still a lack of content on Instagram @ditjenpajakri related to the functions and benefits of taxes, and hardly any content that uses themes, figures, or settings relevant to MSMEs. Given the large number of Instagram users, this is an area that should be further explored. There is a need to create more content regarding how tax revenue supports MSMEs through various ministries and agencies, helping MSME actors understand and appreciate the role of taxes in supporting them.

The researcher believes that increasing the number of videos, maintaining consistent uploads, and using paid ads can raise tax awareness among Instagram users, especially MSME sellers. At present, the impact of tax outreach via TikTok is still not optimal, based on data showing that the DJP Instagram account's followers are only 0.13% (130,000 followers) of the 99.1 million Instagram users in Indonesia, 0.79% of the 12.48 million people who submitted annual SPT in March 2024, and only 0.2% of the 49.82 million individual taxpayers registered in 2024.

The researcher observes that paid Instagram ads have several benefits, including extending the reach of posted outreach information to users who are not yet followers of the DJP Instagram account. These ads can also target potential taxpayers, such as MSME actors, who are likely to contribute taxes. Additionally, responses to posts can be analyzed to measure engagement. This will help increase tax awareness among MSME actors.

c. **Building Tax Awareness for MSME Taxpayers through Instagram Content @ditjenpajakri**

Building tax awareness among MSME actors is essential to improve their tax compliance. As mentioned in the background, MSME actors contribute significantly to Indonesia's GDP, yet their tax compliance remains low. Therefore, strategies to increase tax knowledge are necessary, both through face-to-face engagement and via social media platforms like Instagram.

To achieve this, content that highlights the direct benefits of taxes to MSMEs, such as road and bridge construction, hospitals, schools, and micro-credit schemes provided by the Ministry of Finance through financing institutions, should be emphasized. Additionally, Informants I, II, III, and IV believe that DJP should provide more detailed information about the tax payment and reporting process, making it easier for MSMEs to understand.

Informant I stated that although they have received video tutorials from social media accounts, they still feel the need for direct assistance from tax officers or colleagues who are knowledgeable about taxation to complete the payment and reporting process.

Another issue is the difficulty in finding tax-related information on Instagram, due to the lack of specific hashtags related to tax content. Informant II mentioned that video tutorials on how to pay and report taxes are still lacking, and that videos are not accompanied by hashtags that would make them easier to find. Informant II also pointed out that many MSME actors now use Instagram accounts for promotion and outreach, making it an excellent opportunity for DJP to provide tax education via Instagram.

The researcher believes that DJP should improve the quantity and quality of content related to tax obligations for MSMEs, including both the benefits of taxes for MSMEs and practical information about tax payments and SPT reporting. To increase engagement with followers and foster tax awareness, DJP could implement various strategies, such as organizing giveaways for MSME actors who follow the account and submit their annual SPT on time or pay the 0.5% MSME tax.

4. CONCLUSION

Based on the analysis and discussion, the following conclusions are drawn: First, tax outreach through Instagram plays an important role in enhancing tax knowledge for MSME actors who use Instagram. However, the quantity and quality of video uploads on the @ditjenpajakri account are still considered inadequate by MSME actors. Second, the impact of tax-related video uploads on Instagram on tax awareness among MSME actors who have become followers is better compared to those who have not yet followed the @ditjenpajakri Instagram account. Lastly, tutorial content on how to fulfill tax obligations uploaded on the Instagram @ditjenpajakri account can assist MSME actors. However, many MSME actors are unaware that DJP has an Instagram account providing various tutorials on fulfilling tax obligations on that platform.

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