

Community Empowerment through Digital Entrepreneurship: The Digital Terrace Program in Tangerang

¹Aries Denta Putra; ²Andri Kurniawan

^{1,2}Universitas Islam Syekh Yusuf, Indonesia

1ariedp@unis.ac.id

2andri.kurniawan@unis.ac.id

Abstrak

Perubahan menuju pemanfaatan teknologi digital telah membuka berbagai peluang baru bagi masyarakat untuk mengembangkan usaha berbasis teknologi, namun pemanfaatannya masih terkendala oleh rendahnya literasi digital dan keterampilan kewirausahaan. Program *Digital Terrace* diselenggarakan sebagai kegiatan pengabdian kepada masyarakat yang bertujuan meningkatkan pemahaman dan kapasitas masyarakat mengenai kewirausahaan digital di Kota Tangerang. Kegiatan ini menggunakan pendekatan partisipatif melalui tahapan persiapan, pelaksanaan, dan evaluasi. Metode yang diterapkan meliputi penyampaian materi, diskusi interaktif, demonstrasi, serta sesi tanya jawab yang melibatkan partisipasi aktif masyarakat. Evaluasi dilakukan melalui observasi selama kegiatan berlangsung dan refleksi terhadap keterlibatan peserta. Hasil kegiatan menunjukkan adanya peningkatan pemahaman peserta mengenai konsep kewirausahaan digital, pemanfaatan media digital sebagai sarana pengembangan usaha, serta tumbuhnya kepercayaan diri untuk mengeksplorasi peluang bisnis berbasis teknologi. Diskusi interaktif juga mendorong pertukaran pengalaman dan munculnya berbagai gagasan kewirausahaan yang sesuai dengan potensi lokal. Program ini menunjukkan bahwa edukasi kewirausahaan digital berbasis partisipasi masyarakat dapat menjadi strategi yang efektif dalam memperkuat kapasitas masyarakat sekaligus mendukung pemberdayaan ekonomi lokal secara berkelanjutan.

Kata Kunci: pemberdayaan masyarakat, kewirausahaan digital, literasi digital, pengabdian masyarakat, partisipasi masyarakat

Abstract

The rapid advancement of digital technology has created new opportunities for communities to develop innovative and competitive entrepreneurial activities. However, the utilization of digital technology for business development remains constrained by limited digital literacy and entrepreneurial competencies. The Digital Terrace Program was implemented as a community engagement initiative aimed at enhancing community knowledge and capacity in digital entrepreneurship in Tangerang, Indonesia. The program employed a participatory approach consisting of preparation, implementation, and evaluation stages. Educational activities were conducted through interactive lectures, practical demonstrations, group discussions, and question-and-answer sessions that encouraged active participant involvement. Program evaluation was carried out through direct observation and participant reflections throughout the implementation process. The results indicate that participants developed a better understanding of digital entrepreneurship concepts, digital marketing strategies, and the effective use of digital platforms to support business activities. In addition, the program increased participants' confidence in identifying entrepreneurial opportunities and strengthened collaboration among community members. These findings suggest that participatory digital entrepreneurship education is an effective strategy for enhancing community empowerment and supporting sustainable local economic development.

Keywords: community empowerment, digital entrepreneurship, digital literacy, community engagement, local economic development

Correspondence author: Aries Denta Putra, ariesdp@unis.ac.id, Tangerang, Indonesia.



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INTRODUCTION

The rapid expansion of digital technology has reshaped the way people communicate, access information, and participate in economic activities. The increasing availability of internet services, mobile applications, and digital marketplaces has created new opportunities for individuals to establish businesses with relatively low financial barriers. Small-scale entrepreneurs are no longer restricted to conventional marketing methods because digital platforms enable them to promote products, interact with customers, and expand market access beyond geographical boundaries. As a result, digital entrepreneurship has become an important component of local economic development, particularly in developing countries where micro and small enterprises constitute a significant proportion of the national economy.

Indonesia has experienced remarkable growth in internet penetration over the past decade, accompanied by widespread adoption of social media and digital commerce. This development has accelerated the emergence of online businesses across various sectors, including food services, fashion, handicrafts, and home-based industries. Nevertheless, the availability of digital technology does not necessarily translate into equal participation in the digital economy. Many community members continue to experience difficulties in utilizing digital platforms effectively because they lack the knowledge and practical skills required to transform technology into productive economic activities. Limited digital literacy, inadequate entrepreneurial competencies, and uncertainty regarding online business practices remain common barriers, particularly among communities with limited exposure to entrepreneurship education.

Digital literacy extends beyond the ability to operate digital devices. It encompasses the capacity to evaluate information critically, communicate effectively through digital platforms, create digital content, and utilize technology responsibly to achieve personal and professional goals. Within the context of entrepreneurship, digital literacy enables individuals to identify market opportunities, build customer relationships, develop online branding strategies, and adapt to rapidly changing business environments. Previous studies have demonstrated that entrepreneurs with stronger digital competencies are more likely to innovate, improve business performance, and respond effectively to market changes (UNESCO, 2023; OECD, 2021). Consequently, strengthening digital literacy has become an essential prerequisite for fostering sustainable entrepreneurial development within local communities.

Alongside digital literacy, entrepreneurship education plays a significant role in encouraging individuals to recognize opportunities, develop business ideas, and cultivate confidence in managing entrepreneurial activities. Rather than focusing solely on theoretical concepts, contemporary entrepreneurship education emphasizes experiential learning, critical thinking, and collaborative problem-solving. Educational activities that encourage participants to engage directly with real-life situations tend to produce more meaningful learning outcomes because participants are able to connect theoretical knowledge with their own experiences. Kolb (2015) argues that learning becomes more effective when individuals actively reflect upon concrete experiences, while Bandura (1997) emphasizes that self-efficacy developed through practice and social interaction strongly influences individuals' willingness to initiate entrepreneurial activities. These

perspectives suggest that community-based entrepreneurship education should prioritize active participation and practical engagement rather than one-way knowledge dissemination.

Higher education institutions have an important responsibility to contribute to community development through community engagement activities that address societal needs using academic knowledge. In Indonesia, community service represents one of the three fundamental missions of higher education alongside education and research. Community engagement programs provide opportunities for universities to collaborate with local communities in solving practical problems while simultaneously enhancing public access to scientific knowledge. Effective community engagement is characterized by reciprocal interaction, where universities not only transfer knowledge but also learn from community experiences to develop solutions that are relevant to local contexts. This collaborative relationship strengthens community ownership of educational activities and increases the likelihood that knowledge gained during the program will continue to be applied after the intervention has concluded.

Although numerous community training programs related to entrepreneurship have been implemented across Indonesia, many initiatives continue to emphasize theoretical presentations with limited opportunities for participant interaction and contextual application. In many cases, educational activities conclude immediately after the delivery of learning materials without providing sufficient space for participants to discuss their own challenges, exchange experiences, or explore locally relevant entrepreneurial opportunities. Consequently, participants often gain conceptual understanding but remain uncertain about applying digital entrepreneurship principles in their own communities. This condition indicates the need for community engagement models that integrate practical learning, collaborative discussion, and contextual problem-solving into entrepreneurship education.

The Digital Terrace Program was developed to respond to these challenges by providing a participatory educational platform that introduces community members to practical aspects of digital entrepreneurship. Rather than concentrating exclusively on technological applications, the program encourages participants to understand how digital platforms can be utilized to strengthen existing economic activities, expand business networks, and improve communication with customers. Learning activities were designed to create an interactive environment where participants could discuss local business conditions, share experiences, and collaboratively identify strategies for utilizing digital technology according to their own circumstances. This participatory learning environment distinguishes the program from conventional training activities by positioning participants as active contributors throughout the educational process. Another distinguishing feature of the Digital Terrace Program lies in its emphasis on community empowerment rather than technology adoption alone. Community empowerment is understood as a process through which individuals strengthen their knowledge, confidence, and capacity to make informed decisions that improve their social and economic well-being. Within this perspective, digital entrepreneurship education becomes more than a technical training activity; it serves as a mechanism for increasing individual agency, encouraging collaboration, and expanding access to economic opportunities. The program therefore seeks to build participants' confidence in exploring entrepreneurial initiatives while simultaneously fostering stronger social interaction among community members.

This article presents the implementation of the Digital Terrace Program as a community engagement initiative conducted in Tangerang, Indonesia. It examines how participatory digital entrepreneurship education contributed to improving community awareness, strengthening entrepreneurial confidence, and encouraging collaborative learning among participants. By documenting both the implementation process and the educational outcomes, this study contributes to the growing discussion on community-based digital entrepreneurship education and offers practical insights for universities, policymakers, and community organizations seeking to design sustainable empowerment programs in the digital era.

METHOD

2.1 Program Design

The Digital Terrace Program was implemented as a community engagement initiative designed to enhance digital entrepreneurship literacy among community members in Tangerang, Indonesia. The program adopted a participatory educational approach that emphasized collaborative learning, active discussion, and practical knowledge sharing. This approach positioned participants as active contributors throughout the learning process rather than passive recipients of information.

The community engagement activities were developed through three interconnected stages: preparation, implementation, and evaluation. During the preparation stage, the organizing team conducted preliminary coordination to identify community needs, determine the implementation venue, prepare educational materials, and establish communication with resource persons and local stakeholders. The educational content was designed to address practical issues related to digital entrepreneurship, including digital business opportunities, online marketing strategies, social media utilization, and entrepreneurial mindset development.

2.2 Participants and Location

The program was conducted in Tangerang, Indonesia, involving residents from the surrounding community, university students, young adults, and individuals interested in developing entrepreneurial skills through digital technologies. Participants represented diverse educational and occupational backgrounds, creating an interactive learning environment where experiences and perspectives could be exchanged during discussions. Participation was voluntary, and all learning activities encouraged open dialogue between facilitators and community members. This diversity contributed to richer discussions by allowing participants to relate digital entrepreneurship concepts to their own social and economic contexts.

2.3 Program Implementation

The educational activities were delivered through a combination of interactive lectures, practical demonstrations, guided discussions, and question-and-answer sessions. Instead of relying solely on one-way presentations, facilitators encouraged participants to share personal experiences, identify challenges encountered in digital business activities, and collaboratively explore practical solutions.

The learning materials focused on four primary themes:

1. understanding emerging opportunities in the digital economy;
2. utilizing social media as a business communication platform;
3. introducing basic digital marketing strategies for small businesses; and

4. developing entrepreneurial attitudes characterized by creativity, innovation, and adaptability.

Interactive discussion became an essential component of the program because it allowed participants to connect theoretical concepts with practical situations encountered in their daily lives. Resource persons also presented examples of successful digital business practices that could be adapted to local entrepreneurial activities.

2.4 Evaluation of the Program

The effectiveness of the Digital Terrace Program was assessed using qualitative evaluation techniques. Data were collected through direct observation during the implementation process, participant engagement throughout learning activities, interactive discussions, and reflective feedback provided at the conclusion of the program.

Several indicators were used to evaluate the implementation, including participant attendance, level of participation during discussions, responsiveness to learning activities, and participants' ability to identify potential applications of digital entrepreneurship within their communities. Facilitators also documented participants' questions, reflections, and responses as complementary evidence of learning outcomes.

Rather than measuring achievement solely through numerical indicators, the evaluation emphasized changes in participants' understanding, confidence, and willingness to explore digital business opportunities after participating in the educational sessions. This reflective approach provided a comprehensive understanding of the program's contribution to community capacity building.

2.5 Data Analysis

The findings were analyzed descriptively using a qualitative approach. Observational notes, participant feedback, and facilitator reflections were organized according to recurring themes emerging during the implementation process. These themes included participant engagement, perceived benefits of the educational activities, understanding of digital entrepreneurship concepts, and opportunities for future community development initiatives.

The analytical process focused on interpreting how participatory learning contributed to strengthening community awareness and entrepreneurial capacity rather than producing statistical generalizations. Consequently, the discussion emphasizes practical implications and lessons learned that may inform similar community engagement programs in other local contexts.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Community Participation and Program Implementation

The Digital Terrace Program was implemented successfully through collaboration between the organizing committee, invited speakers, and community members in Tangerang, Indonesia. The activities were designed to create an inclusive learning environment where participants could acquire practical knowledge while actively contributing to discussions concerning digital entrepreneurship. Throughout the implementation, community members demonstrated a high level of enthusiasm, particularly during interactive sessions that encouraged them to relate the presented materials to their own experiences.

Unlike conventional seminars that often rely on one-way communication, the Digital Terrace Program adopted a participatory learning approach. Resource persons acted primarily as facilitators, encouraging participants to share opinions, ask questions, and discuss the opportunities and challenges associated with digital entrepreneurship. This learning atmosphere enabled participants to engage more deeply with the educational content and promoted collaborative knowledge construction.

Observations during the program indicated that participant engagement increased progressively as discussions became more interactive. Initially, participants tended to listen attentively, while later sessions were characterized by active questioning, peer discussions, and exchanges of practical experiences. This progression reflects an important characteristic of participatory education, where confidence develops gradually as learners become more familiar with the learning environment.

The diversity of participant backgrounds also enriched the learning process. Individuals with different educational experiences and occupational profiles contributed various perspectives regarding digital business opportunities within their communities. Such diversity supported meaningful dialogue and demonstrated that digital entrepreneurship education should consider local experiences rather than relying solely on generalized business concepts.

3.2 Improving Digital Entrepreneurship Literacy

One of the primary outcomes of the Digital Terrace Program was the improvement of participants' understanding of digital entrepreneurship concepts. Many participants initially associated digital business exclusively with large online companies or advanced technological skills. However, through interactive discussions and practical examples, participants recognized that digital entrepreneurship could also involve simple business activities supported by widely accessible digital platforms.

The educational sessions introduced participants to several practical aspects of digital entrepreneurship, including online promotion, customer communication through social media, digital branding, and opportunities for expanding market reach using digital platforms. Rather than emphasizing complex technological knowledge, the facilitators focused on practical strategies that participants could implement using resources already available within their communities.

An important observation during the discussions was the gradual shift in participants' perceptions regarding technology. Instead of viewing digital platforms merely as communication tools, participants increasingly recognized their potential as instruments for business development and economic empowerment. This change in perspective represents an important educational outcome because entrepreneurial behavior often begins with changes in mindset before translating into business actions.

Participants also expressed interest in learning more about digital marketing techniques after recognizing how social media could contribute to business promotion. Questions raised during discussion sessions reflected genuine curiosity regarding product branding, customer engagement, content creation, and strategies for maintaining online business sustainability. These discussions suggested that the program successfully stimulated participants' motivation for continued learning beyond the completion of the activity.

3.3 Interactive Learning as a Driver of Community Empowerment

The participatory learning model adopted during the Digital Terrace Program significantly influenced participant engagement throughout the educational activities. Rather than positioning facilitators as the only source of knowledge, the program encouraged collaborative dialogue in which participants' experiences became valuable learning resources.

Interactive discussions enabled participants to compare their individual experiences, identify common challenges, and explore practical solutions collectively. This exchange of experiences contributed to a learning environment characterized by mutual respect and shared problem-solving. Such collaborative interaction is consistent with community empowerment principles, where knowledge is co-constructed through active participation rather than transferred unidirectionally.

Another notable outcome involved the increased confidence demonstrated by participants when discussing entrepreneurial ideas. At the beginning of the program, several participants were hesitant to express opinions or describe their business aspirations. As discussions progressed, however, participants became increasingly willing to share ideas, ask questions, and provide suggestions to fellow participants. This gradual increase in confidence illustrates the importance of supportive educational environments in encouraging community participation.

The facilitators also observed that participants frequently connected newly acquired knowledge with existing community resources. Instead of proposing entirely new business concepts, participants discussed how local products, neighborhood services, and community networks could benefit from digital marketing strategies. Such contextual learning enhances the sustainability of community engagement programs because educational outcomes remain closely linked to participants' everyday realities.

3.4 Practical Challenges during Program Implementation

Although the program achieved its primary objectives, several practical challenges emerged throughout the implementation process. These challenges primarily involved logistical coordination, scheduling adjustments, and limitations related to the learning environment rather than deficiencies in participant motivation.

Coordination among organizing committee members required continuous communication to accommodate changes in schedules, venue arrangements, and resource person availability. Similar challenges have frequently been reported in community engagement activities, where coordination among multiple stakeholders often requires flexibility and effective communication.

Environmental factors also influenced participant comfort during several learning sessions. Limited physical facilities occasionally affected classroom conditions, requiring organizers to make immediate adjustments to maintain participant engagement. Despite these constraints, facilitators successfully adapted the implementation process without substantially disrupting the learning objectives.

Another challenge concerned the varying levels of participants' prior digital knowledge. Some participants already possessed basic experience using social media for commercial purposes, whereas others had very limited exposure to digital entrepreneurship concepts. This diversity required facilitators to balance introductory explanations with more practical discussions, ensuring that all participants could actively follow the learning process.

Rather than reducing the effectiveness of the program, these implementation challenges provided valuable lessons for future community engagement initiatives. Improved planning, earlier stakeholder coordination, and more flexible educational strategies may further enhance the effectiveness of similar programs conducted in different community settings.

3.5 Implications for Sustainable Community Development

The findings of the Digital Terrace Program demonstrate that community engagement activities focusing on digital entrepreneurship education can contribute to broader community empowerment efforts. Rather than merely transferring technical knowledge, the program encouraged participants to reconsider local economic opportunities from a digital perspective.

Digital entrepreneurship education supports community development by strengthening individuals' capacity to identify business opportunities, communicate with wider markets, and utilize digital technologies more effectively. These competencies have become increasingly important as digital transformation continues to reshape economic activities across various sectors.

The participatory educational model adopted in this program also offers practical implications for universities implementing community service activities. Sustainable community engagement requires educational approaches that prioritize dialogue, contextual learning, and collaboration rather than one-way dissemination of information. Universities can therefore play a strategic role in connecting academic knowledge with community needs through interactive learning experiences that encourage long-term capacity development.

Furthermore, the Digital Terrace Program illustrates that relatively small-scale educational interventions can produce meaningful changes in participants' perspectives when learning activities are designed according to community contexts. Although the program was implemented over a limited period, the positive responses observed among participants indicate the potential for developing more comprehensive entrepreneurship mentoring initiatives in the future.

Overall, the Digital Terrace Program demonstrates that community empowerment extends beyond knowledge acquisition. Empowerment is reflected in participants' increased confidence, greater willingness to explore entrepreneurial opportunities, stronger collaborative interactions, and improved awareness of how digital technologies can support local economic development. These outcomes suggest that digital entrepreneurship education represents a promising strategy for strengthening community resilience in an increasingly digital society.

CONCLUSION

The Digital Terrace Program demonstrated that community-based digital entrepreneurship education can serve as an effective strategy for strengthening community capacity in responding to the challenges and opportunities of the digital economy. By integrating interactive learning, collaborative discussions, and practical entrepreneurial knowledge, the program created an educational environment that encouraged participants to actively engage in the learning process and relate new knowledge to their own social and economic contexts.

The findings indicate that participants developed a broader understanding of digital entrepreneurship, recognized the potential of digital platforms for business

development, and showed greater confidence in exploring entrepreneurial opportunities within their communities. The participatory learning model played an important role in facilitating knowledge exchange, promoting critical reflection, and fostering collaborative problem-solving among participants with diverse backgrounds. These outcomes suggest that community empowerment is not limited to the transfer of knowledge but also involves strengthening participants' confidence, motivation, and capacity to adapt to an increasingly digital society.

Although the program encountered several operational challenges, including coordination, scheduling, and infrastructure limitations, these issues did not diminish the overall effectiveness of the activities. Instead, they provided valuable insights for improving future community engagement initiatives. Strengthening communication among stakeholders, conducting more comprehensive needs assessments, and extending post-program mentoring activities may further enhance the sustainability and long-term impact of similar programs.

This study contributes to the growing body of literature on community engagement by demonstrating that digital entrepreneurship education can become an accessible and practical approach to community empowerment. Universities, local governments, and community organizations are encouraged to develop collaborative educational initiatives that combine academic knowledge with local community needs. Future programs should consider longitudinal evaluation to examine how participants apply digital entrepreneurship competencies in establishing or expanding business activities over time.

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