Information Technology in Marketing: Implications in Marketing of Equality Education Programs

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Abstract

Beground: The equality education program in Banjarmasin has an important role in providing learning opportunities for people who cannot access formal education. However, challenges in terms of marketing this program are still an obstacle, such as the lack of public understanding of the benefits of equality education and limitations in reaching prospective students. Along with the development of information technology, the implementation of digital-based marketing strategies is a potential solution to increase the reach and effectiveness of the promotion of this program.

Urgency: The urgency of this research lies in the importance of the use of information technology in increasing the marketing effectiveness of equality education programs in Banjarmasin, which still faces challenges in terms of community participation and information dissemination. With the increasing use of the internet and social media, digital-based marketing strategies are a potential solution to reach more prospective students and increase awareness of the benefits of equality education.

Purpose: This study aims to explore the implications of the use of information technology in the marketing of equality education programs in Banjarmasin.

Method/approach: The research method used is a qualitative approach with data collection techniques through in-depth interviews, observations, and document analysis. The research informants consisted of the manager of the Center for Community Learning Activities (PKBM), educators, and students involved in the equality program.

Findings: Research findings show that the use of information technology, such as social media, websites, and mobile-based applications, has had a positive impact on increasing the visibility of equality education programs. The use of digital platforms allows for a wider reach, increased interaction with prospective students, and more effective and efficient delivery of information. However, challenges such as limited internet access in some regions and the lack of digital literacy among the community are still obstacles that need to be overcome.

Conclusions: The conclusion of this study confirms that the application of information technology in the marketing of equality education programs in Banjarmasin can increase community participation and the effectiveness of information delivery. A more targeted and sustainable digital marketing strategy is needed to overcome existing obstacles.

Novelty/Originality/Value: The novelty of this study lies in the development of an information technology-based marketing model that is tailored to the demographic and social characteristics of the Banjarmasin community, so that it can be a reference for equality education program managers in increasing public participation and awareness of the importance of non-formal education.

Keywords: Information Technology; Marketing Technology; Equality Education

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INTRODUCTION

In today's digital era, information technology has become one of the main pillars in the development of various sectors, including education (Hussaini, 2022). In Banjarmasin, the equality education program faces significant challenges in terms of marketing and information delivery to the community. The marketing of equality education programs not only aims to increase the participation of learning citizens, but also to build a positive image of non-formal educational institutions (Nurhanipah & Arin Khairunnisa, 2023). By utilizing information technology, educational institutions can reach a wider audience, facilitate access to information, and increase interaction between education managers and the public.

This is very important considering that many people have not yet received access to formal education, so that equality education is a relevant and necessary alternative (Widianto, 2021; Fradito et al., 2020). The basic concept of marketing in the context of equality education includes various strategies that aim to attract public interest in the programs offered. Educational marketing not only focuses on promotion, but also on developing a good relationship between educational institutions and society (Huang, 2024). In this case, information technology plays a crucial role in creating an effective communication platform (Dani, 2023). For example, the use of social media and websites as a means to convey information about educational programs, schedules, and activities carried out by educational institutions.

Research shows that the use of digital media can increase public awareness of equality education, as well as encourage active participation in the programs offered (Rum, 2022; Isa, 2023). The research variables in this context include the effectiveness of the marketing strategies implemented, the level of community participation in equality education programs, and the impact of the use of information technology on increasing interest in learning. Previous research has shown that gaps in people's access to information and understanding of equality education can hinder their participation. Therefore, it is important to evaluate how information technology-based marketing strategies can overcome these problems and increase public participation in equality education programs in Banjarmasin (Pratiwi, 2021; Mulyawan, 2020).

The problems faced in the marketing of equality education programs in Banjarmasin can be seen from several aspects. First, there is still a gap in access to information technology among the community, especially in remote areas. This causes information about educational programs to not reach those in need. Second, the low public awareness of the importance of equality education is also an obstacle (Azizah, 2023). Research shows that many parents and prospective students do not understand the benefits of equality education, so they are reluctant to enroll (Rostini, 2023; Mulyawan et al., 2020). Third, the lack of synergy between educational institutions and the community in terms of communication and promotion of educational programs is also a factor affecting low participation (Widianto, 2021; Sianturi, 2023).

The urgency of this research lies in the importance of the use of information technology in increasing the marketing effectiveness of equality education programs in Banjarmasin, which still faces challenges in terms of community participation and information dissemination. With the increasing use of the internet and social media, digital-based marketing strategies are a potential solution to reach more prospective students and increase awareness of the benefits of equality education. However, there is still a gap in the adoption of technology by education providers, both in terms of resources, digital skills, and targeted marketing strategies. Therefore, this research is needed to analyze the role of information technology in the marketing of equality education, identify the challenges faced, and provide strategic recommendations so that the marketing of this program is more effective and inclusive, in order to increase public access to wider educational opportunities.

The purpose of this study is to analyze and evaluate the marketing strategies implemented in the equality education program in Banjarmasin, as well as their impact on community participation. This research also aims to provide recommendations for managers of educational institutions in increasing marketing effectiveness through the use of information technology. The urgency of this research is very high, considering that equality education is one of the solutions to overcome the problem of unequal access to education in Indonesia, especially in underserved areas (Nurhanipah & Khairunnisa, 2023; Hayyi, 2023).

The novelty of this study lies in the approach that integrates information technology in the marketing of equality education, as well as focusing on the local context in Banjarmasin. By utilizing digital platforms, this

research aims to explore how technology can be used to improve marketing effectiveness and attract public interest in equality education programs. In addition, this research will also provide recommendations for educational institutions in designing marketing strategies that are more effective and efficient, and relevant to the current needs of society (Suryadi et al., 2020).

The contribution of this research is expected to provide new insights into the importance of information technology-based marketing in equality education, as well as a reference for managers of educational institutions in designing more effective strategies. Thus, it is hoped that public participation in equality education programs can increase, so that the goal of national education to educate the nation's life can be achieved (Harahap, 2021).

METHODS

This research is about the use of information technology in the marketing of equality education programs in Banjarmasin using a descriptive qualitative approach. This method was chosen to explore how information technology is applied in marketing strategies and to explore the views of various parties involved in equality education programs (Asikin, 2024). Data was collected through several techniques, namely observation, interviews, and document analysis (Muzari, 2022). Observation was carried out by direct observation of marketing activities implemented by equality education institutions.

The researcher monitors the use of social media and other digital platforms directly to understand real practices and interactions between educational institutions and prospective students. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with educational institution managers, teachers, and students. Through this interview, the researcher delves into in-depth information about the experiences and challenges faced in information technology-based marketing in equality education (Nurhayati & Suprapto, 2020). In addition, document analysis was carried out to review various promotional materials, training modules, and reports of marketing activities that had been carried out previously (Susanti, 2024)

Data validation is carried out to ensure the reliability of the information collected, by involving source triangulation, namely by comparing data from various collection techniques to produce credible findings (My et al., 2022). With all these techniques, this research is expected to contribute to educational institutions in formulating better marketing strategies, so that public participation in equality education can

The collected data was then analyzed using an interactive model by Miles & Huberman, which included four stages: data reduction, data presentation, conclusion drawn, and data validation (Cipta, 2024). In the data reduction stage, the researcher filters relevant information, while the data presentation is carried out to compile the information in a format that is easy to analyze (Mezmir, 2020). The conclusion was drawn to answer the research question and provide a clear understanding of the implications of information technology in the marketing of equality education programs in Banjarmasin.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The use of information technology in the marketing of equality education programs in Banjarmasin shows significant results on its impact on the visibility and interaction of educational institutions with prospective students. Through the use of social media, websites, and mobile applications, educational institutions can expand the reach of information that can be accessed by the wider community (Sivakumar, 2023). In this context, research by Hidayah et al. (2022) confirms that information technology is able to improve marketing communication, helping educational institutions to attract the attention of prospective students more effectively. Furthermore, the existence of information online is very important in creating wider accessibility to educational information, which is the basis for prospective students to make the right decision in choosing an educational program that suits their needs (Rochman et al., 2020).

The role of marketing in education is not only limited to the formal delivery of information, but also includes aspects of interaction with the community (Njonge, 2023). A good marketing communication strategy can help an educational institution build strong relationships with prospective students and parents, foster trust, and promote its educational offerings (Mykhailyk, 2022). Recent research shows that by utilizing social media

as a means of promotion, educational institutions can conduct more effective two-way communication, create space for feedback from the public, and adjust their offerings to the needs and expectations of the target audience (Isa et al., 2023).

However, challenges such as limited internet access and low digital literacy among several people in Banjarmasin are significant obstacles in maximizing the potential of information technology. For this reason, it is necessary to take integrated strategic steps between improving digital infrastructure and digital literacy training programs to ensure that all segments of society can utilize technology more optimally and ensure that the marketing of educational programs has a broad and inclusive impact (Snigdhya et al., 2024).

Against this background, this study aims to examine more deeply the use of information technology in the marketing of equality education programs in Banjarmasin, as well as explore the challenges faced and efforts that can be made to optimize the use of technology in the context of education. The results of this research are expected to make a meaningful contribution to the development of more effective and sustainable education marketing strategies, as well as support efforts to increase access to education in this digital era.

Challenges of Limited Internet Access

Although there are various benefits of using information technology in education, the biggest challenge faced is limited internet access, especially in rural and remote areas (Graves, 2021). Inadequate digital infrastructure is often the main obstacle to the use of technology to improve the quality of education (Shrivastava, 2022). Research shows that the low internet penetration rate in these areas significantly limits opportunities for students to access online educational resources, participate in online learning, and utilize modern learning tools (Syahidi et al., 2023; Tsabita & Sugandi, 2022).

One of the factors contributing to this problem is the lack of supportive infrastructure. In many rural areas, internet networks are very limited or even non-existent (Mack, 2024). The high cost of getting stable internet access also often makes these services unaffordable for low-income populations. As explained in a study by Tiara (Ariyani, 2021), this problem can lead to inequities in access to education, where students in urban areas benefit more than those in remote areas. This kind of imbalance can exacerbate existing educational gaps, making it harder for students in underserved areas to compete with their urban peers.

Furthermore, low internet penetration in rural areas not only affects access to learning materials, but also reduces opportunities for teachers to undertake online professional development (Soekamto, 2022). Limited online access hinders teachers from attending training courses, seminars, or workshops that can improve their skills and knowledge, which in turn impacts the quality of teaching they provide. Therefore, overall, the lack of adequate digital infrastructure results in the loss of potential for improving the quality of education in various regions (Rawal, 2024).

In the context of Banjarmasin, the variation in internet access between urban and rural areas has become very striking. Students who live in urban areas tend to have better access to technology and the internet, which allows them to get a better quality education. On the other hand, students in rural areas are often trapped in limited access and availability of resources, which reduces their chances of thriving academically. This creates a situation where educational inequalities are widening, hampering efforts to achieve inclusive and equitable education for all children, regardless of their geographical location (Mao & Sun, 2023).

To address these challenges, greater investment in information and communication technology infrastructure is needed, as well as collaboration between governments, the private sector, and educational institutions (Udanoh & Zouria, 2023). Efforts to expand the internet network to remote areas and digital literacy training programs for the community should be a top priority to ensure that all students have equitable access to quality education. With these strategic measures, it is hoped that the educational gap between urban and rural areas can be minimized, and every child has an equal chance of success.

Low Digital Literacy Among the Community

Low digital literacy is a significant challenge that hinders the use of information technology, especially in remote areas (Ollerenshow, 2021). Many individuals in the region do not have the necessary skills to use digital technology effectively, which makes it difficult for them to access and utilize valuable information. Research by Hidayah et al. (2022) shows that a lack of understanding of online security risks and how to utilize digital devices wisely can make people vulnerable to misinformation and limit their ability to use technology in productive contexts. This is a major concern because in today's digital era, digital literacy skills are essential to encourage access and participation in various aspects of life, including education and the economy.

Furthermore, low digital literacy not only has implications for individuals' capacity to use technology, but can also widen the social and economic gap between urban and rural areas. Research by Bahri et al. (2023) shows that individuals with high levels of digital literacy are better able to participate in economic and educational activities that utilize technology, while those with low skills lag behind. This creates a negative cycle, where a lack of access and understanding of technology hinders opportunities to upskill them, further exacerbating the digital divide.

Therefore, better digital literacy training programs need to be implemented in underserved areas. This training should be designed to provide opportunities for the public to learn and understand how to use technology more effectively. Murtinugraha et al. (2021) and Phillips (2024) suggest that this kind of initiative not only improves individuals' technical skills, but also equips them with a better understanding of digital security and how to use information critically. With the presence of an effective training program, it is hoped that the community can make optimal use of technology, increasing their chances of being actively involved in various activities that can improve their quality of life.

In the context of this research, it is important to explore more deeply about the implementation strategies of digital literacy programs that are appropriate and applicable for minimalist communities in remote areas. This research is expected to provide new insights and concrete recommendations for change agents, so that more individuals from various backgrounds can acquire the digital skills necessary to succeed in this digital era. Thus, the development of digital literacy is expected to be a bridge to improve educational accessibility and create more equitable economic opportunities for all levels of society.

Efforts to Overcome Challenges

To overcome the challenges that hinder the use of information technology in equality education, collaborative efforts involving the government, the private sector, and the community are needed. The first step that must be taken is to improve digital infrastructure throughout Indonesia, especially in remote and underserved areas. The construction of a wider internet network will not only provide better access to information, but also allow residents of the area to take advantage of various digital platforms that can enrich their learning experience. This unequal access is often a barrier for communities in remote areas to achieve quality education, so investment in infrastructure is crucial (Sudrajat et al., 2023).

In addition, the implementation of digital literacy training programs that are tailored to local needs is also very important. The public needs to be given a thorough understanding of how to utilize technology effectively and safely. This includes training in the use of hardware, an understanding of relevant applications in the learning process, as well as awareness of the risks associated with using the internet. Training programs that involve community elements can be an effective approach, as they can bring in experienced experts and provide opportunities for community members to share knowledge and skills (Labrecque, 2023). With this approach, it is hoped that trainees can support each other, strengthen social networks, and create a cooperative learning culture in the community.

The implementation of digital literacy training can even foster awareness of the importance of technology in daily life. When people realize the benefits of using it, such as access to education, job opportunities, and diverse sources of information, then the motivation to learn and participate in equality education programs will increase. Therefore, in designing digital literacy training, it is important to relate to relevant local contexts and present applicable examples that they can immediately apply in daily life.

These kinds of programs must also be supported by policies from the government that ensure the sustainability and accessibility of training. Support in terms of funding, provision of facilities, and regular training classes is needed to ensure that communities in remote areas are not left behind in the ongoing digital revolution. With the commitment of all parties, namely the government, the private sector, and the community, it is hoped that digital literacy training can improve people's skills and knowledge, which will ultimately contribute to increased participation in equality education programs and social development at large.

Through this collaborative approach, it is hoped that the creation of an inclusive and equitable educational ecosystem can be realized, where every individual, regardless of background, has the same opportunity to learn and develop in an increasingly technology-oriented society. The results of these efforts will not only improve the quality of education, but also have the potential to foster innovation and improve the welfare of society as a whole.

CONCLUSION

The use of information technology in the marketing of equality education programs in Banjarmasin has a positive impact by increasing visibility, expanding reach, and facilitating more effective interaction with prospective students. However, significant challenges such as limited internet access and low digital literacy among the community need to be overcome to ensure the sustainability and effectiveness of the program. The novelty of this research lies in the understanding that the use of information technology must be accompanied by a holistic approach to address these barriers, with a focus on the development of digital infrastructure and skills training. With the right efforts, it is hoped that the equality education program can reach more individuals and increase participation in education as a whole.

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