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The Level Of Digital Entrepreneurship Knowledge Application Among Participants Of Community Culinary Entrepreneurship Program (Variety Snacks) At Tvet Institutions In Hulu Langat

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Abstract: This study explores the implementation of digital entrepreneurship knowledge among participants of a Community Entrepreneurship Program (PKK) focused on culinary skills at Hulu Langat Community College (KKHL), Malaysia. The findings reveal that participants effectively acquired digital marketing skills, particularly through social media platforms such as Facebook and Instagram, and demonstrated strong capabilities in utilizing these tools to market their products. Additionally, participants exhibited high motivation for digital entrepreneurship, driven by aspirations to enhance their standard of living and create employment opportunities. The program successfully equipped participants with the skills necessary to generate income through their culinary ventures. The findings underscore the critical role of PKK programs in empowering communities and fostering digital entrepreneurship. Incorporating additional digital business platforms, such as Shopee and Lazada, into the curriculum could further enhance participants' entrepreneurial capabilities. This study highlights the importance of community colleges in promoting entrepreneurship and contributing to economic development, emphasizing the effectiveness of PKK programs in preparing participants for success in a digitalized business landscape.

Keywords: Digital Entrepreneurship, Community Entrepreneurship Program, TVET

INTRODUCTION

The National Entrepreneurship Policy (NEP), launched on July 11, 2019, aims to establish a comprehensive framework for Malaysia's entrepreneurship development by

2030 (DKN, 2030). It outlines five key objectives:

Build a supportive entrepreneurial ecosystem to drive inclusive and sustainable socioeconomic growth; Foster an entrepreneurial mindset and culture among Malaysians; Develop high-quality, resilient, and globally competitive entrepreneurs; Enhance the capacity of micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) and cooperatives; Promote entrepreneurship as a desirable career path.

To achieve these goals, government agencies and stakeholders, including the Ministry of Higher Education (MOHE), collaborate to create a thriving entrepreneurial ecosystem. Education and training are pivotal in nurturing skilled, knowledgeable individuals who contribute significantly to national progress (Noorazeela Zainol Abidin, 2022). Community colleges, under the Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) umbrella, play a vital role in fostering entrepreneurship through lifelong learning initiatives. The Lifelong Learning Unit (UPSH) of the Department of Polytechnic and Community College Education (JPPKK) spearheads these efforts with programs like the Community Entrepreneurship Program (PKK).

Implementation of PKK

Since 2019 to 2023, PKK has organized 234 programs involving 3764 participants throughout Malaysia (JPPKK, 2023). This program focus on courses in skills and entrepreneurship, combining a minimum 48-hours skills module and 24-hours (minimum) entrepreneurship module. It provides opportunities for Malaysians of all ages and backgrounds to gain entrepreneurial skills and improve their socioeconomic status. Community colleges, established in every parliamentary constituency, act as dynamic knowledge hubs, offering short courses and integrating entrepreneurship into technical and vocational training. For example, Hulu Langat Community College hosted a culinary-focused PKK program in 2022 to nurture resilient, competitive entrepreneurs. Such initiatives empower participants to generate income while contributing to the national economy.

Significance and Challenges

The PKK has transformed individuals with little to no business knowledge into income-generating entrepreneurs, showcasing its impact on community development. However, stronger collaboration with agencies for training, finance, and support services could further amplify its effectiveness. Accessible to urban and rural communities, community colleges have attracted thousands of lifelong learners since their establishment in 2000. Many participants have successfully launched or expanded businesses using their newly acquired skills. Strengthening these initiatives is essential for addressing economic and social challenges while positioning community colleges as entrepreneurial hubs (Nurdiyanah et al., 2023; Sarimah, 2020).

Digital Entrepreneurship and Research Objectives

The COVID-19 pandemic highlighted the importance of digital skills for business resilience. Entrepreneurs with digital expertise thrived, while those without struggled to sustain their ventures. Despite this, the extent of digital entrepreneurship among PKK participants remains underexplored. This study aims to:

- i. Analyze how participants of Hulu Langat Community College's culinary entrepreneurship course apply digital skills in their businesses.
- ii. Assess the course's overall effectiveness.

- iii. The findings will offer insights for program improvement and contribute to strengthening PKK initiatives, aligning with the government's vision of fostering a digitally empowered society.

LITERATURE REVIEW AND HYPOTHESIS DEVELOPMENT

Social media has become a powerful tool for entrepreneurs, enabling them to market products to both familiar and untapped audiences (SocialMediaExaminer.com). Women entrepreneurs, in particular, are encouraged to take bold risks, innovate, and maintain consistent online communication with suppliers and customers (Faradillah, 2015). The COVID-19 pandemic further highlighted the importance of ICT applications as small businesses adapted to digital business norms, implementing strategies to survive post-pandemic challenges (Siti Masayu Rosliah, 2020).

The indispensability of social media in modern business is emphasized by Bill Gates, who warned that businesses ignoring digital opportunities risk irrelevance. This underscores the necessity of digital entrepreneurship, urging entrepreneurs to integrate digital technologies into business management to remain competitive globally.

Lifelong Learning (LLL) at Community Colleges

The Malaysian Education Development Plan (2015–2025) positions lifelong learning (LLL) as essential for societal improvement. The Department of Polytechnic and Community College Education (JPPKK) delivers formal and informal LLL courses to diverse groups, including youth, the elderly, single mothers, and Indigenous communities. These initiatives aim to enhance socio-economic well-being by equipping participants with relevant skills.

Since its launch in 2019, the Community Entrepreneurship Program (PKK) has conducted 234 programs, benefiting 3,764 participants across fields like catering, food processing, tailoring, beauty, and agro-technology (JPPKK, 2023). For example, Hulu Langat Community College's 2022 Snack Entrepreneurship Program included ten cooking and five entrepreneurship modules, followed by a two-month mentorship to support participants' business ventures.

Digital Entrepreneurship

The internet has revolutionized business, enabling digital entrepreneurs to access broader markets at reduced costs (Dzulkefly Ahmad, 2019). However, many entrepreneurs struggle with digital technology due to limited skills. With over half of Malaysians accessing the internet via smartphones (SKMM, 2015), rural SMEs have a unique opportunity to expand globally.

Innovative social media marketing—sharing insights, experiences, and brand stories—enhances communication with customers and vendors, boosting visibility and sales (Shih & Chieh, 2019; Beninger et al., 2016). Recognizing this potential, the Malaysian government introduced the PRIHATIN Economic Stimulus Package, allocating RM 2.1 billion to help SMEs digitalize through grants and support from agencies like MDEC and SME Bank (Budget 2020). Such initiatives highlight the critical role of digital technology in keeping SMEs competitive (Zarifah et al., 2021).

Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET)

TVET focuses on developing a skilled, entrepreneurial workforce to meet industry

demands and drive economic growth. Guided by the National TVET Policy 2030, community colleges under the Ministry of Higher Education provide lifelong learning opportunities and support SMEs through specialized training. By integrating technical expertise with entrepreneurial knowledge, TVET equips graduates to maximize opportunities and contribute to society (Sarimah et al., 2020). Community colleges adapt their programs to remain industry-relevant, aligning with the National TVET Policy 2030's vision of producing globally competitive human capital (Mohd Faizullah et al., 2014).

METHODS

This quantitative study employed a survey distributed to 11 participants of the Snack Entrepreneurship Program at Hulu Langat Community College in 2023. The questionnaire included two sections: (A) respondent demographics (e.g., gender, age, income, gadget ownership) and (B) five components: knowledge of digital entrepreneurship (6 items), social media application skills (5 items), motivation factors (7 items), application of digital entrepreneurship knowledge (12 items), and course effectiveness (4 items). Responses were measured using a 5-point Likert scale.

Data were analyzed using SPSS 23.0, focusing on descriptive statistics and mean scores to evaluate the components. The small sample size reflects the limited number of participants who completed the program, with data collected two weeks post-completion.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The respondents' demographic data is shown in Table 1, detailing aspects such as gender, age, family income, and the ownership of gadgets. This study comprised entirely female respondents, with 45.5% aged 31-40 years, 9% aged 41-50 years, and 45.5% aged 51 years and above. Regarding family income, 27.3% of respondents earned RM 1001–RM 2000, 27.3% earned RM 2001–RM 3000, 36.4% earned RM 3001–RM 4000, and 9% earned more than RM 4001. In terms of gadget ownership, 45.5% owned a laptop/computer, and 18.2% owned a tablet/iPad, while all respondents (100%) owned a smartphone.

Table 1. Respondents' Demographics

Demographic Variable	Study Sample (n=11)	Percentage (%)
Gender		
Male	0	
Female	100	
Age		
31 - 40 years	45.5	
41 - 50 years	9	
51 and above	45.5	
Family Income		
RM 1001 - RM 2000	27.3	
RM 2001 - RM 3000	27.3	
RM 3001 - RM 4000	36.4	
More than RM 4001	9	
Laptop/Computer Ownership		
Yes	45.5	
No	54.5	
Tablet/iPad Ownership		
Yes	18.2	
No	81.8	
Smartphone Ownership		
Yes	100	
No	0	

This study utilized the interpretation of mean scores suggested by Nunnally and Bernstein (1994), as shown in Table 2. A larger standard deviation indicates greater dispersion in the data distribution.

Table 2. Mean Score Interpretation

Mean Score	Interpretation
1.00 - 2.00	Low
2.01 - 3.00	Moderately Low
3.01 - 4.00	Moderately High

Knowledge of Digital Entrepreneurship

For the findings on knowledge of digital entrepreneurship, overall, a moderately high mean score of 3.38 was obtained. This indicates that participants have gained knowledge of digital entrepreneurship after completing the course, particularly knowledge in using digital marketing through Facebook/Instagram Advertisement/WhatsApp/Telegram (mean = 3.82). However, knowledge in utilizing digital business platforms such as Shopee/Lazada/Websites is moderately low (mean = 2.64). The significant difference in mean scores is attributed to the fact that applications like Facebook/Instagram Advertisement/WhatsApp/Telegram are much easier to learn and use compared to Shopee/Lazada/Websites. According to Faradillah et al. (2017), women entrepreneurs possess high levels of skill and motivation in using the internet. Women entrepreneurs rely heavily on the use of the internet in their business operations, particularly applications like WhatsApp, Facebook, and Instagram. Social media applications actively used by SMEs to advertise and expand communication networks more effectively include Facebook, Twitter, and Google (Oztaman & Karakadilar, 2014). Table 3 presents the mean scores for each question on knowledge of digital entrepreneurship.

Table 3. Knowledge of Digital Entrepreneurship

Question	Mean Score
I have theoretical knowledge in the field of digital entrepreneurship.	3.55
I have knowledge of using digital business platforms such as Shopee/Lazada/Website.	2.64
I have knowledge of using digital marketing on platforms like Facebook/Instagram Advertisement/WhatsApp/Telegram.	3.82
I have attended classes/modules/courses related to entrepreneurship.	3.45
I have attended certification training/courses/seminars/briefings/webinars in digital entrepreneurship (online).	3.27
I have experience in conducting digital (online) entrepreneurial business.	3.55
B1 – Knowledge of Digital Entrepreneurship	3.38

Skills in Using Social Media for Digital Entrepreneurship

In terms of students' skills in social media applications for digital entrepreneurship, the overall mean score was moderately high at 3.16. Participants were highly skilled in using social media platforms such as Facebook/Instagram Advertisement/TikTok/Twitter/WhatsApp/Telegram to market their products, with a high mean score of 3.91. Meanwhile, the mean score for skills in using YouTube to edit and upload video content about their products was moderately high at 2.64.

Strong digital marketing skills among entrepreneurs can enhance business performance globally. This is supported by research by Faradillah et al. (2020), which found that the power of digital marketing significantly influences business performance. Social media use provides traders with advantages and incentives to increase sales performance without incurring high costs in product promotion. Entrepreneurs can identify the types and features of products in high demand by customers. Consequently, they can improve and innovate their products to meet customer needs, thereby increasing market sales.

According to Oddoom, Dorson, and George (2017), social media platforms such as Facebook and Twitter enable customers to access products or services more easily and quickly. Entrepreneurs, in turn, can reach a larger customer base across the country and achieve substantial profits without high capital expenditure by leveraging cost-effective and creative media solutions.

Table 4. Students’ Skills in Using Social Media Applications for Digital Entrepreneurship

Question	Mean Score
I am skilled in using social media platforms such as Facebook/Instagram Advertisement/TikTok/Twitter/WhatsApp/Telegram to market products.	3.91
I am skilled in using digital platforms such as Shopee/Lazada/Website to market products.	2.91
I am skilled in video editing using applications like InShot/VivaVideo/CapCut/Filmora/KineMaster for advertising purposes.	3.09
I am skilled in using YouTube to edit and upload video content about my products.	2.64
I am skilled in using applications like Canva/PhotoGrid to edit product images for advertising purposes.	3.27
B2 – Students’ Skills in Using Social Media Applications for Digital Entrepreneurship	3.16

Motivational Factors Influencing Students in Digital Entrepreneurship

The findings indicate that the motivational factors influencing students in digital entrepreneurship scored a mean of 4.47, showing that respondents have a high level of motivation in this area. Question 6, "Digital entrepreneurship can improve my standard of living and my family's," and question 7, "Digital entrepreneurship gives me the opportunity to create job opportunities for others," received the highest mean scores of 4.73. These two motivational factors inspire participants to work harder in advancing their businesses while also supporting government policies that encourage entrepreneurs to provide more job opportunities for the community.

According to Abd Ghani, Muhammad Asri, and Zaimah Darawi (2012), Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) are the main drivers of Malaysia's economic growth, where almost 99.2% of all entrepreneurs in Malaysia are registered SMEs, contributing approximately 32% to the Gross Domestic Product (GDP). This information is supported by SME Corp. Malaysia (2009), which highlights the significant contribution and role of SMEs in driving business growth, creating job opportunities, and contributing to Malaysia's GDP.

Table 5. Motivational Factors Influencing Students in Digital Entrepreneurship

Question	Mean Score
I receive support and encouragement from my friends to start an online business.	4.18
I receive support from my family to start an online business.	4.27
I have a deep interest in digital entrepreneurship.	4.45
Knowledge of digital entrepreneurship motivates me to start an online business.	4.36
Digital entrepreneurship is an opportunity for me to earn additional income.	4.55
Digital entrepreneurship can improve my standard of living and my family's.	4.73
Digital entrepreneurship provides me the opportunity to create jobs for others.	4.73
B3 – Motivational Factors Influencing Students in Digital Entrepreneurship	4.47

Application of Digital Entrepreneurship Knowledge

For the findings on the application of digital entrepreneurship knowledge, the overall mean score was 4.3, indicating that respondents have a high level of application of digital entrepreneurship knowledge. This finding is supported by Lundin (2020), who highlighted that entrepreneurs utilize digital business for three primary purposes: marketing, service expansion, and communication to strengthen their businesses.

The survey question, *"I consistently advertise my sales on my preferred*

business platform," recorded a mean score of 4.55. This practice aligns with recommended marketing techniques, emphasizing frequent product advertising to increase customer awareness of the products being sold. A business can remain competitive and continue to thrive with the integration of digital technology.

The result fosters healthy competition among entrepreneurs, enabling them to sell goods and provide quality services to customers. Consequently, the use of digital technology can enhance creativity and encourage innovation among entrepreneurs, ensuring their businesses stay relevant with the changing times.

This finding is consistent with studies by Chang et al. (2014) and Martinez et al. (2018), which demonstrated that market orientation strongly influences innovation by increasing the development of new products that can compete with existing markets. Additionally, Galindo and Mendez-Picazo (2013) emphasized that entrepreneurs become more innovative to expand their markets and increase their business revenues. Table 6 presents the mean scores for each question on students' application of digital entrepreneurship knowledge.

Table 6. Application of Digital Entrepreneurship Knowledge

Question	Mean Score
I have started an online business.	4.18
I have started an offline business.	4.27
I simultaneously run both offline and online businesses.	4.45
I apply the digital entrepreneurship knowledge learned in classes/courses to start my business.	4.36
I have registered my business with the District Council/State Government/Local Authority/SSM.	4.55
I consistently advertise sales on my preferred business platform.	4.73
I consistently promote my business sales.	4.73
I diversify the products I sell in my business.	4.47
I record all my business transactions (sales and purchases).	4.09
I keep financial records for my business.	4.00
I am willing to take risks in my business.	4.45
I earn income/profit from the products I sell in my business.	4.45
B4 – Application of Digital Entrepreneurship Knowledge	4.3

Effectiveness of Skills from the PKK Cooking Course

The findings on the effectiveness of skills gained from the PKK cooking course show an overall high mean score of 4.59. This indicates that the Community Entrepreneurship Program implemented at KKHL has had a positive impact on participants.

This is evident as participants have utilized the skills from the PKK cooking course to generate income, which scored a high mean of 4.45. This aligns with the PKK cooking program report (variety of snacks), which shows that participants benefited from the skills and knowledge gained during the course.

Findings from monitoring participants over a three-month period revealed that more than 50% of them experienced an increase in income after completing the PKK cooking course (variety of snacks). Table 7 presents the mean scores for questions on the effectiveness of the skills from the PKK cooking course.

Table 7. Effectiveness of Skills from the PKK Cooking Course

Question	Mean Score
I have used the skills from the PKK cooking course to generate income.	4.45
I have started a business using the skills from the PKK cooking course.	4.45
I am confident in the products resulting from the PKK cooking course.	4.64
The skills I gained during the PKK cooking course have helped me diversify my product offerings.	4.82
B5 – Effectiveness of Skills from the PKK Cooking Course	4.59

Implications and Recommendations

The research conducted on participants of the Community Entrepreneurship Program (PKK) on Snack Variety at KKHL successfully achieved its objectives. The findings revealed that all participants benefited from the program by applying the knowledge and skills acquired, particularly in cooking and preparing snack varieties.

Furthermore, the study also highlighted that all participants acknowledged the importance of utilizing digital entrepreneurship knowledge and skills to increase their business income.

These findings are significant as they provide a foundational basis for the need for similar courses in the future. KKHL has strategically taken the initiative to empower the community by offering programs that transform acquired knowledge and skills into valuable assets for systematically and effectively increasing income. Supported by a strong network, this initiative elevates the role of community colleges to a more prominent position in the eyes of the government and society. The implementation of PKK remains highly relevant, especially in the post-pandemic era (Fadzlunsara et al., 2023), as it promotes entrepreneurship and reduces dependency on traditional employment opportunities.

Based on the study results, several recommendations can be considered:

Implementation of Structured Lifelong Learning Courses

It is recommended that all community colleges conduct structured short courses (PSH) that integrate skill-based and entrepreneurial elements for interested community members at affordable prices. These courses can be tailored by colleges in collaboration with industries and agencies to suit course requirements. Unlike PKK, which has entry requirements, limited participant numbers, and dependency on allocations from the Department of Polytechnic and Community College Education (JPPKK), structured PSH courses can be more inclusive. Structured PSH courses are also shorter, unlike PKK programs, which combine at least 48 hours of skill

modules and 24 hours of entrepreneurship modules. This is especially beneficial for individuals with work and daily commitments who cannot dedicate extensive time to attending long-term courses.

This aligns with Lenny et al.'s (2022) findings, which suggest that JPPKK should review and revise the timing, duration, and location of PKK courses to enhance participant satisfaction. Similarly, Nurdianah et al. (2023) recommended improving PKK through partnerships with other agencies, such as training institutions, financial institutions, and related support services. Structured lifelong learning courses with affordable fees can be made accessible to all groups, allowing communities to enhance their income in today's challenging economic environment.

Digital Entrepreneurship and Age Consideration

Advances in digital technology have transformed the business landscape, emphasizing the importance of leveraging digital tools for marketing and business sustainability. However, age plays a significant role in acquiring and utilizing digital technology. Older individuals tend to use digital technology less frequently, relying more on assistance from employees or family members (Aida Idris et al., 2023). Therefore, to ensure the courses target the right audience effectively, age selection is crucial. Setting an age limit for PKK participants can enhance the effectiveness of the knowledge application and help achieve the course objectives.

Age also influences entrepreneurs' mindset and attitudes in planning their business strategies (Aida Idris et al., 2023). By tailoring courses to specific age groups, the programs can better address the unique needs of participants and maximize the benefits of the knowledge imparted.

In conclusion, the research emphasizes the importance of offering accessible, structured courses that cater to diverse community groups while leveraging digital technology for entrepreneurship. The recommendations highlight the need to balance inclusivity, affordability, and effectiveness to ensure that the courses meet the community's needs and contribute to the development of skilled and innovative entrepreneurs.

CONCLUSIONS

As a conclusion, investigated the application of digital entrepreneurship knowledge among participants of a Community Entrepreneurship Program (PKK) focused on culinary skills at Hulu Langat Community College (KKHL). Here's a summary of the key findings:

Knowledge and Skills: Participants gained knowledge in digital entrepreneurship, particularly through social media applications like Facebook/Instagram for marketing. However, knowledge of digital business platforms like Shopee/Lazada was lower. Skill in using social media for marketing was moderately high, while video editing and YouTube content creation skills were lower.

Motivation: Participants exhibited high levels of motivation for digital entrepreneurship, driven by factors like improving their standard of living and creating job opportunities.

Application: Participants actively applied their digital entrepreneurship knowledge. Most had started businesses, advertised online, and kept financial records.

Course Effectiveness: The PKK cooking course was highly effective, equipping participants with income-generating skills and boosting their confidence in their products.

These findings suggest that the PKK program successfully empowers participants with both culinary and digital business skills. However, there's room for improvement in incorporating knowledge of digital business platforms like e-commerce sites.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the study's findings, here are some recommendations for KKHL's PKK program:

Strengthen Digital Business Knowledge: Integrate modules on managing online stores (Shopee/Lazada) and website development into the curriculum.

Develop Video Editing Skills: Offer workshops or additional training on using video editing apps for creating marketing content.

Continued Support: Consider providing access to mentors or resources to assist participants with their digital marketing efforts further.

By incorporating these recommendations, the PKK program can further equip participants with the necessary skills to thrive in the digital age and maximize their entrepreneurial success.

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