



ANALYSIS OF M. DIEMAS ANGGARA'S (@infoasikdimas) PERSONAL BRANDING ON INSTAGRAM IN RELATION TO CULINARY TOURISM PROMOTION IN MEDAN CITY

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to analyze the personal branding strategies employed by M. Dimas Anggara through the Instagram account @infoasikdimas in promoting culinary tourism in Medan City. Amid the growing role of social media as a digital promotional platform, personal branding has become a crucial element in shaping the image and influence of an influencer. This research adopts a descriptive qualitative approach, utilizing data collection techniques such as content observation, digital documentation, and the distribution of questionnaires to the followers of the @infoasikdimas account. The human brand theory developed by Susan Fournier and Thomson serves as the main framework for understanding the dimensions of authenticity, emotional closeness, and personal appeal in the individual brand formation process. The findings indicate that the @infoasikdimas account exhibits strong elements of personal branding, such as consistency in showcasing local culinary content, authenticity in delivery, and active engagement with the audience. The presented content is not only visually appealing but also informative and communicative. This strategy successfully builds trust and loyalty among followers and has a direct impact on increasing exposure and consumer interest in the recommended culinary spots. Furthermore, Dimas's role as a micro-influencer contributes to the promotion of culinary MSMEs and supports the narrative of Medan City as a friendly and authentic culinary tourism destination. Thus, this study demonstrates that strategically and authentically developed personal branding through social media can significantly contribute to the promotion of the local creative economy, particularly in the culinary tourism sector. These findings are expected to serve as a reference for creative industry players and academics in developing more effective digital branding approaches.

Keywords: Personal Branding, Social Media, Instagram, Culinary Tourism, Influencer.

1. INTRODUCTION

Social media has become an integral part of Indonesian society in line with the rapid development of information and communication technology. Data from Databoks Katadata in 2024 shows that 191 million Indonesians (73.7% of the total population) are social media users, with 167 million classified as active users. The high internet penetration rate, reaching 93.4%, has contributed to the intensive use of social media, averaging 3 hours and 14 minutes per day. The most widely used platforms include YouTube, Instagram, Facebook, WhatsApp, and TikTok, dominated by the productive age group of 18–34 years (54.1%) with a relatively balanced gender proportion. This phenomenon indicates that social media not only serves as a medium for entertainment, communication, and information sharing but has also become a strategic digital space for economic activities such as online shopping and promotional efforts, particularly in the realm of digital marketing and personal branding. This trend signifies that social media plays a significant role in shaping consumer behavior, patterns of social interaction, and the construction of self-identity in contemporary society.

The phenomenon of personal branding on social media, particularly Instagram, has become a crucial communication strategy in shaping digital self-image. As a visually-based platform, Instagram provides extensive space for individuals to build curated personal identities through photos, videos, captions, and interactions with followers. Personal branding on Instagram functions not only as a form of self-representation but also as a tool for building credibility, increasing visibility, and creating added value in both social and commercial contexts. In practice, personal branding involves strategic efforts to construct a consistent, authentic, and audience-relevant identity narrative, thus enabling emotional connections and trust between account owners and their followers. This phenomenon reflects a paradigm shift in interpersonal communication and marketing, where individuals act as "brands" professionally positioned to attract attention, build influence, and create opportunities in careers, business, and the creative industries (Ma'aruf & Putra, 2019).

The power of personal branding through Instagram becomes even more significant when linked to the culinary tourism sector, which heavily relies on visualization, narrative experiences, and consumer trust. Influencers capable of presenting culinary content in an engaging manner not only shape taste perceptions through visual displays but also generate consumer desire and decision-making to visit the recommended locations. In this context, personal narratives become the main attraction by highlighting authentic and subjective experiences that are perceived as more convincing than formal advertisements. Therefore, an influencer's ability to package culinary experiences into compelling and informative visual stories is a key element in building influence and audience engagement (. & Aminah, 2022).

In addition, the success of personal branding on social media is closely tied to the ability to maximize user engagement and platform algorithms. Consistency in posting frequency, optimal timing, and active interaction with followers are part of digital strategies that enhance account presence and reach. By understanding how platforms like Instagram operate—prioritizing content with high interaction—an influencer can manage their self-image in a more structured and strategic manner. In this case, personal branding encompasses not only visual or communication style aspects but also technical elements that contribute to content visibility on users' timelines (Yusanda et al., 2021).

M. Diemas Anggara, commonly known by his Instagram username @infoasikdimas, is one of the influencers who has proven successful in his profession. In attracting the interest of the online community, M. Diemas Anggara possesses a distinctive style. His content ranges from reviews of dining spots and tourist attractions to visits to branded stores. He is one of the influencers from Medan who frequently reviews brands with a cheerful and relaxed demeanor. As of 2025, M. Diemas Anggara has successfully reached 110,000 followers on his Instagram account. In managing his image as an influencer, Diemas Anggara applies effective personal branding strategies. He maintains consistency in his presentation style and the type of content he uploads, thereby creating a strong identity in the minds of his followers (Marshely et al., 2022).

According to Manuel Castells in his theory of the network society, modern society is now evolving toward a social structure shaped by digital networks, where processes of production, power, and experience are constructed through information and communication technologies. Castells argues that in this era, individual identity is no longer shaped solely by traditional institutions such as family, school, or religion, but by interactions within global digital networks. This phenomenon is highly relevant in the context of social media use, such as Instagram, where individuals—including influencers like Diemas Anggara—construct self-image and build social relationships through digital networks. In the network society, social media platforms serve as new social spaces that enable personal branding, information distribution, and identity formation to occur rapidly, broadly, and dynamically, transcending conventional geographic and cultural boundaries (Ramdhan et al., 2022).

The urgency of examining how @infoasikdimas builds and shapes personal branding on Instagram in the context of culinary tourism lies in the strategic role of social media as a space for self-representation and a dominant medium for digital promotion influencing consumer preferences. Amid the proliferation of digital content, personal branding becomes the key for influencers to create differentiation and maintain relevance with their audiences. In the case of @infoasikdimas, a consistent approach to presenting culinary content—with a relaxed communicative style, appealing visuals, and local narratives relatable to the Medan audience—demonstrates how digital identity can be deliberately

constructed to shape public perception. Analyzing the strategies and branding patterns employed is essential for understanding the dynamics of the relationship between individuals, social media, and the promotion of creative economic sectors such as culinary tourism, which is now heavily influenced by the power of digital networks and platform algorithms.

Literatur Review

The first study, titled "Analisis Personal Branding Influencer Aghnia Punjabi dalam Perspektif Etika Bisnis Islam" by Layinnatushifah (2021), examines how Aghnia builds personal branding through social media within the framework of Islamic business ethics. The study reveals that although Aghnia successfully creates a strong image on social media, there is a misalignment between this image and the moral values of society as well as the principles of Islamic business ethics, particularly regarding authenticity and its impact on followers' consumptive behavior. The research adopts a descriptive qualitative approach, focusing on the analysis of values and norms in the digital communication of an influencer.

The second study, titled "Strategi Pengelolaan Akun Instagram @ariesskuliner dalam Mempromosikan Kuliner di Ponorogo" by Andan Ayu Salsabila (2022), focuses on content management in promoting local culinary offerings. This research highlights the importance of content planning, consistent posting, and regular evaluation in increasing follower engagement and business partner satisfaction. Using interviews, observation, and documentation methods, the study finds that structured social media management can significantly impact the promotion of culinary MSMEs, although challenges such as generating creative ideas and maintaining content originality remain major obstacles.

The third study, titled "Pengaruh Selebgram Endorsement, Personal Branding, dan Popularitas Terhadap Volume Penjualan UMKM di Media Sosial Instagram" by Noris Agustin (2023), uses a quantitative approach and questionnaires to measure the influence of digital marketing variables on MSME sales. The findings indicate that endorsements and influencer popularity have a positive and significant effect on sales volume. Interestingly, personal branding does not have a significant impact in this context, suggesting that personal brand strength does not always directly correlate with commercial outcomes, particularly in MSME transactions.

Compared to my research, all of the aforementioned studies share a common thread in discussing personal branding and the role of social media; however, their focuses and perspectives differ. My research emphasizes the personal branding strategy of an influencer, namely @infoasikdimas, in shaping a digital identity that impacts the promotion of culinary tourism in the city of Medan. This contrasts with the first study, which is rooted in ethical values; the second, which focuses on institutional account management; and the third, which measures the sales aspects of MSMEs. This study examines the relationship between personal image on

Instagram and its impact on the visibility of local culinary destinations, using a qualitative approach based on content observation and digital interaction.

2. RESEARCH METHOD

This study employs a qualitative research method. Qualitative research aims to understand phenomena in depth by exploring the meanings, perspectives, and experiences of individuals or groups within a specific context. This type of research does not focus on numbers or statistical data, but rather on an in-depth analysis of information obtained through observation, documentation, and the use of open-ended questions posed to respondents. Through the qualitative method, this research seeks to understand how M. Diemas Anggara (@infoasikdimas) constructs his personal branding on Instagram as an influencer in promoting culinary tourism in the city of Medan (Sugiyono, 2023).

The approach used in this study is a descriptive approach, which aims to provide a systematic and accurate portrayal of the phenomenon being investigated. This approach is employed to analyze the personal branding strategies applied by Diemas Anggara in building his identity as a culinary influencer. Through detailed descriptions, this research will explore how Diemas utilizes Instagram features, communication style, and visual elements to establish his image as a credible and engaging influencer. Using the descriptive approach, this study also aims to provide a clearer understanding of the personal branding process on social media, particularly in the context of culinary tourism promotion (Waruwu, 2023).

In this study, data analysis was conducted using the interactive model of Miles, Huberman, and Saldana, which includes three main stages: data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing and verification. The data condensation stage involved simplifying, selecting, and focusing the raw data obtained from content observation, digital documentation, and open-ended responses into relevant information in accordance with the research focus. Subsequently, in the data display stage, the condensed information was organized into descriptive narratives and thematic tables to facilitate the identification of patterns, categories, and relationships among the data. The final stage, which consists of conclusion drawing and verification, was carried out continuously throughout the analysis process by interpreting the findings, relating them to relevant theories—particularly the concepts of personal branding and network society—and validating the data through triangulation. This approach enables a thorough, systematic, and reflective analysis of the digital identity formation process of @infoasikdimas in the context of culinary tourism promotion through Instagram social media.

3. RESULT AND ANALYSIS

Results

Analysis of the @infoasikdimas Account

The Instagram account @infoasikdimas is a public account owned by M. Dimas Anggara, specifically dedicated to sharing content related to the distinctive culinary offerings of Medan City and its surrounding areas. As of mid-2025, the account has gained over 110K followers. With significant follower growth, @infoasikdimas has become one of the influential micro-influencers in promoting local eateries through digital media, particularly Instagram (Nasution, 2021).

Based on content observation and documentation conducted from March to June 2025, it was found that the @infoasikdimas account consistently uploads content focused on local cuisine. Reels, photos, and stories feature traditional dishes, street food, and hidden gem eateries. This content establishes Dimas's position as a representative of Medan's distinctive culinary scene (Ayutiani & Satria Putri, 2018).

This aligns with the principles of personal branding, which emphasize the importance of consistency in conveying a central theme or value to the audience. The local theme not only strengthens emotional connections with followers from Medan but also creates a distinctive and easily recognizable digital identity.

The visuals in Dimas's content have unique characteristics, such as point-of-view shots from the perspective of a food enthusiast, overlay text describing the food, and spontaneous expressions in videos. In many reels, Dimas includes chewing sounds, honest reactions, and comments like:

"Ini enak kali, wajib coba! Pedasnya nampol, murah lagi!"

This style reflects a narrative that is unfiltered and highly relatable to everyday life, reinforcing the element of authenticity within human brand theory (Thomson, 2006), wherein personal branding is built on emotional closeness and perceptions of honesty.

With a large follower base, the @infoasikdimas account demonstrates a high level of engagement. Followers frequently leave comments containing food recommendations, location inquiries, and review requests. Dimas actively responds by replying to comments, reposting followers' stories, and creating polls about culinary topics. This interactive strategy demonstrates the application of two-way communication between the content creator and the audience, which not only fosters follower loyalty but also strengthens credibility as a trusted figure in the local culinary scene (Butar Butar et al., 2023).

Personal Branding Reflected in the @infoasikdimas Account

Based on the analysis of the content and interactions on the @infoasikdimas account, six key elements were identified that shape M. Dimas Anggara's personal branding as a content creator in the culinary field.

The first element is consistency. This account consistently features content themed around Medan's local cuisine. This consistency plays a crucial role in establishing the account's positioning in the minds of the audience as a reliable source of culinary information in Medan (Febrian, 2023).

The second element is authenticity. The content delivery style appears natural and unscripted. Dimas uses everyday language and displays honest expressions in every post. This builds an authentic impression and strengthens the emotional bond between the account owner and followers (Mustaqimmah & Firdaus, 2021).

Next, the third element is credibility. The culinary recommendations provided by Dimas are widely trusted by his followers. This is evident from the high level of interaction in the comment sections and the positive impact on the culinary MSMEs he reviews. This credibility reinforces Dimas's role as a trustworthy figure in the digital culinary domain (Ramaputra & Afifi, 2021).

The fourth element is audience engagement. The account actively engages in two-way communication with followers through comments, polls, and story reposts. This engagement creates loyalty and strengthens the community surrounding the account (Nafsyah et al., 2022).

The fifth element is value and differentiation. The content shared by Dimas not only showcases food but also adds value by providing information on affordability and the uniqueness of local cuisine. This grounded and simple approach serves as a distinct appeal that sets the account apart from other culinary accounts (Hasibuan, 2021).

Lastly, the element of visual aesthetics and professionalism is also highly evident. Well-organized content management, optimal use of Instagram features, and systematic content categorization demonstrate that the account is managed professionally. This further reinforces the personal branding image of a reliable and influential food content creator (Siregar et al., 2023).

Application of Human Brand Elements in the @infoasikdimas Account

Within the framework of human brand theory as developed by Susan Fournier and reinforced by Thomson (2006), a strong personal brand is established through the integration of three key elements: authenticity, emotional attachment, and personal attractiveness. These three components are clearly reflected in the activities and content produced by the Instagram account @infoasikdimas.

The first element, authenticity, is evident in Dimas's natural and unpretentious style of communication. The use of local expressions, everyday language, and sincere reactions in videos indicate that he does not construct a fabricated persona. Viewers perceive Dimas as a genuine representation of a local food enthusiast who

is also a part of their own community. By presenting a personal side and crafting narratives that resonate with his audience, this sense of authenticity strengthens the foundation of a trustworthy personal brand (Ramadini, 2022).

The second element is emotional attachment, which can be observed through Dimas's high level of engagement with his followers. Beyond merely sharing content, he actively responds to comments, interacts with users via Instagram Stories, and reposts user-generated content. This two-way communication fosters a sense of closeness that transcends the typical creator-viewer relationship. Emotional attachment thus serves as the cornerstone of follower loyalty and the sustainability of the digital community surrounding the account (Tresnawati, 2017).

The final element, personal attractiveness, extends beyond physical appearance and encompasses the digital persona constructed by Dimas. He consistently demonstrates a friendly, humorous, and approachable character in his posts. His supportive attitude toward local culinary MSMEs and his down-to-earth manner of speaking contribute to the image of a relatable influencer who feels accessible to his audience. As a result, the @infoasikdimas account functions not only as an information source but also as a likable and engaging digital persona worthy of following (Cesariana, 2021).

By consistently integrating these three human brand elements, Dimas has successfully established a robust personal brand, characterized not only by content aesthetics but also by relational depth. The connection built between Dimas and his audience is not transactional in nature, but rather emotional and enduring. This relational quality constitutes the primary strength of the @infoasikdimas account in reaching and influencing the public, particularly in the promotion of culinary tourism in the city of Medan.

Impact on Culinary Tourism Promotion in Medan City

The Instagram account @infoasikdimas plays a significant role as an effective medium for promoting culinary tourism in Medan City. As a micro-influencer with more than 110,000 followers, M. Dimas Anggara has successfully established a wide and active communication network with an audience largely composed of local residents and culinary enthusiasts from other regions. This position renders the @infoasikdimas account a catalyst in introducing, shaping the image of, and stimulating the growth of the local culinary sector through digital platforms (Achyunda & Wulan, 2017).

One of the most observable impacts is the substantial increase in visibility and exposure for culinary business owners, particularly micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs). Each time Dimas uploads content—particularly reels showcasing new dining spots or local hidden gems—he receives strong audience engagement, as evidenced by numerous comments, likes, and shares. These videos highlight the ambiance of the venue, the uniqueness of the dishes, and Dimas's

authentic reactions while tasting the food. This not only enhances visual appeal but also encourages viewers to visit in person, which in turn leads to increased customer traffic for the featured businesses (Hubner et al., 2022).

Beyond entertainment, Dimas's content also offers educational and informational value. He often includes practical details such as menu prices, locations, opening hours, and recommended dishes. This information is delivered in a casual and easily understood manner, thereby improving public access to knowledge about local culinary options. Through this approach, the @infoasikdimas account contributes to shaping the perception of Medan City as a rich and accessible culinary destination, worthy of exploration by diverse audiences (Ajie et al., 2022).

Strategically, Dimas's role aligns with regional government efforts to develop tourism based on cultural heritage and local wisdom. His content supports the narrative of Medan as a culinary hub while introducing a broad array of both traditional and modern local dishes to wider audiences. In the long term, this effort helps establish Medan's culinary identity as an integral part of its national tourism image.

Equally important are Dimas's collaborative activities with culinary entrepreneurs and local events, which create mutually beneficial promotional opportunities. These collaborations foster the growth of the creative economy while encouraging digital transformation among traditional culinary businesses. The personal brand that Dimas has developed has thus become a valuable social asset—not only enhancing his position as a content creator but also making a direct contribution to the inclusive and sustainable development of Medan's culinary tourism industry.

Personal Branding on the Instagram Account @infoasikdimas

The Instagram account @infoasikdimas demonstrates a strong personal branding strategy through various key elements such as consistency, authenticity, credibility, and audience engagement. Dimas consistently presents content focused on the local culinary scene of Medan City, thereby reinforcing his position as a trusted source of information. His natural style of delivery and use of everyday language enhance a sense of authenticity, fostering closeness with his audience. Moreover, his active interactions with followers through comments and stories cultivate a deep sense of connection and community loyalty (Ishihara & Oktavianti, 2021).

The application of human brand theory is reflected in this account through three core elements: authenticity, emotional attachment, and personal attractiveness. Dimas presents himself honestly and unpretentiously, creating the impression that he is an integral part of the local culinary community. Emotional attachment is developed through intense two-way interactions, while his appeal lies in his friendly, humorous, and approachable personality, which resonates with

audiences from diverse backgrounds. As a result, the @infoasikdimas account serves not only as an information hub but also as a pleasant figure to follow.

The impact of this strategy is evident in the promotion of culinary tourism in Medan City. Dimas plays a significant role as a micro-influencer who introduces a wide range of culinary destinations, including MSMEs (Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises) that were previously less known to the public. The engaging visual presentation in his short videos, showcasing the atmosphere and food preparation processes, piques the curiosity of viewers and encourages them to visit in person. Consequently, culinary business visibility increases, and foot traffic grows.

Beyond entertainment, the shared content also carries educational and informational value. Detailed information such as pricing, location, and recommended dishes provides the audience with concrete added value. This indirectly supports the narrative of Medan as a diverse and affordable culinary destination. The relaxed yet informative communication style further enhances public access to culinary information and strengthens Medan's image as a culinary city.

Dimas's role also contributes to the promotion of tourism rooted in local culture. Collaborations with business owners and culinary events create mutually beneficial promotional opportunities. Not only does this help him build his personal image as a content creator, but it also supports the growth of the creative economy and the digital transformation of the culinary sector. Thus, the @infoasikdimas account has emerged as a key driver in advancing the culinary tourism ecosystem in Medan in a sustainable manner.

Below is a scientific tabulation based on the survey data, presented in the format: Number, Personal Branding Analysis, Description, and Impact. This format is used to analyze how the elements of personal branding from @infoasikdimas are constructed and to what extent they influence the audience (followers) in the context of promoting culinary tourism in Medan.

No	Personal Branding Analysis	Description	Impact on Audience Interest/Engagement
1	Distinctive Speaking Style	The majority of respondents noted that @infoasikdimas has a highly recognizable and unique way of speaking.	Enhances audience recall of the presented content and strengthens personal identity.
2	Consistency in Culinary Content	Content consistently focuses on food reviews, local restaurants, and regional brands.	Establishes positioning as a culinary influencer, making it easier for the audience to seek culinary references in Medan.
3	Engaging Visuals	Video production and visual elements are considered aesthetically pleasing and appetite-inducing.	Increases visual appeal, encouraging interaction and stimulating the desire to visit recommended places.

4	Informative Value	Provides detailed information, including taste, pricing, location, and ambiance.	Builds audience trust in the reviews presented and enhances credibility as a reliable source.
5	Positive Energy and Personality	Cheerful demeanor and enthusiastic delivery are defining traits of @infoasikdimas.	Makes the content more engaging and fosters emotional connections with the audience.
6	Local Recognition	Local identity (use of Medanese language, references to local spots) is prominently featured in content.	Strengthens connections with local audiences and supports the promotion of culinary heritage.
7	Audience Perception as an Influencer	A majority of respondents (86.7%) recognize @infoasikdimas as a digital influencer.	Demonstrates success in building a professional image as a digital promotional figure.
8	Influence on Consumption Decisions	100% of respondents discovered culinary destinations through this account, with most positively influenced.	Content plays a significant role in increasing visit intention and influencing consumer decisions.
9	Review Credibility	Most respondents reported that the reviews align with their real-life experience.	Reinforces trust between the influencer and followers, fostering audience loyalty.
10	Narrative Uniqueness	Information is delivered with humor, informal language, and a storytelling approach.	Makes content accessible across age groups and enhances audience retention.

The analysis of personal branding on the Instagram account @infoasikdimas reveals that a distinctive speaking style is one of the most prominent characteristics in shaping a strong personal identity. The majority of respondents stated that Dimas's straightforward, casual, and conversational delivery style makes his content easily recognizable. This distinctiveness not only contributes to his personal appeal but also enhances audience recall, reinforcing the association between the account and the culinary scene of Medan.

Consistency in presenting culinary content also emerges as a core strength of Dimas's personal branding strategy. His continuous focus on reviewing local dishes, restaurants, and culinary brands typical of Medan has positioned the account as a primary reference for audiences seeking food recommendations. By maintaining thematic consistency and a regular posting schedule, the account has successfully established itself as a credible food influencer focused on a specific niche.

The visually appealing nature of each post plays a significant role in capturing audience interest. Aesthetic videos, appetizing food shots, and dynamic editing offer an engaging visual experience. These elements directly contribute to increased audience interaction—such as likes, comments, and shares—while also encouraging viewers to visit the recommended culinary spots. The strong visual aesthetic further enhances the account's perceived professionalism.

In addition to visual appeal, the informative value of the content provides an added strength. Respondents noted that the information shared is highly

comprehensive, covering aspects such as taste, price, location, and ambiance. This informative quality fosters a higher level of trust from the audience, who perceive the reviews as useful resources for making rational and data-driven consumption decisions.

Dimas's positive energy and cheerful personality also serve as key attractions. His enthusiastic and spirited presentation style brings his content to life, making it more engaging. Such a persona fosters an emotional connection between Dimas and his followers, whereby audiences not only enjoy the content but also feel a personal closeness to the creator. This emotional bond is essential for building long-term loyalty and engagement on social media platforms.

Finally, the strong local identity embedded in each piece of content cannot be overlooked. The use of the Medanese dialect, emphasis on local culinary spots, and celebration of regional food culture create a unique sense of familiarity for audiences from Medan as well as Indonesian culinary enthusiasts. This engagement indirectly contributes to the preservation of local wisdom and supports the promotion of authentic, culturally-based culinary tourism.

Overall, the strength of Dimas's personal branding is reflected in audience perceptions, with 86.7% of respondents identifying him as an influencer and 100% acknowledging the impact of his content on their consumption decisions. The credibility of his reviews—perceived as consistent with real-life experiences—along with his distinctive narrative style marked by humor and storytelling, further solidifies @infoasikdimas's position as an effective digital promotional figure. He has successfully built public trust, stimulated interest in culinary tourism, and made tangible contributions to the development of the local culinary sector in Medan.

Discussion

This research closely aligns with previous studies that examine personal branding strategies and the role of social media in digital communication. Layinnatushifah (2021) explores personal branding from an ethical standpoint, particularly within the framework of Islamic business ethics. While Aghnia successfully constructs a strong social media image, the study reveals tensions between personal image construction and societal moral values—particularly concerning authenticity and its influence on consumerist behavior. This indicates that personal branding is not only communicative and aesthetic in nature but also encompasses ethical dimensions that must be considered in the formation of a digital identity. Such a perspective is significant as a comparative point, offering an ethical lens distinct from the focus of this study, which emphasizes promotional effectiveness and audience engagement.

In contrast, studies by Salsabila (2022) and Agustin (2023) contribute to understanding how social media account management impacts the promotion of MSMEs (micro, small, and medium enterprises). Salsabila's research highlights the

importance of content planning and consistency in increasing audience engagement on culinary institutional accounts in Ponorogo, while Agustin discusses how endorsements and the popularity of “celebgrams” influence MSME sales volumes. These studies position social media as a strategic marketing tool in the digital economy. However, unlike this research, their emphasis is on commercial and institutional outcomes. This study expands the scope by analyzing how individual personal branding—specifically, the case of @infoasikdimas—contributes to the construction of an authentic digital identity and has a long-term impact on promoting local culinary tourism.

This research is grounded in the Human Brand Theory developed by Susan Fournier and later expanded by Thomson (2006), which conceptualizes personal branding as a form of individual identity construction as a “human brand.” This framework identifies three key components of a strong human brand: authenticity, emotional attachment, and personal attractiveness. These elements are interrelated and form the basis for building audience loyalty and trust toward a public figure on social media. The theory emphasizes that a successful personal brand is not only about visual presentation but also involves the individual's ability to foster meaningful, authentic, and emotionally resonant relationships with their audience. In the context of @infoasikdimas, this theory provides a foundation for analyzing how Dimas fosters such connections with his followers through communicative, honest, and enjoyable culinary content.

The findings reveal that the personal branding developed by M. Dimas Anggara through the Instagram account @infoasikdimas is robust and systematic. This is evident in the consistent presentation of local culinary content, the use of a natural and authentic communication style, and active audience engagement. Analysis indicates that personal branding elements—such as credibility, authenticity, compelling visual storytelling, and a positive energy—are key factors in fostering emotional bonds with followers. High audience responsiveness and the influence on culinary consumption decisions demonstrate that this account functions not only as a source of entertainment but also as an effective promotional tool for culinary destinations in Medan. The image constructed is not solely oriented toward personal gain but also contributes to the local tourism ecosystem and the creative economy (Dimas & Kiki Zakiah, 2023).

The novelty of this study lies in its integrative approach, which combines an analysis of personal branding strategies—based on the Human Brand Theory—with the context of promoting local culinary tourism through Instagram. This research goes beyond examining content visually and narratively by exploring the emotional engagement between influencer and audience in depth. Unlike prior studies that predominantly focus on commercial or institutional impacts, this study highlights relational and authentic aspects as the core of effective digital promotion. Using a qualitative approach and content observation techniques, the results show that the power of personal branding on social media largely depends

on the integration of authentic personality, grounded communication style, and emotional connection with the audience. These findings contribute new insights to media and digital communication studies, particularly in developing personal identity-based promotional strategies for tourism.

4. CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that the personal branding developed by M. Dimas Anggara through his Instagram account @infoasikdimas provides a tangible contribution to the promotion of culinary tourism in Medan City. By employing visually engaging communication strategies, a relaxed and authentic delivery style, and active engagement with followers, Dimas has successfully established himself as a credible and influential micro-influencer. Distinctive features such as his use of local dialect, entertaining yet informative narratives, and consistent focus on local culinary content have strengthened his digital identity and fostered audience loyalty. Dimas's approach aligns with the principles of human brand theory, where authenticity, emotional closeness, and personal appeal serve as the foundational elements for building long-term relationships with followers.

The impact of this personal branding extends beyond increased exposure for local culinary MSMEs; it also contributes to shaping the image of Medan as a diverse and affordable culinary destination. Through a communication style that resonates with audiences across social strata, Dimas's content helps form public perceptions of the uniqueness and richness of local culinary culture. The collaborations between Dimas and culinary business owners have expanded the reach of digital promotion networks in a mutually beneficial manner and supported the growth of a locally-based creative economy. Overall, this study affirms that a consistently and authentically built personal brand via social media holds strategic value not only in constructing individual identity but also in advancing the culinary tourism sector in a sustainable way.

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