Exploration of Knowledge and Attitudes of Remang Fish Skin Cracker Producers Related To Food Labeling in Indramayu Cracker Industry Area

Abstract: As many as 20 out of 30 producers who sell remang fish skin crackers with incomplete food labels and consumers still pay less attention to the food labels on the product packaging. This study aims to explore the knowledge and attitudes of remang fish skin cracker producers on food labels in the Indramayu Cracker Industrial Area. In-depth interviews with 16 producers were conducted using a case study approach with 5 (five) domains, namely knowledge of food labels, attitudes towards food labels, skills to making food labels, perceptions of food labels (images), and marketing strategies. The results showed that based on the knowledge, attitudes, and skills of remang fish skin cracker producers on food labels, it was stated that the producers were able to make food labels.

Key Words: Food Labels, Producer Knowledge, Producer Attitudes, Producer Skills, Marketing Strategy

1. INTRODUCTION

The food industry is one of the pillars of the economy in the industrial world of the Indonesian state (Mahardika, 2018). The increase in the economy in the industrial sector is evidenced by the existence of economic growth originating from the food and beverage processing industry of 7.9% (Bappenas, 2020). The contributors to the Indonesian economy are mostly dominated by the islands of Java and Sumatra (Media Indonesia, 2020). Among the dominant in the Java Island region, namely West Java. West Java Province has 17 regencies and 9 cities. Indramayu Regency is one of the regencies that dominates the economy from the results of the processing industry and has even become an industrial area that has been nationally recognized as a contributor to the Indonesian economy (Pemprovjabar, 2017).

Snacks consist of several types, one of which has a savory taste and uses frying techniques when cooking it (Amir, 2016). Crackers are a type of interlude with these flavors and cooking techniques. The penchant for eating crackers has been proven by
Making crackers a favorite snack that is favored by teenage girls with a percentage of 16% (World Food Programme and IPSOS, 2017). Skin crackers are processed from the main ingredient in the form of fish skin. Fish skin to be processed into skin crackers must comply with the criteria for processing skin crackers. The criteria for processing fish skin into good quality fish skin crackers must be fresh, not easily torn, cleaned of scales, and not easily crushed (Kristianingrum, 2004). Remang fish has a thick elongated body shape like an eel. Remang fish have abundant meat and good quality fish skin (Laksono et al., 2019).

After being processed into skin crackers, fish skin crackers are then widely marketed. When a product is marketed, the producer must include the product name and brand so that it is well accepted and known by the public. The inclusion of brands and product names is better known as food labels. In food labels, producers must write complete product information (product name, brand, net weight, production address, composition, expiration date, and nutritional information (nutrition facts)) to convince consumers to consume the product. Labeling that can explain products in detail aims to make it easier in terms of product licensing (Pratiwi, 2019).

Food labels are a form of information facility between producers and consumers about food (Direktorat Standardisasi Pangan Olahan BPOM, 2020). Therefore, food labels must be made and included on the packaging so that it can make it easier for consumers to consider the food to be purchased. In line with this, according to Government Regulation of the Republic of Indonesia Number 69 of 1999 concerning Food Labels, it is stated that every producer who will sell their products is obliged to include food labels on product packaging, both outside and inside the packaging.

However, after observing the remang fish skin crackers with various factories, 20 of the 30 producers found that the food labels on the remang fish skin crackers were incomplete, such as the expiration date, net weight, and name of the product were not written. In addition, many consumers also found that they did not pay attention to the food labels on the remang fish skin crackers. The existence of food labels serves as a medium for disseminating information and making it easier for consumers to choose food. However, so far, consumers who pay attention to food labels only focus on expired food labels. This is evidenced by as many as 94.3% of consumers using expired labels on food packaging as a consideration in choosing packaged foods (Devi, Sartono and Isworo, 2013). Differences in age, gender, education, and income are the causes of the lack of consumer attention to food labels. In previous studies, it was stated that female consumers had more attention on food labels. Consumers with an old age range, higher education, and have a high income have the awareness to consume nutritious food and have a healthy diet that starts by reading food labels. In addition, some consumers stated that it was difficult to understand food labels because they were constrained by scientific language (Asgha, 2016).

The lack of knowledge, understanding, and compliance of producers regarding food labeling is evidenced by as many as less than 60% of producers understand food labeling knowledge. However, in practice, only 16% of producers have a correct understanding of food labeling knowledge. In practice, more than 55% of producers have minimally included food labels that comply with regulations (Septian, Jihan dan Rahayu, 2014). Food products that are not labeled by the provisions of BPOM can cause unwanted problems, especially health problems. Based on previous research, it was found that there was a poisoning case that happened to 39 students of SD Negeri 01 Gedangan, Tegal Ombo District, Pacitan Regency who experienced mass poisoning due to consuming cassava chips that did not have food labels. A total of 19 students were rushed to the nearest community health center for intensive care (Nurjannah, 2012).
2. METHODS

This research was conducted in the Indramayu Crackers Industrial Area located in Kenanga Village, Sindang District, Indramayu Regency. This study uses a qualitative method with a descriptive approach and a case study perspective.

The selection of informants is using direct determination technique (purposive) sampling and snowball sampling. Determination of the number of informants is defined based on objective studies, essential variations, and previous research. The four criteria for the essential variation are then multiplied by two to get the number of informants (Sufyan et al., 2019). The informants who will be interviewed are producers of remang fish skin crackers and the estimated number of informants based on the essential variation is 16.

Researchers take data directly by conducting in-depth interviews with each informant and triangulating sources to obtain and know different perceptions so that can validate the answers given by key informants. The types of data in this study are primary data and secondary data. Then, the instrument in this study used a semi-structured questionnaire and food label images. In the process of collecting data in this study, it was carried out by observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation.

This research has been approved by the Health Research Ethics Commission Universitas Pembangunan National Veteran Jakarta under number 22/I/2021/KEPK.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In this study, researchers have successfully conducted interviews with 16 informants (tabel 1).

From 16 informants, overall the informants obeyed the regulations at a minimum. This is evidenced by the delivery of information on each of their food labels which is the main factor according to them that the appropriate food label is a food label that includes a business license number. The average education of the informants has a secondary education, namely high school graduates/equivalent. There are only 3 informants who have higher education, namely bachelor/undergraduated/postgraduate. Then, as many as 4 informants who really understand the information related to food labels. All informants have productive age.

Other participants who took part in this research and acted as key informants were consumers, reseller, and local village heads. Consumers who participate in this study are buyers who have subscribed. The reseller who participated in this study were sellers of remang fish skin crackers in traditional markets. The reseller are a little closer to the producers because there are long-standing partnerships.
Table 1. Characteristics of Informants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristics</th>
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<td>Compliance Obligation to</td>
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<td>obey a maximum of</td>
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<td>Understanding</td>
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<td>Just knowing</td>
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<td>Education</td>
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<td>University (Bachelor/Undergraduated/Postgraduated)</td>
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<tr>
<td>High school</td>
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<tr>
<td>Age</td>
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<td>Productive (34-64 years)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Non-productive (&lt; 15 and &gt; 64 years)</td>
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Knowledge of Food Labels

The results of in-depth interviews conducted by researchers stated that most producers explained the purpose of the existence of food labels, namely as an intermediary so that their products could be widely known by the entire community. The following is an excerpt regarding what manufacturers know about the purpose of food labels.

“Menurut saya tujuan dari label pangan agar produk usaha saya dapat dikenal masyarakat secara luas mba” (Produsen, 47 tahun)

“Tujuan dari label pangan itu media perantara agar masyarakat luas mengetahui produk saya mba” (Produsen, 39 tahun)

“Tujuan label pangan bagi saya itu supaya label pangan saya atau merek ini menjadi terkenal dan dikenal oleh konsumen mba” (Produsen, 37 tahun)

“Tujuan dari pembuatan label merek ini menurut saya agar usaha saya dikenal secara luas sehingga banyak yang membeli mba” (Produsen, 38 tahun)

“Tujuan saya membuat merek agar pembeli tahu dan jualan saya jadi terkenal mba” (Produsen, 45 tahun)

According to them, the existence of food labels can help them to expand sales. This is in line with the Regulation of the Food and Drug Supervisory Agency number 31 of 2018 concerning processed food which states that the labeling of processed food aims to provide correct and clear information to the public about every processed food product that is packaged before buying and/or consuming processed food (Badan Pengawas...
Obat dan Makanan Republik Indonesia, 2018). According to producers, food labels generally have two benefits, namely benefits for producers and consumers. The benefit for producers in general is that it can help provide information to consumers through food labels. Then, the benefit of having food labels for consumers is to help them in choosing the food or product they will buy. The following are the views expressed by the producers regarding the benefits of food labels.

“Manfaatnya apa ya mba ya membuat konsumen mengetahui informasi terkait makanan yang ada di dalam kemasan itu mba” (Produsen, 43 tahun)

“Manfaat adanya label pangan menurut saya adalah membantu masyarakat memilih atau mempertimbangkan makanan yang akan dibelinya melalui informasi yang tertera pada label pangan tersebut mba” (Produsen, 39 tahun)

Based on the quote above, the trust built by producers through the information displayed on food labels makes consumers feel comfortable and safe when buying their products. According to previous research, the benefits of having food labels are that it can increase profits for producers and can also help consumers to consider the food they will buy (Septian, Jihan dan Rahayu, 2014). In addition, producers make efforts by preparing their food labels to comply with government recommendations. The preparations carried out are also very diverse, but basically they focus on providing information about the distribution permit of processed foods. Here’s what manufacturers think when preparing food labels that are in line with regulations.

“Cap yang harus sesuai ya berarti harus mau ngurus-perizinan mba biar dapat nomor P-IRT, BPOM mba” (Produsen, 34 tahun)

“Menurut saya ya harus mengikuti prosedur pemerintah yang sudah dibuat mba” (Produsen, 39 tahun)

“Kalau menurut saya harus ada niat dan kemauan, terus baru deh ngurus-ngurus pengajuan surat izin usaha gitu mba karena ya selain butuh kesabaran ya kita juga harus mau membuka diri untuk mendapatkan ilmu-ilmu baru saat pengajuan surat mba” (Produsen, 43 tahun)

“ya harus memperhatikan Depkes nya mba agar sesuai dengan pemerintah” (Produsen, 25 tahun)

“Ya liat dulu label temen seperusahaan kemudian coco kok kan dengan keinginan saya dan sesuai peraturan kalau sudah ketemu benang merah nya baru saya cetak mba, yang terpenting menurut saya adalah adanya izin usaha di label saya sehingga pembeli yakin terhadap apa yang saya jual mba” (Produsen, 38 tahun)

“Menurut saya sih ya harus mengurus perizinan nya mba biar dipermudah penjualannya” (Produsen, 36 tahun)

According to the statement above, for them the main factor in preparing food labels in accordance with regulations is having a great will and intention because the process of applying for a business license is quite time-consuming and requires full patience. If producers are not willing to apply for a permit, their food label will not have their business license number listed. In line with the statement above, previous findings state
that producers, especially processed food producers, must arrange for a distribution permit for their products in order to ensure the safety of each product (Niagara, 2019).

**Attitudes towards Food Labels**

Before making food labels, producers determine food labels by categories, namely regulation, appearance, and shape. For producers, obeying the regulations, one of which is by applying for a permit to the authorities so that they can get a license number to trade. This is their view that determining food labels must be based on regulations.

“Ya harus memperhatikan Depkes nya mba agar sesuai dengan pemerintah” (Produsen, 25 tahun)

“Yang utama izinnya mba” (Produsen, 36 tahun)

“SIUP nya dulu mba” (Produsen, 47 tahun)

“Menaati peraturan mba” (Produsen, 39 tahun)

“Izin jualan nya juga mba” (Produsen, 34 tahun)

This is in line with research that states that when a product is sold to the upper-middle class, it is necessary to have the quality of the food label and packaging (Sucipta, Suriasih and Kenacana, 2017). In addition, in terms of the appearance of food labels, what must be determined are the text, color, and logo. According to some manufacturers, adjusting the layout of the text, colors, and logos has a good impact because they are the main focus of consumers when looking at food labels. Here are their opinions on this matter.

“Kalau menurut saya karena merek kan salah satu tujuannya menarik perhatian konsumen jadi mungkin dari segi warna nya dulu ya mba terus besar kecil nya tulisan nya dan ukuran dari merek nya juga harus disesuaikan mba” (Produsen, 38 tahun)

“Yang harus diperhatikan dari segi penampilan ya tulisan nya, warna nya, dan juga logonya sebisa mungkin dibuat dengan posisi mencolok sehingga jadi pusat perhatian mba” (Produsen, 38 tahun)

“Menurut saya ya tulisan, gambar, sama logonya mba biar pas udah jadi label konsumen nyaman liat label nya” (Produsen, 43 tahun)

“Yang perlu diperhatikan tulisan, warna, gambar misalnya nih mba gambarnya ga jelas bisa membuat kesan ambigu ke konsumennya” (Produsen, 37 tahun)

Based on the quote above, the appearance of food labels has an important role for producers and consumers. According to them, an attractive color combination can increase consumer interest in buying remang fish skin crackers. In addition, the placement of the writing structure can affect the reading interest of consumers, because if the writing is placed beautifully then consumers will feel comfortable reading the information listed on the food label. According to manufacturers, the presence of logos and images on food labels can help producers in clarifying the products on the packaging. In line with this, other researchers state that the appearance aspect which contains colors, text, images, and logos has a role in helping producers to communicate their products to consumers (Nugrahani, 2015).
Skills to making Food Labels

Skill is an important aspect for producers in making food labels. Food labels are made by producers largely based on personal desires. Even though producers make food labels of their own accord, they still want to adapt them to the applicable food label regulations. According to the producers, although skills are free and innovative, they must remain in line with regulations. The advantage for producers who make and use food labels in accordance with applicable regulations can simplify all their entrepreneurial processes. Efforts made by producers through food labeling skills are an exemplary effort because they are trying to make food labels in accordance with regulations. This is in line with the statement that the label is a statement containing information about the product and production address and must comply with regulations (Menteri Perdagangan Republik Indonesia, 2015). Each producer has a unique preparation, resulting in a work of food labels that are believed by manufacturers to be the most attractive food labels. The following is an excerpt related to the preparation of making food labels.

“Saya tentuin dulu warna, gambar, tulisan, dan hiasan lainnya. Terus abis itu saya gambar dulu untuk nyoba buat kerangka meletakkan tulisannya dimana mba baru deh saya serahkan ke percetakan” (Produse, 34 tahun)

“Kalau saya, saya buat bentuk label terus saya coret-coret gambarnya mau apa terus warna nya apa dan tulisannya mau diisi apa gitu mba. Selain itu juga saya lihat label pengusaha lain agar jangan mirip persis banget mba” (Produsen, 38 tahun)

“Kalau saya bikin gambar ya konsep kasar aja gitu mba. Jadi misalnya peletakan nomor P-IRT dibagian mana, tulisannya apa aja, dan gambarnya seperti apa gitu mba. Baru setelah itu saya serahkan kepada percetakan tapi pada saat pembuatan desain saya ikut mendampingi agar label yang akan dibuat sesuai dengan konsep yang saya buat mba” (Produsen, 39 tahun)

“Kalau saya baca peraturan dulu mba terus dipelajari, terus saya buat konsep bareng suami mba” (Produsen, 43 tahun)

“Modal, konsep,surat izin nya mba kaya nya itu mba biar label nya menarik” (Produsen, 41 tahun)

Based on the quote above, the manufacturer begins its preparation by creating a food label concept that will be made by drawing on paper. In addition, the manufacturer determines the colors, text, and images that will be used. Then, the producer arranges the placement of information that will be included on the food label. It is intended that the writing can attract the attention of consumers when reading the food labels on each package. Then, manufacturers also read the applicable regulations in order to follow and obey them. Food labels have various forms, according to the manufacturer, the shape of the food label will be adjusted to the size of the packaging used, so the shape and packaging of remang fish skin crackers need to be prepared. According to the results of previous research, it is stated that if a food label concept is made incorrectly it will leave a bad impression on the food label and the food packaging being sold so that the manufacture of food labels must pay attention to the concept carefully (Irrubai, 2015).

Making food labels and packaging for remang fish skin crackers, conceptually and determining the appearance and shape based on the wishes of the producer. However, the producers stated that when they were going to draw digitally, they went to screen printing and printing services. The use of these services is because producers are not able to create digital images, but producers continue to monitor the results of the digital images. The monitoring carried out by producers to produce food labels that have been
conceptualized is by accompanying screen printing services and printing services when digital drawing. So it can be concluded that the role of screen printing and printing services is very meaningful for producers for the sustainability of their entrepreneurial activities. In line with this, other research states that producers need the role of graphic design actors in order to realize the concepts they make (Nugrahani, 2015).

Then, the producer added that the knowledge possessed by the service is closely related to food labeling. According to the producer, when the food label is still in the process of being conceptualized and has a rough description, the producer still accepts it. However, in realizing the concept or rough description of food labels into a form of food labels physically, they have not been able to do it. According to the producers, basically they only focus on their entrepreneurial activities. Although producers cannot design food labels like other services, producers must understand the content of information that will be conveyed by producers through food labels. Based on previous research, the role of graphic design is very helpful for producers in making food labels, therefore graphic design science directly becomes the special science needed by producers to produce a food label (Nugrahani, 2015).

**Perception of Food Labels**

The overall perception that they convey in the form of views conveyed on the information content and form of food labels is a picture that represents their understanding of food labels. In addition, they indirectly evaluate the food labels they have. The following is the perception of producers regarding their current food labels.

"Karena simple dan ya waktu buat itu motivasinya semakin simple semakin banyak yang liat jadilah begini mba" (Produsen, 43 tahun)

"Karena punya saya ga selengkap sampai ada barcode untuk penjualan ke supermarket mba" (Produsen, 39 tahun)

"Menurut saya cap paling minimalis dalam memberikan informasi" (Produsen, 32 tahun)

Manufacturers share their views on the food labels they currently have. They say it honestly and are enthusiastic to tell stories. However, it is undeniable that the food labels they tell about are not all in accordance with the food labels they have. The reality that is different from what they convey occurs because they do not understand food labels that are in accordance with regulations. They can identify their food labels but information about food labels that comply with regulations is very minimal, so most of them feel confident about the compliance of their food labels with applicable regulations. The lack of understanding of producers in applying food labels is in line with previous research which states that producer quality is one of the factors in determining attitudes (Dienillah, 2019).

Producers hope that in the future the food labels they make can comply with applicable regulations. In addition, producers hope that the sellers of remang fish skin crackers that they process are not only sold in the Indramayu crackers industrial area, but they have hope that in the future their products can have a barcode that they make so that they can expand sales outside the city and enter supermarkets. Their expectations are in line with regulations which state that every product to be sold in supermarkets is required to include a barcode with the aim that the product can be tracked and identified digitally (Direktorat Registrasi Pangan Olahan, 2019).

**Marketing Strategy**
Competition in the industrial world encourages producers to always be vigilant and must have a strategy. The results of in-depth interviews with producers of remang fish skin crackers resulted in the role of marketing strategy in expanding the reach of food labels as a medium of information for consumers and reseller. So that producers innovate and hone their creativity in order to create food labels that have the opportunity to generate more profits. According to him, food labels that are given a slogan or tagline can increase profits. This is in line with previous research which states that slogans are unique in advertising a product with the aim of influencing consumers to buy the product (Harminingtyas, 2013).

In addition to including slogans on food labels, image adjustments are made in order to provide an indirect explanation to consumers. Adjustment of images on food labels is also a means of communication between producers and consumers. On the food label for remang fish skin crackers, producers include pictures of fish on each food label with the aim of providing information to consumers that their skin crackers use fish. So that consumers do not feel worried and doubtful when they want to buy these skin crackers. Image adjustment as a marketing strategy medium is in line with previous research which states that one of the functions of food labels is to explain products through various images (Keller, 2016).

4. CONCLUSION

Based on the results of qualitative research that has been done by researchers, it can be concluded that:

a. Based on the knowledge, attitudes, and skills of remang fish skin crackers producers on food labels, it is stated that producers are able to make food labels.

b. The description of understanding of the producers of remang fish skin crackers is conveyed through the producer's perception of food labels. The perceptions conveyed make producers indirectly evaluate and give hope to their food labels.

c. Marketing strategy plays an important role in making food labels because it can increase the attractiveness of food labels in front of consumers.

The researcher suggests that other researchers use quantitative methods in researching the relationship between the understanding of fish skin crackers producers and the manufacture of food labels by regulations. In addition, it can specifically explore the skills of producers in depth by using in-depth interviews and adding focus group discussions (FGD).

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The authors declare that there were no conflicts of interest in this study.

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