

Research Article

Creating Digital Creativepreneur for SMEs in Rural Indonesia

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Abstract.

SMEs in Balida Village, Majalengka, strives to survive and grow in the pandemic era, while digitalization era provides opportunities to be more creative and reach a broader market efficiently. Main problem is lack of digital literacy and skill among them. Those weaknesses and opportunities drive to a solution program of a digital creative entrepreneur development that aims to enhance digital literacy and accelerate digital transformation in SMEs sector. The program applied activities in current analysis, design solution, training, assistance, and evaluation. The main activities are training and assistance for implementing of digital marketing through a marketplace platform to 32 SMEs with various business fields, such as food and culinary, convection and fashion, groceries, art, health and beauty, and services. The evaluation showed that training and technical assistance had increased digital literacy and interest in digital marketing of SMEs. They plan to expand the market and sell products using the marketplace platform. At the end of this 7-month program, 5 digital creative entrepreneurs were born with the need for advanced development programs.

Keywords: digital literacy, digital creative entrepreneur, digital marketing, marketplace

1. Introduction

Balida Village is located in Dawuan District, Majalengka Regency, West Java Province, Indonesia which has an area of 482.564 hectares and 6.210 population [1]. It has priority programs including village owned enterprises (BUMDES) development, digital creative human resource, infrastructure, and digital-based waste management. There are many business unit operating in village including 10 home industries, 20 small companies, 35 medium companies, and 7 large companies. Home and small industries are categorized as SMEs or creative enterpreneurs that play as driver in regional economy and so that SMEs need to be developed [2].

Current problems among SMEs is inability to addapt and grow in pandemic situation because they run business traditionally in production and marketing. Nowadays,

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digitalization era provides opportunities to be more creative and reach a broader market efficiently. SMEs can use internet and digital media to penetrate broader market. Indonesian people are one of the largest internet users in the world [3] But, SMEs in Balida can not take advantage due to the lack of digital literacy competence and limited access to technology. SMEs which have limitations in using technology cannot compete with other business actors [4]. Digitalization can provide opportunities for various sectors including creative entrepreneurs to develop and reach a wider market efficiently [5]. Based on current situation, problem, and opportunities it is necessary to develop digital literacy of SMEs. Therefore, digital creative entrepreneur development program was implemented for SMEs or the potential youth. Program purpose is creating digital creative entrepreneur in Balida as a sample of rural Indonesia.

2. Methodology

The methodology used is the descriptive research method. Research purpose is to find out the impact of development program in creating digital creative entrepreneur. The program consists of five activities. They are current analysis, solution design, training, assistance, and evaluation. During these activities, observation and simple survey take place. Current analysis of village demography, topography, education, public health, agriculture, and sociology was conducted to elaborate real potency and problems addressing on creative entrepreneur development. A simple FGD with the Village Head (Kuwu) was conducted to discuss alternatives and choose the most appropriate solution program. Program priorities are local business unit (BUMDES), digital literacy development, infrastructure, and waste management. Training of digital creative entrepreneurship development for SMEs or local creative entrepreneurs was considered the most important program and urgent solution in pandemic era. After the training, technical assistance was provided continuously through the WA group until the participants succeeded in transforming their business into a marketplace. Their progress is continuously monitored and evaluated in 7 months.

Training was carried out for 32 SMEs as participant in Balida Village, Majalengka on March 17, 2022. The materials provided were digital creative entrepreneur concept, digital literacy for SMEs, and digital marketing practices using Shopee marketplace platform presented by academician from Industrial Engineering UNISBA and external instructor from Bandung Shopee Export. A simple questionnaire was fulfilled by participant before and after the training for evaluation with same questions. The questionnaire consists of

3 parts : personal data, business information, questions about digital literacy and digital marketing practices. The questions are:

1. Do you know digital technology that can be used to improve business management? (Q1)
2. What type of digital technologies are needed to improve business management? (Q2)
3. Do you use online media for selling product? (Q3)
4. If the answer is yes, what online media do you use? (Q4)
5. Do you use online media for promotion? (Q5)
6. If the answer is yes, what online media do you use? (Q6)
7. Do you plan to expand marketing through export? (Q7)
8. If the answer is yes, will you use online media? (Q8)
9. If the answer is yes, what online media will be used? (Q9)

Difference Test was carried out on related data (Q1,Q3,Q5,Q7,Q8) to see whether there were changes or enhancement in digital literacy and interest in digital marketing. Prerequisite normality test is carried out to finally decide the difference test using non-parametric statistical methods with the Wilcoxon signed-rank test [6].

3. Results and Discussion

The 32 SMEs, as training participants, have sales omzet IDR 3,000,000 per month and 83% marketing area in Majalengka. 85% of them are aged 17-45 years, so they are classified as productive age. They have run small business in various fields and products as shown in Table 1.

Evaluation of the training showed an increase in participants' interest and awareness of the importance of using digital media in marketing their products. These are based on the analysis of the questionnaire data before and after training. Level of understanding of important role of digital technology for business has increased. The number of participants who understand the importance of digital technology for business before the training was 47% and then increased to 92% after the training. It means their digital literacy has increased. The number of participants who used social media for promotion before the training was 34% and then all participants planned to use online media. 79%

of participants plan to expand export marketing after the training, from 68% before the training. Those illustrate better awareness and interest in using digital technology for their business. These descriptive statistics was also validated by Difference Test using the Wilcoxon signed-rank test. 4 related data in difference test has significance value (p) less than 0.05 as shown in Table 2. It means that digital literacy and interest has changed and increased after training. Knowledge and practical skill in using marketing digital has been improved especially in using a marketplace for automated selling. The biggest effort in creating new digital creative entrepreneurs is technical assistance. Technical matters are still needed to be discussed while facing communication challenges between participants and instructors in the WA group. Finally, at the end of the 7 months program, 5 participants could technically build a business channel and start automated selling in a marketplace. Their products are beauty, herbs, and coffee. They still need assistance in management and capital access to grow bigger.

TABLE 1: Business Fields and Products of 32 Participants or SMEs.

Fields and Products Group	Number (%)
Food and Culinary	41%
Convection and Fashion	19%
Arts	9%
Groceries	9%
Health and Beauty	6%
Services	6%
Others	10%

TABLE 2: Difference Test Results.

Question	Significance Value (p)	Inference
Q1	0,018	Difference
Q3	0,004	Difference
Q5	0,012	Difference
Q7	0,025	Difference
Q8	0,365	No difference

4. Conclusion

The training has increased participant digital literacy especially knowledge and skills in digital marketing using a marketplace. In addition, awareness and interest of using online media in their business has increased significantly. The most important activity in creating digital creative entrepreneurs in rural is continuous assistance not only in digital literacy development, but also in business management and capital access. For

further research or program, SMEs management and finance should be the next training topics in creating digital creative entrepreneur.

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