

THE HEGEMONIC IMPACT OF THE TECHNOPRENEURSHIP DISCOURSE ON BUSINESS BEHAVIOR OF THE MSME PLAYERS IN PROBOLINGGO

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ABSTRACT

This article focuses its studies on the impact that is caused by the hegemony of the technopreneurship discourse on business behavior of the MSME (Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises) players in Probolinggo. In Indonesia, the technopreneurship discourse has been popularized by economists since 2015. During the Covid-19 pandemic period, the discourse has found its momentum as a text that constructs business awareness and behavior of the MSMEs in Indonesia. The objective of this study is to describe the impact caused by the discourse hegemony on the MSMEs in Probolinggo. The study urgency is to find out their awareness of business behavior in the current growing information technology era. The theory that is used as a basis for the analysis is the discourse theory that is pioneered by Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe. It is a descriptive qualitative study that uses interview as the data collection method. The findings are the MSME players in Probolinggo have no longer relied on the direct promotion and selling in their daily business activities, and there is an emergence of the humblebrags in the MSMEs due to the strengthening of excessive trust in online social media as a medium of promotion and marketing of their products.

Key words: hegemony, discourse technopreneurship, business behavior

1. INTRODUCTION

The current dynamic technological development impacts on the emergence of a new discourse in the business field, namely technopreneurship. According to Siregar et al. (2020) Technopreneurship is a business concept that understands the existence of technology as an important factor for business continuity and development. In this concept, the business continuity and development cannot be carried out without collaborating with technology. In other words, in the concept of technopreneurship, the technology application is the main instrument to fulfill business needs (ITS, 2015).

In Indonesia, the technopreneurship discourse spreads across various business sectors, including the MSME (Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises) sector. Here, the government's attention to MSMEs has started since the era of Soeharto's presidency. This attention continues to this day. This is due to the existence of the micro, small and medium business sector which is considered by the Government of Indonesia to be able to become a pillar of economic resilience. During the Covid-19 Pandemic, the Government's attention to this sector is getting stronger. This can be seen in the budget allocation of 123.46 trillion in the SME sector (Kulsum, n.d.).

As in other regions in Indonesia, Probolinggo also develops the economic, business, and trade sectors. The priority of the development is on the sector of the MSME business. The Governments of Kota and Kabupaten Probolinggo also pay great attention to the sector. During the Covid-19 pandemic, this has been further enhanced by the Probolinggo Governments. It can be seen in the allocation of business development assistance funds for the sector by the Governments, which reaches around 100 million more (*Bimtek Keuangan UMKM Di Kota Probolinggo Tak Jalan, Ini Alasannya*, n.d.). This allocation shows the existence of the MSME sector in Probolinggo.

This article focuses the study on the impact caused by the hegemony of entrepreneurship discourse on the business behavior of MSME players in Probolinggo. In this article, entrepreneurship is understood as a hegemonic discourse that is able to shape the business behavior of MSME actors in Probolinggo. The theory which is used as the basis for the analysis in this article is the hegemonic theory of discourse model by Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe.

According to Laclau and Mouffe (dalam Hutagalung, 2004) hegemony can be understood as an articulation practice that builds nodal points or a central point that partially improves the meaning which is built by the social realm in an organized system of distinction. The practice of hegemony allows the formation of a common awareness and interest in the social realm. The formation of this awareness and interest allows hegemony to shape the behavior of every member of society, or the behavior of every individual in the social realm.

However, this hegemony requires instruments in order to work optimally. According to Laclau & Mouffe (2008), hegemony works through discourse. It is due to the existence of discourse that allows the social realm to have

meaning. Based on this understanding, it appears that discourse is an important instrument for the social realm. Discourse allows the realm to have meaning that can be understood.

For Laclau & Mouffe (2008), discourse is a product of a practice in giving meaning to the social realm. It is as in the understanding of Laclau & Mouffe (2008) which defines discourse as a structured totality that is produced by articulatory practice. The efforts to form the totality are carried out by the articulator through an articulation, namely every practice of constructing a relationship between elements that causes these elements to have modification.

An articulator is a subject who practices the articulation. According to Laclau & Mouffe (2008), the articulatory subject can be anyone, and he is not limited to refer to a person or institution. It is the limitation that he is understood as a subject who has the ability to articulate in the social realm, and to determine meaning in the realm. Therefore, anyone who practices the articulation, and the practice can assign meaning to the social realm, can be called an articulator.

As a structured totality, discourse is composed of certain concepts. According to Ayudya et al. (2019), the discourse theory of Laclau & Mouffe has three important concepts, namely the nodal point, the discourse field, and the ending. It is conveyed also by Sofa & Supratman (2020) that these three concepts are the main concepts in Laclau & Mouffe's theory. Nodal point is a concept in the theory that understands meaning at the level of relativity.

Laclau & Mouffe (2008) understand that meaning is always in an unstable condition. The instability is due to the construction of meaning always at the level of relations. The relativity makes the meaning always at the level of change. However, the change in meaning will not occur if the meaning does not experience a temporary pause. While, nodal point is a concept that allows the meaning of discourse to experience relations in its formation.

The nodal point is a sign. However, unlike other signs, it is a sign that has special rights. The specificity of the sign is because the nodal point is a place which is used by discourse to organize other signs around it. The point becomes a sign that makes the others derive meaning from their relationship with the nodal point. So, the function of the nodal point is to determine the partial meaning of the signs around it. In other words, it is the environmental center of a discourse (Ayudya et al., 2019; Laclau & Mouffe, 2008; Sofa & Supratman, 2020).

The second concept in Laclau & Mouffe's theory is the field of discourse. The relativity of meaning allows the meaning to experience an infinite surplus. In order to determine the temporary meaning, it is necessary to exclude the meaning of the sign in a discourse. A place of meaning that is excluded because of the need for the unity of discourse meaning is called the field of discourse. In the theory, it is defined as a surplus reserve of meaning which is resulted from articulatory practice. In other words, it is a possible meaning that exists but has been omitted because of the need for the unity of discourse meaning by a special discourse (Ayudya et al., 2019; Laclau & Mouffe, 2008; Sofa & Supratman, 2020).

The ending is the third concept in Laclau & Mouffe's discourse theory that must be observed. It can be defined as a temporary pause of the fluctuations in the meaning of a sign. It serves to remove ambiguity in the meaning of the sign. It is the unity of the meaning of discourse. In other words, the ending is a construction of the discourse meaning which is created by the practice of exclusion and the determination at the nodal point (Ayudya et al., 2019; Laclau & Mouffe, 2008; Sofa & Supratman, 2020).

2. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The method of this study is a descriptive qualitative method. It is used because the study aims to describe the impact caused by the hegemony of the technopreneurship discourse on the business behavior of MSME players in Probolinggo. The study uses the literature study, observation, and interviews on selected informants as the data collection techniques. The object of the study is the business behavior of MSMEs in Kota and Kabupaten Probolinggo. The subject of this study is MSME players in Kota and Kabupaten Probolinggo. The determination of the subject was carried out purposively, on the three representative MSME players. In conducting the analysis, this study follows the steps contained in Laclau & Mouffe's theory of discourse hegemony, which are (1) analyzing the technopreneurship discourse, and (2) analyzing the business behavior of MSME business players in Probolinggo which is caused by the hegemony of the technopreneurship discourse.

3. ANALYSIS AND FINDING

3.1. The Discourse Analysis of Technopreneurship

Efforts to describe the impact which is caused by the hegemony of a discourse must be preceded by an analysis of the discourse content. The analysis that hegemonizes the business behavior of MSME players in Probolinggo must be based on an analysis of nodal point, discourse field, and ending which are the elements in making up the meaning of discourse. It is due to the existence of these three things which are the main concepts in Laclau & Mouffe's theory of discourse.

Generally, technopreneurship can be understood as a discourse that narrates the importance of technology in business maintenance and development. This is because in the discourse, there is a relation of signs that refer to the markers of business and technology. It is as shown in the following quote from the statement of Labiba (2014):

Apakah Technopreneurship Itu? Ditilik dari asal katanya, Technopreneurship merupakan istilah bentukan dari dua kata, yakni 'teknologi' dan 'enterpreneurship'. Secara umum, kata Teknologi digunakan untuk merujuk pada penerapan praktis ilmu pengetahuan

ke dunia industri atau sebagai kerangka pengetahuan yang digunakan untuk menciptakan alat-alat, untuk mengembangkan keahlian dan mengekstraksi materi guna memecahkan persoalan yang ada. Sedangkan kata *entrepreneurship* berasal dari kata *entrepreneur* yang merujuk pada seseorang atau agen yang menciptakan bisnis/usaha dengan keberanian menanggung resiko dan ketidakpastian untuk mencapai keuntungan dan pertumbuhan dengan cara mengidentifikasi peluang yang ada

Dalam wacana nasional, istilah *technopreneurship* lebih mengacu pada pemanfaatan teknologi informasi untuk pengembangan wirausaha. Berbeda dengan pengertian pertama di atas, jenis wirausaha dalam pengertian *technopreneurship* di sini tidak dibatasi pada wirausaha teknologi informasi, namun segala jenis usaha, seperti usaha mebel, restoran, super market ataupun kerajinan tangan, batik dan perak. Penggunaan teknologi informasi yang dimaksudkan di sini adalah pemakaian internet untuk memasarkan produk mereka seperti dalam perdagangan online (*e-Commerce*), pemanfaatan perangkat lunak khusus untuk memotong biaya produksi, atau pemanfaatan teknologi web 2.0 sebagai sarana iklan untuk wirausaha

(What is Technopreneurship? From the bases of the word, Technopreneurship is a term which is formed from two words, namely 'technology' and 'entrepreneurship'. In general, the word **technology** is used to refer to the practical application of science to industry or as a knowledge framework which is used to create tools, to develop skills and to extract materials to solve the existing problems. While, the word **entrepreneurship** comes from the word **entrepreneur** which refers to a person or an agent who creates a business with the courage to take risks and uncertainties to achieve profit and growth by identifying existing opportunities....

In the national discourse, the term **technopreneurship** refers more to the use of information technology for entrepreneurial development. In contrast to the first definition, the type of entrepreneurship in the sense of technopreneurship here is not limited to the information technology entrepreneurs, but all types of businesses, such as furniture, restaurants, super markets or handicrafts, batik and silver. The use of information technology here refers to the use of the internet to market their products such as in online commerce (*e-Commerce*), the use of special software to cut production costs, or the use of web 2.0 technology as an advertising tool for entrepreneurs...)

Based on the statement of Labiba above, it appears that the technopreneurship discourse has a technological nodal point. Technology has become a central point that allows the business signs, and the industrial world in Indonesia have a relationship between signs, so that it can produce meaning in the business realm. Meanings such as "mastery of technology is an important element for business players", "business development cannot be done without technology", or "technology eliminates the elements of human and humanity in the business field" are meanings that are produced because of the relationship that is built between *technology* and *business* signs.

However, these meanings do not have a unified discourse meaning. There is a surplus of meaning that causes the meaning of the discourse does not experience the unity. It can be seen in the possibility of the existence of meanings that articulate the bad aspects of the technopreneurship discourse, such as "technopreneurship eliminates the human and humanity aspects." Therefore, Labiba as an articulator creates a discourse field towards the possibility of a surplus of meanings that can obstruct the formation of a unified meaning of the technopreneurship discourse that he articulates. It can be seen in the statement of Labiba that is: "*the use of special software to cut production costs....*"

The statement places the meaning of "technology eliminates the human and humanity aspects" excluded from the technopreneurship discourse. It places the meaning as a surplus of meaning that must be placed in the discourse field of technopreneurship discourse. This exclusion is needed to carry out the ending of the technopreneurship discourse, so that the unity of the meaning of the technopreneurship discourse as a discourse that defines the reality of business development can only be done at this time if it presupposes the involvement of technology.

It can be seen also in the technopreneurship discourse that has been articulated by the ITS Surabaya Technopreneurship Development Team. In the discourse, the team also excludes the surplus of meaning which refers to the aspect of eliminating human and humanity in the relationship between technological and business signs. This aspect is placed by the team, as an articulator, in the field of discourse when articulating the discourse. It causes the construction of the meaning of technopreneurship discourse as a discourse that is needed for business continuity today. It is stated as in the following quote statement:

Technopreneurship adalah suatu karakter integral antara kompetensi penerapan teknologi serta spirit membangun usaha. Dengan menjadi tchnopreneurship kita dapat turut berkontribusi meningkatkan taraf hidup masyarakat Indonesia dengan menghasilkan lapangan pekerjaan dan membangun perekonomian sekaligus teknologi Indonesia (ITS, 2015).

(Technopreneurship is an integral character between competency in applying technology and the spirit of building a business. By becoming a tchnopreneurship, we can contribute to improve the Indonesian people standard of living by generating jobs and building the Indonesian economy as well as technology (ITS, 2015).)

The quote above shows the ending that constructs the meaning of the technopreneurship discourse as a discourse that can save the lives of Indonesian people. The aspects of eliminating the sides of human and humanity are excluded from the discourse and placed in the discourse field of technopreneurship discourse. The aspect is positioned as a surplus of meaning which is not the main meaning of the discourse. So, based on this analysis, the technopreneurship discourse contains a narrative that articulates the meaning that businesses can improve the economy and save the lives of Indonesian people, which must involve technology. It is because technology is the main factor that saves human life.

3.2. The Impact of the Hegemony of Technopreneurship Discourse

A person's behavior is not a given. A person's behavior is formed by the discourse that influences him. According to Laclau & Mouffe (2008), a discourse has the ability to form people's behavior. It is due to the existence of discourse that has hegemonic power in forming meaning in society or social reality. In the discourse theory of Laclau & Mouffe (2008), it is understood that the individual behavior cannot be separated from the behavior of the community. It is because individual behavior is formed through discourse interventions which are found in the community or social realm where the individual lives. So, in the theory, individual behavior is understood as a representation of the society where the individual lives.

In Probolinggo, business behavior that positions information technology and digital communication can be seen in the MSME youth group players. This group consists of MSME players in Probolinggo who were born in the 2000s. For the MSME group, ownership of a gadget that can provide access to social media applications such as Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, or Youtube, as well as online sales site applications such as Shopee, Tokopedia, or Bukalapak becomes the main requirement. It is as shown in the image of the online shop on Effendi's Instagram social media below:



Figure 1. Longstory Clothing Online Store

Source: https://instagram.com/longstory_17?utm_medium=copy_link

Longstory Clothing is an MSME in the fashion sector who is owned by Achmad Holilur Rahman Effendi. Effendi can be categorized as an MSME player from the Probolinggo youth group because he was born in 2000. His business field is in the field of fashion. He owns a fashion business on an MSME scale called *Longstory Clothing*. For him, the presence of technology in his business is a factor that cannot be ignored. It is as shown in Figure 1.

Beside doing promotion and marketing through online social media Instagram, Effendi also prefers marketing his products through online store applications. The store application that he chooses as a place for product marketing and promotion is an online store application called Shopee. This application is a commercial application that was first established in Singapore in 2015. Currently, the application is one of the applications that is in great demand by business people and consumers (*Sejarah Shopee*, n.d.). The following is a picture of the *Longstory Clothing* virtual store on the Shopee application.



Figure 2. Longstory Clothing Virtual Store on Shopee
 Source: <https://shopee.co.id/heyLur/?categoryId=32&itemId=4817804290>

For Effendi, having a store account in the online store application is more strategic than opening a physical store. It is due to the existence of a virtual store which is understood to have wider marketing power by him. Therefore, for him, there is no need to have a physical store with more complex management, and it does not guarantee that the business development can be carried out. It is as stated by Effendi (interview, 29 May 2021) as follows:

“Olshop itu lebih strategis, Pak. Promosi dan pemasaran produk kalo lewat olshop tidak terbatas wilayah. Di olshop saya bisa promosi dan memasarkan produk saya pada pembeli yang tidak hanya ada di Probolinggo atau Indonesia saja. Saya juga dapat memasarkan dan mempromosikan produk saya sampai ke luar negeri. Ada pembeli saya yang dari Singapura, dan Malaysia. Makanya, udah ndak penting punya toko fisik itu sekarang, Pak.”

(Olshop is more strategic, Sir. Product promotion and marketing through olshop is not limited by area. At the olshop I can promote and market my products to buyers who are not in Probolinggo or Indonesia only. I can also market and promote my products overseas. I have buyers from Singapore and Malaysia. That's why it's no longer important to have a physical store now, Sir.)

Figure 2 and Effendi's statement above shows the impact of hegemony on technopreneurship discourse on MSME players. The discourse hegemony forms business behavior that focuses on the use of online digital technology. Business through the virtual medium that is created by information technology and digital communication is an activity that must be done. Therefore, ownership of a gadget that can support these activities becomes a matter that must be fulfilled. It is as shown in the following statement by Effendi (Interview, May 29, 2020):

“Hp ini penting untuk bisnis, Pak. Wah, kalo tidak punya hp bisa repot, Pak. Saya kan jual kaosnya di medsos dan olshop. Kalo ndak punya hp gimana saya bisa jualan. Kalo buka toko di pinggir jalan itu juga repot, modalnya besar, selain itu juga repot jaganya. Apalagi saya masih kuliah. Jadi tidak bisa maksimal jualannya kalo ada toko fisik. Kalo jualan di medsos dan olshop kan enak. Dimana aja, kapan aja, lagi apa aja saya bisa jualan.”

(This handphone is important for business, Sir. Wow, if I don't have a handphone, it can be troublesome, Sir. I sell the t-shirts on social media and online shops. If I don't have a handphone, how can I sell it? If I open a shop on the side of the road, it's also difficult, the capital is large, besides that it's also difficult to maintain. Besides, I'm still in college. So, I can't sell maximally if there is a physical store. If I sell it on social media and online shops, it's good. Anywhere, anytime, and whatever I am doing, I can sell my products)

Based on the statement above, it appears that Effendi's business behavior is hegemonized by the technopreneurship discourse. Technological markers fill in the empty space in the business history in Probolinggo. It can be seen in Effendi's statement that is: *“This handphone is important for business, Sir. Wow, if I don't have a handphone, it can be troublesome,”* The statement shows that without the technology that is occupied, the business cannot run well. So, having a mobile phone gadget which is a manifestation of the existence of technology is something that must be fulfilled. Therefore, the hegemony of the technopreneurship discourse has an impact on the presence of awareness of gadget ownership among young MSME players in Probolinggo.

The same thing is stated by Annisa. As a young Probolinggo MSME player in the culinary field, she stated that business can only be done with the capital of owning a gadget. Even, it is the main element for the existence and development of a business. For her, physical store is not important to have. she believes that business does not need to be done through physical direct selling. Marketing products through Instagram social media has the same value as the marketing physically. It can be seen in Annisa's business behavior, which only has a shop on Instagram. It is as in the figure of Annisa's culinary shop on the following Instagram social media:



Figure 3. Annisa's Virtual Store Makanominumo on Social Media Instagram
Source: https://instagram.com/makano.minumo_pbl?utm_medium=copy_link

Like Effendi, Annisa also chooses Instagram social media account as a place to promote and market her products. According to Annisa (interview, May 30, 2021) marketing and product promotion is enough to do on Instagram. It is because social media has a wider reach for marketing and promotion. So, it is no longer important to have a physical store. Therefore, continuously updating photo uploads on Instagram accounts becomes the main business program or activity that must be carried out by an MSME player. That's why the ownership of an adequate gadget to display a series of attractive product images is important for business players today. It is as Annisa's statement (interview, 30 May 2021) below:

"That good handphone is now important, Sir, especially for MSMEs like me. A good handphone not only allows me to produce good photos of my products, but also can help me organize their appearance on social media. If the handphone is good, uploading photos is also fast and easy to organize. So, I use a handphone which has medium to high quality for my business."

4. CONCLUSION

Technopreneurship discourse is a discourse that places technology as an important element in the formation of meaning in the business realm. The discourse hegemonies the realm of business that exists today. In Probolinggo it also occurred. It appears in the business behavior of MSME players in Probolinggo from the youth group. For the MSMEs group, business must involve technology, especially information technology and digital communication. These MSME players have a gadget that becomes a business medium. Meanwhile, through this gadget, business activities are carried out. So, for these MSMEs, having a virtual store and good gadgets is more important than having a physical store.

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