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Exploring the Benefits and Barriers of QRIS Adoption Among Micro Businesses in North Bogor

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Abstract: This study explores the role of the Indonesian Standard QR Code (QRIS) in enhancing the business outcomes of micro enterprises in North Bogor Subdistrict. While QRIS has been recognized as a crucial technological advancement for promoting financial inclusion, there remains a reluctance among some micro business owners to adopt it. This research utilizes a descriptive qualitative method, including interviews with micro entrepreneurs who do and do not use QRIS, government officials involved in MSME development, and financial institution representatives. The findings reveal that the adoption of QRIS is often driven by its integration with delivery services rather than its potential to boost business performance. Despite some entrepreneurs experiencing benefits from QRIS, a significant gap in understanding its full potential as a payment method persists. For those not using QRIS, reasons include the efficiency of cash transactions, additional costs, and expectations more on government support in promoting their products to achieve business growth.

Keywords: Financial Inclusion, QRIS, MSMEs, Micro Businesses

INTRODUCTION

Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) in Indonesia serve as a cornerstone of economic development, playing a pivotal role in establishing a sustainable economic system (Gustika & Susena, 2022; Sarfiah et al., 2019; Sutanty et al., 2022; Utami et al., 2022). According to Law No. 20 of 2008, micro enterprises are defined as businesses with a maximum asset value of IDR 50,000,000 and an annual turnover of up to IDR 300,000,000. The vast number of MSMEs, which reached 65.4 million in 2021, and their capacity to absorb a large workforce demonstrate Indonesia's strong economic potential (Nainggolan, 2020). Despite this, micro enterprises contribute only about 37.8% to the national economy. Given their critical role in the economy, especially in times of economic crisis, the government has implemented policies to help micro enterprises evolve into small or medium-sized businesses (Komara et al., 2020; Nainggolan, 2020; Natasya & Hardiningsih, 2021; Putra, 2016; Sarfiah et al., 2019).

However, micro enterprises in Indonesia frequently face challenges in accessing formal financial institutions (Ningsih et al., 2023; Suryani et al., 2019). These barriers stem from

stringent requirements and relatively high banking interest rates, posing a significant obstacle to the growth of small businesses and limiting their contribution to the national economy. Therefore, broader access to financial institutions is essential for enhancing the participation of all societal sectors, including MSMEs, in the national economy, a concept often referred to as financial inclusion (Haryanto, 2011; Maulida & Yunani, 2017; Sugita & Ekayani, 2022).

Financial inclusion ensures that all societal groups can access formal financial services such as savings, credit, insurance, and digital payments, which is crucial for reducing poverty levels and promoting sustainable economic growth (Ogunsakin & Olumide, 2017). By increasing financial inclusion, individuals can manage their finances more effectively, improve their economic well-being, and enhance overall financial stability (Sugita & Ekayani, 2022). Additionally, financial inclusion enables MSMEs to develop and actively contribute to national economic growth, fostering more equitable and sustainable economic development (Richard et al., 2024).

In the context of the growing digital economy, understanding the importance of the digital ecosystem for micro enterprises is a preliminary step toward enabling these businesses to contribute more significantly to national economic income (Barata, 2019; Dwi Purnomo & Adhitya, 2021; Krisnawati, 2018; Qureshil et al., 2009; Rachmawati, 2024; Wibowo, 2018; Widnyani et al., 2021). According to Harvie (2003), growth-oriented micro enterprises require not only access to financing but also opportunities to modernize their skills and technologies.

A significant technological advancement in achieving financial inclusion is the digitalization of payments through QR Code technology. To facilitate this, Bank Indonesia introduced the QR Code Indonesian Standard (QRIS), aimed at simplifying transactions for MSMEs (BI, 2020). QRIS is characterized by its UNGGUL attributes: Universal, because it supports all QR Code-based payment applications; Easy, as its use is straightforward for both consumers and merchants; Profitable, allowing users to utilize any QR payment account while merchants need only one account to receive all types of QR Code payments; and Direct or Instantaneous, with transactions processed instantly and notifications provided immediately to both users and merchants (BI, 2020). By April 2023, there were 25.4 million MSME users of QRIS, indicating growing familiarity with digital technology among the public and merchants (Laucereno, 2023).

Previous research has highlighted the ease and simplicity of QRIS, noting its benefits for business owners in accelerating payment transactions, recording business results, and enhancing the image of a contemporary business, thus attracting more customers (Pratiwi, 2022). Other studies have shown that QRIS increases sales and brand awareness, is practical, and provides security by reducing the risk of counterfeit money (Sari & Adinugraha, 2022). Furthermore, the combined use of e-commerce and QRIS positively impacts MSME sales performance (Wahyudin et al., 2022). According to Munizu (2010), MSME performance can be measured using five key indicators: growth in product or service sales, increased revenue, growth in the number of employees, market expansion, and profit growth, which all indicate financial health and business sustainability.

Despite the benefits of QRIS and the government's efforts to promote its use, there is still reluctance among micro business owners in North Bogor Subdistrict, Bogor City, to adopt QRIS. This study aims to explore whether micro enterprises in North Bogor perceive the use of QRIS as a payment method that can enhance their business outcomes.

Previous studies on QRIS adoption among MSMEs have primarily focused on the technical aspects driving the acceptance of QRIS as a payment technology, rather than on its role in improving business outcomes (Setiawan & Mahyuni, 2020; Sihalohe et al., 2020; Yuliati & Handayani, 2021). The findings of this study are expected to serve as a policy reference for expanding QRIS usage among micro enterprises to achieve financial inclusion.

METHOD

As shown in figure 1, the research employs a conceptual framework to answer the primary research question that have been formulated by this research which are: (1) How does QRIS influence business improvement for micro-entrepreneurs in this area? and (2) What factors affect their decision to use or not use QRIS? This conceptual framework helps in understanding variable dynamics, shaping precise research questions, and developing systematic data analysis strategies. In addition, it also helps in ensuring that the research remains focused on the original objectives and is able to produce relevant and valid findings.

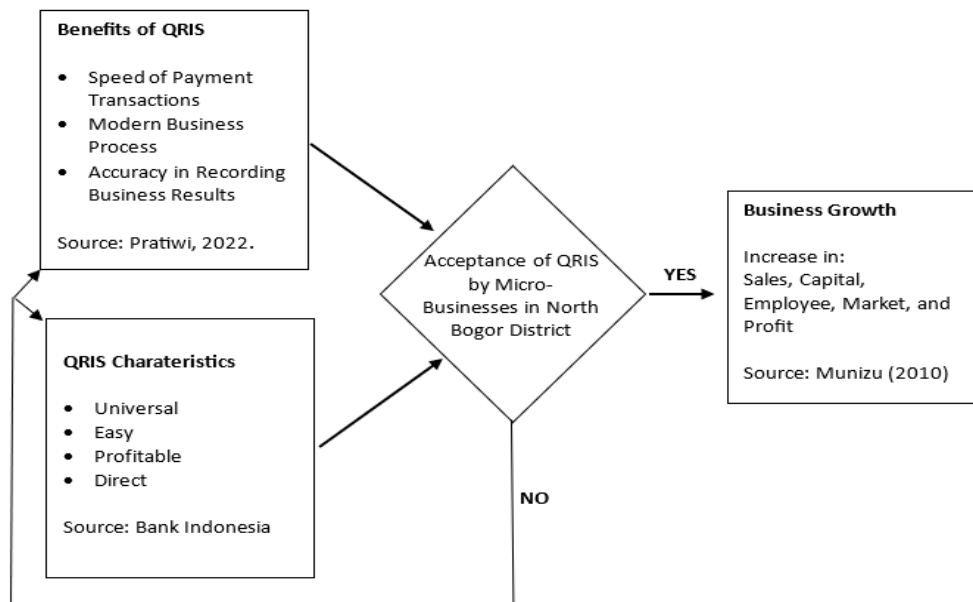


Figure 1. Conceptual Framework

Utilizing a qualitative approach Sugiyono (2015), the study aims to deeply explore the dynamics of digital payment usage among micro-entrepreneurs. Sudjana (2000) argues that the stages of qualitative research include problem identification, setting problem boundaries, determining the focus of research, data collection, data management and analysis, theory building, and reporting research results. A descriptive qualitative design provides a comprehensive description of the phenomenon.

Purposive sampling is used to select informants with relevant characteristics. Researchers selectively choose informants who have special characteristics or experiences that are relevant to the research and can contribute in-depth and diverse data, so as to produce richer and more meaningful findings. With those criteria, informants in this research are micro-entrepreneurs using and not using QRIS, SME development officials, and financial institutions.

Data is gathered through semi-structured interviews and observations. Semi-structured interviews allow for in-depth exploration with prepared questions and probing, while observations provide contextual understanding of business operations. Data analysis involves systematic organization, reduction of irrelevant information, and narrative presentation of findings. The process includes conclusion drawing and verification to ensure validity. To ensure credibility and validity, triangulation techniques-investigator, data source, and theory triangulation are applied.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Reasons Micro-Entrepreneurs Use QRIS

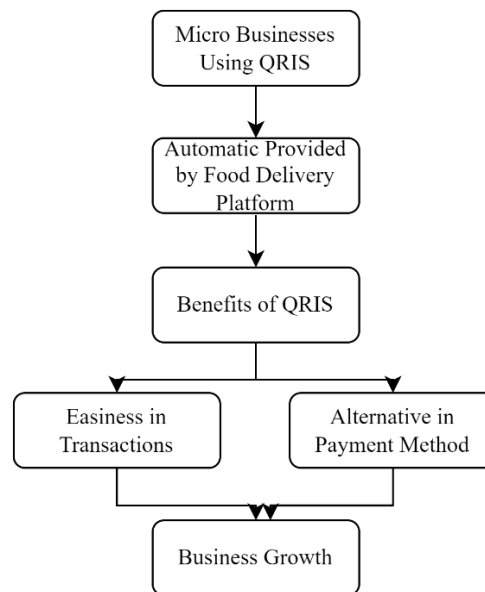


Figure 2. Research Findings on Micro Businesses Using QRIS

Interviews with two micro-entrepreneurs using QRIS reveal that the primary reason for adopting QRIS is its automatic integration through delivery service apps like food delivery and online shopping platforms. These platforms include QRIS as a standard payment method, simplifying the adoption process for entrepreneurs who participate in these platforms. The ease of access eliminates the need for separate applications to financial institutions, thereby reducing resistance to QRIS adoption and enhancing operational efficiency while improving customer service.

Additionally, these entrepreneurs perceive QRIS as a growing trend. As digital payments become more popular, micro-entrepreneurs feel the need to align with customer preferences for cashless transactions. Embracing this trend helps them stay competitive and modern, potentially boosting customer satisfaction and loyalty. Previous studies highlight that the adoption of QRIS is often driven by technological advancements and the need to stay current with market trends (Farhan & Shifa, 2023; Sihalohe et al., 2020).

Benefits of QRIS Usage

The interviews with two micro-entrepreneurs using QRIS identified two key benefits: transaction convenience and an alternative payment method. QRIS simplifies transactions by allowing customers to complete payments within seconds by scanning a QR code, reducing time at the checkout, eliminating the need for cash handling, and minimizing errors in change. Moreover, QRIS consolidates various payment platforms into one system, reducing the need for multiple payment terminals and enhancing customer satisfaction by accommodating various digital payment apps.

The ease of transaction has positively influenced perceptions of QRIS, reinforcing its adoption (Setiawan & Mahyuni, 2020). The convenience factor drives greater adoption as businesses experience smoother transactions and improved customer engagement. Studies confirm that transaction ease is a major factor encouraging QRIS usage (Faizani & Indriyanti, 2021; Fauziyah & Prajawati, 2023; Kurniawati et al., 2021; Sihalohe et al., 2020; Sudiarmika & Martini, 2022).

As a payment alternative, QRIS expands sales by reaching customers who may not carry cash or credit cards, attracting younger, tech-savvy consumers who prefer mobile transactions. This flexibility can boost sales and broaden the customer base, contributing to significant business growth.

Reasons Micro-Entrepreneurs Do Not Use QRIS

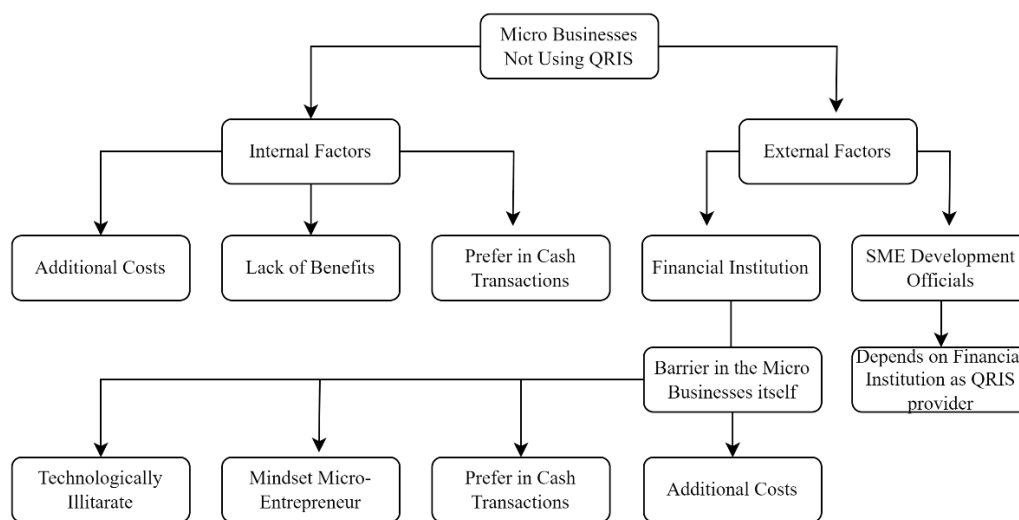


Figure 3. Research Findings on Micro Businesses Not Using QRIS

Interviews with two micro-entrepreneurs not using QRIS highlighted three main reasons for their reluctance: 1) additional operational costs, 2) lack of significant perceived benefits, and 3) a preference for transactions in cash. The costs associated with QRIS, including transaction fees and potential hardware or software upgrades, are seen as burdensome, particularly for businesses with thin profit margins (Fauziyah & Prajawati, 2023; Kurniawati et al., 2021; Mahyuni & Setiawan, 2021).

Moreover, these entrepreneurs require quick cash turnover for their operations. Delays in receiving payments can disrupt cash flow and financial stability, leading them to favor payment methods that provide immediate funds. Additionally, the perceived lack of added value from QRIS—given that customers continue to transact with cash—makes them hesitant to switch from their reliable traditional payment systems. Negative perceptions and limited understanding of QRIS also play a role (Fauziyah & Prajawati, 2023; Kurniawati et al., 2021; Mahyuni & Setiawan, 2021; Palupi et al., 2022).

Furthermore, these entrepreneurs often prioritize marketing and promotional strategies over adopting new payment technologies. Despite government and financial institutions' efforts to provide digital payment infrastructure, the primary needs of micro-entrepreneurs often revolve around effective marketing strategies.

Perspectives of Financial Institutions and SME Development Officials

From the financial institutions' perspective, promoting digital payments like QRIS to micro-entrepreneurs is a key target for achieving financial inclusion. Challenges in this promotion include 1) resistance to digitalization, 2) limited technological literacy among entrepreneurs, 3) entrenched cash transaction habits, 4) sensitivity to additional costs, and 5) inconsistent internet connectivity. Addressing these challenges is crucial for successful digitalization through QRIS.

The role of government and financial institutions significantly influences micro-entrepreneurs' decisions to adopt QRIS. Efforts from these entities to promote digitalization and provide necessary infrastructure are vital. Government initiatives, coupled with proactive banking programs supporting micro-enterprises, are crucial for the successful adoption of QRIS.

CONCLUSION

QRIS adoption among micro-entrepreneurs in North Bogor Subdistrict initially occurred due to its automatic availability through delivery services rather than a proactive choice. Over

time, entrepreneurs have recognized QRIS's benefits in transaction efficiency and cash management. However, some still view it as a mere alternative payment method due to insufficient understanding of its full potential.

Key motivations for QRIS adoption include digital payment trends and the need for faster transactions. Despite its advantages, there is a need for enhanced education on QRIS to fully leverage its benefits.

Targeted socialization efforts are crucial to improve QRIS adoption among micro-entrepreneurs and the general public. Further research with a quantitative approach will help identify barriers and refine strategies to boost QRIS use, supporting greater financial inclusion and business growth in North Bogor Subdistrict.

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