Digitalization, Business Potential, and Financial Inclusion: Youth Training in Parangloe Subdistrict, Gowa Regency

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Abstract

Digitalization is the process of converting physical data or media into a digital format that can be managed using information technology. In Gowa Regency, South Sulawesi, the expansion of IT infrastructure is enhancing public services and improving interactions between citizens and the government. Digitalization offers numerous benefits, such as increased efficiency in information retrieval, easier market access, and expanded market reach, which can boost the economic potential of residents, including those in Parangloe Subdistrict. This Community Service Program (PkM) aims to enhance digital skills among the youth in youth organizations in Parangloe Subdistrict. The training is designed to help the youth become economically independent and promote financial inclusion. The program includes training on creating social media accounts, setting up e-commerce accounts, using Canva, and basic computer literacy. The program will be conducted in July 2024, with prior preparations and socialization with village officials and youth organization leaders. The results indicate that the training exceeded participation targets and improved participants' understanding of digitalization. Overall, the program successfully equipped participants with valuable digital skills, contributing to broader technological and economic inclusivity.

Keywords: *Digitalization; Digital Skills; Financial Inclusion; Youth Training*

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INTRODUCTION

Digitalization is the process of converting physical data or media into a digital format that can be managed using information technology (Siwi & Bida, 2023). This process is becoming increasingly important as IT infrastructure in Indonesia, particularly in Gowa Regency, South Sulawesi, becomes more widespread. With robust IT infrastructure, public services are improving, and interactions between citizens and between the government and citizens are becoming more seamless. Digitalization offers numerous benefits, both economically and socially, such as enhancing the efficiency of information retrieval, bringing markets closer to consumers, and expanding market reach, which in turn can boost the economic potential of residents, including those in Parangloe Subdistrict, Gowa Regency (Ramlawati et al., 2022). The youth in this subdistrict, particularly those in youth organizations, possess significant potential, and by leveraging technology, they are expected to enhance their skills and achieve greater competitiveness in the job market.

Digitalization plays a crucial role in significantly driving economic potential. By utilizing digital technology, businesses can enhance operational efficiency, expand market reach, and access data that supports better decision-making (Tajuddin et al., 2023). This not only creates new economic opportunities but also boosts competitiveness. Conversely, rapid economic growth opens up more opportunities for financial inclusion. Advanced businesses can leverage technology to offer better and more inclusive financial services (Sukatari & Suryanto, 2024). With broader access to financial services, individuals and small businesses can more easily engage in economic activities, secure capital, and manage their finances. All of these factors contribute to more equitable and inclusive economic growth (Murdifin et al., 2021).

The primary focus of this community service activity is to enhance the use and application of digitalization among the youth in the youth organizations of Parangloe Subdistrict, Gowa Regency. Developing skills in digitalization is expected to be key to unlocking local potential, thereby creating young individuals who are responsive, economically independent, and self-reliant (Puspitasari et al., 2023). The goal is to promote financial inclusion in Parangloe Village, Gowa Regency.

Parangloe Village in Gowa Regency is known for having a population primarily engaged in farming. This profession has been the main source of income for many generations, helping to meet various household needs and fund children's education. Service to the community is a crucial aspect of development aimed at enhancing the well-being of residents. In this regard, the government has a role and responsibility to continuously improve the quality of public services professionally. Through training in the use of ICT for digitalization and business potential, this community service program aims to enhance the non-technical (soft) skills of youth groups (Basalamah et al., 2023).

It is hoped that this training will enable the youth groups to develop better and more effective skills in utilizing information and communication technology (Syahnur et al., 2020).

Based on the background outlined, the author identifies a key issue in this community service activity: how to enhance digital literacy skills among the youth in the youth organizations of Parangloe Village, Gowa Regency. To address this issue, the following solutions are proposed: *Presentation*: Presenting the importance of digitalization for promoting the business potential in Parangloe Village, Gowa Regency; *Lessons*: Providing instruction on creating social media accounts, setting up e-commerce accounts, basic techniques for using Canva, and computer literacy through a systematic teaching method; and *Training*, Using a hands-on approach to practice these skills. This strategy includes guidance and support in using basic applications. Additionally, the training covers how to use Google Search to find news sources as part of digital literacy.

METHODS

Based on the analysis of the outlined background, the author identifies the main issue in this community service activity: how to enhance digital skills among the youth in the youth organizations of Parangloe Village, Gowa Regency. To address this issue, several solutions have been proposed (Hayati et al., 2024). The instructional material, designed to facilitate the understanding and application of crucial technology knowledge for developing digital skills, will be presented in the form of a module. Training will be conducted using a hands-on approach that allows participants to practice the skills they have learned directly (Magfirah et al., 2024). During this training, participants will receive instruction and support in basic social media creation, setting up e-commerce accounts, and using Canva. Additionally, the training will cover techniques for searching information using Google Search, which is an important aspect of digital literacy. Through this approach, it is hoped that the youth in the youth organizations will gain improved digital literacy skills and become more effective in accessing, evaluating, and utilizing information online (Karim et al., 2022).

The identified problem is addressed with the proposed solutions mentioned in the previous paragraph, as well as the implementation of activities that align with the objectives of this program. The aim is to enhance the skills and awareness of the youth in the youth organizations of Parangloe Village, Gowa Regency. For further clarification, the scheme for this activity is presented in the following flowchart;
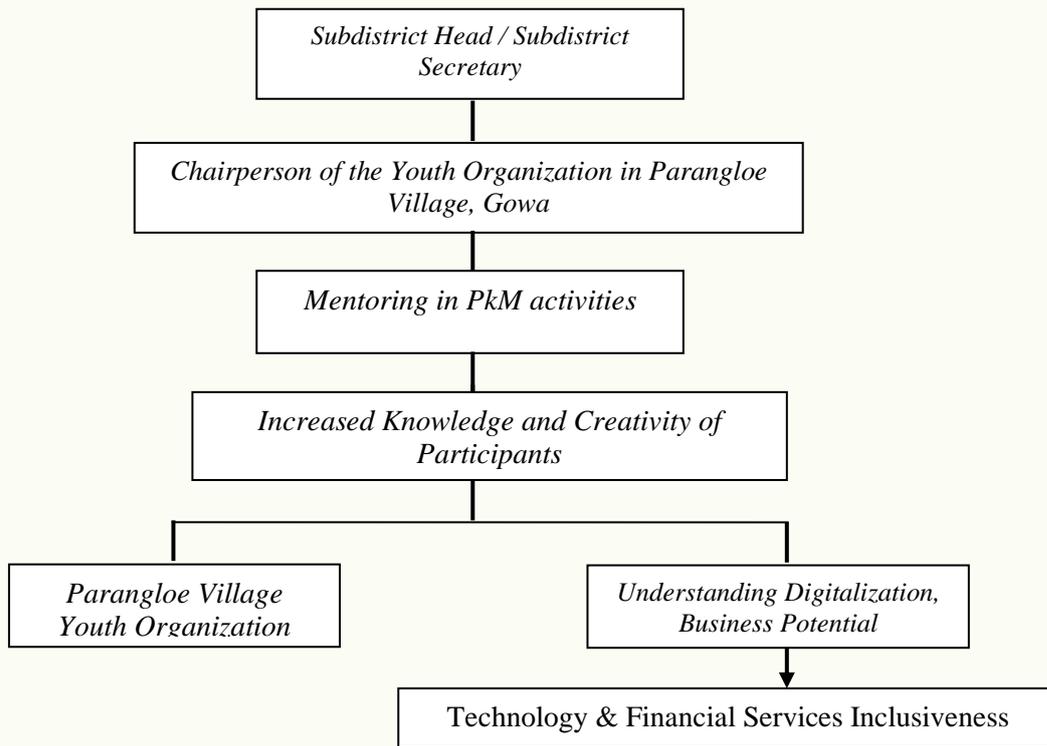
Figure 1 Scheme of PkM Activities in Parangloe Village, Gowa

The Community Partnership Program (PKM) will be conducted in Parangloe Village, Gowa Regency, in July 2024. Prior to the implementation, a series of preparations and meetings will be held with village officials and the chairperson of the youth organization to assist them in preparing for the program. These meetings aim to explain the objectives and benefits of PKM through a process of socialization and support, which is crucial for enhancing knowledge and changing mindsets to better prepare for the PKM activities. Technical guidance will be provided both directly and in groups, serving also as a means of program socialization.

RESULT and DISCUSSION

In the implementation of the Community Partnership Program (PKM), village officials will act as facilitators for the activities, which will take place in the meeting hall of the Parangloe Subdistrict office in Gowa Regency. The focus will be on both technical and non-technical skills. The training on the importance of digitalization for the youth in the youth organization will be conducted by the PKM team from Universitas Muslim Indonesia, comprising faculty members from the Faculty of Economics and Business and the Faculty of Computer Science. The goal of the PKM is to create economically self-sufficient community groups. This training will be delivered through direct meetings with the community, providing feedback and valuable insights to participants to help change their mindset and develop the village's potential more productively.

Additionally, the PKM program will emphasize non-technical training on the importance of digitalization that can be utilized by village officials, including administrative tasks

that can be managed online. After the training, a 'Learning by Doing' approach will be implemented, where learning occurs through practical experience. This process will involve skill evaluation with support from a dedicated mentor outside the organizing team. The aim of these activities is for the village to independently manage its digital systems to improve the performance of service users.

The participation of village officials in various aspects, such as labor, time, ideas, and the provision of local materials and training venues, is crucial for the sustainability of the program. (Prihatin & Syahnur, 2021)This participation reflects a sense of ownership of the program, ensuring that activities can continue effectively. This involvement also includes providing local materials and transportation at no cost. The Implementation Team for the Internal Community Service Program consists of faculty members from various departments at Universitas Muslim Indonesia, with each member having specific roles and areas of expertise as follows:

1. **Dr. Dolly Indra, MSi., MTa (FIKOM-UMI) – Activity Coordinator:** Expertise in Information Systems and Application Design. Responsible as the Coordinator of the activity, specifically for designing the village website and evaluating activities to explore the potential of the participants..

2. **Muh. Haerdiansyah Syahnur, ST., MM (FEB-UMI) – Expert in Technology-Based Management**: Responsible for delivering content on digitalization, its implementation, and educating participants on the importance of digitalization.

3. **Lilis Nur Hayati, S.Kom., M.Eng., MTA (FIKOM-UMI) – Expert in Information Systems and Software Engineering:** Responsible for serving as a mentor in the Canva application training for participants.

The implementation of activities in the PKM program went according to plan, with the realization carried out through visits and training at the Parangloe Village office, Gowa Regency.

Activity Implementation, The activity begins with a seminar on the potential of digitalization and its utilization for the youth in Parangloe Village, Gowa. The event was opened by the Subdistrict Head, Muh. Nur Agung MK, S.STP, and the Chairperson of the Youth Organization of Parangloe Village, Muh. Rusdy Alamsyah, S.Pd. It was attended by village officials and the youth members of the Karang Taruna organization from Parangloe Village, Gowa.

Figure 2 Socialization of PkM Activities

The support team provided training on digitalization and the use of Canva to simplify design tasks for users. After an initial assessment, the team made adjustments and tailored the training to meet specific needs. They trained the youth of the village youth organization in understanding the importance of digitization and trained them in the use of simple Canva applications. (Mutiarni, R., Utomo, L. P., & Zuhroh, S. 2023). The team also developed a draft for the design of a village website application, which will be handed over to the village officials to facilitate their activities. Following several training sessions, the team ensured that, although further practice was needed due to the lack of prior similar training, the partners were able to design infographic layouts using Canva. The team is prepared to offer additional assistance if needed in the future.

- **Figure 3 Provision of PkM Activity material of Digitalization**

Figure 4 Provision of PkM Activity material of Canva Design

The results of the Community Service Program (PKM) reflect several key aspects indicating the program's success:

Firstly, the number of training participants exceeded expectations, with a participation rate reaching 110% of the initial target. This included an additional 25 participants beyond the original goal, enriching the engagement in the activity. The involvement of community members also enhanced the program's effectiveness.

Secondly, the training objectives to socialize the importance of digitalization for supporting digital technology and economic inclusion were successfully achieved. Participants' enthusiasm in understanding the material and using the Canva application for the youth organization in the village demonstrated the program's success.

Thirdly, the execution of the training material was effective. The delivery of content was conducted efficiently. Although participants did not fully master the material due to their varied educational backgrounds, the overall program was deemed successful. This was evidenced by the pre-test and post-test surveys, which showed an improvement in participants' understanding before and after the program. The partner group successfully grasped the importance of digitalization, which is expected to support the government's target of achieving technological and economic inclusivity.

CONCLUSSION

The Community Service Program (PKM) in Parangloe Village demonstrated significant success across several key areas. The program not only exceeded its participant target, achieving a 110% participation rate, but also effectively engaged community members and enriched the overall experience. The training successfully conveyed the importance of digitalization, helping participants understand its role in supporting digital technology and economic inclusion. The enthusiasm of the youth in learning and applying digital tools, such as the Canva application, highlighted the program's effectiveness. Additionally, the delivery of training material was efficient and impactful. Despite varied educational backgrounds among participants, the pre-test and post-test results indicated a noticeable improvement in understanding. Overall, the program successfully met its objectives, equipping participants with valuable digital skills and contributing to the broader goal of technological and economic inclusivity.

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