

Empowering Kindergarten Teachers: The Role of Online Business in Enhancing Economic Well-being at Yayasan Chalisarurrahmi Luqman Halim, Medan

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Abstract. Kindergarten teachers play a crucial role in early childhood education, which is the foundation for children's intellectual, social, and emotional development. However, their economic welfare is often overlooked, with many kindergarten teachers receiving inadequate salaries. This can affect their quality of life and the quality of education they provide. Low economic welfare can lead to stress, decreased motivation, and impact their performance at work. Time and resource constraints often hinder kindergarten teachers from seeking additional income, as most of their time is spent teaching and preparing learning materials. Furthermore, many kindergarten teachers lack the knowledge or skills to start a side business. Online business offers a solution with the flexibility to run a business without leaving their main job. With relatively low capital requirements and technological advancements providing access to a global market, online business becomes a feasible alternative to increase the income of kindergarten teachers. Therefore, socialization regarding the importance of online business can significantly benefit the economic welfare of kindergarten teachers, providing them with opportunities to leverage digital-era advantages through social media.

Keywords: digital economy, economic welfare through social media, online business

1. INTRODUCTION

Kindergarten teachers play a crucial role in early childhood education, which is a fundamental foundation for children's intellectual, social, and emotional development. However, their economic welfare is often overlooked. Many kindergarten teachers receive inadequate salaries, which can affect their quality of life and the quality of education they provide. Low economic welfare can lead to stress, decreased motivation, and impact their performance at work. Kindergarten teachers often face limitations in time and resources when it comes to seeking additional income. Much of their time is spent teaching and preparing educational materials. Additionally, most kindergarten teachers lack the knowledge or skills needed to start a side business that could increase their income. Many also may not have access to training or resources that could help them start a business or additional venture. Online business offers flexibility that allows kindergarten teachers to run a business without leaving their primary job. They can manage their own work hours and operate a business from home or school. Online business also requires relatively low capital compared to conventional businesses, making it easier for teachers with limited funds to start. Technological advancements and the internet have opened up many opportunities for anyone, including kindergarten teachers, to market their products or services to a broader audience without geographical constraints.

A preliminary survey of the five kindergarten teachers at Yayasan Chalisarurrahmi Luqman Halim reveals critical insights into their economic conditions. The survey highlights their average income levels, the significant workload they manage, and the financial challenges they face. Despite their essential role in early childhood education, these teachers often experience economic difficulties that impact their quality of life and, potentially, the quality of education they provide.

Recent statistical data and reports indicate a rapid expansion of the online business sector in Indonesia. This growth presents numerous opportunities, particularly for individuals seeking additional income streams. For the five kindergarten teachers, who are often constrained by limited financial resources, the burgeoning online business market offers a promising pathway to improve their economic well-being. Engaging in online business allows them to explore new revenue sources without compromising their primary teaching responsibilities.

There are notable examples of kindergarten teachers from various regions who have successfully improved their financial situations through online business ventures. These success stories provide valuable lessons and serve as motivation for the teachers at Yayasan Chalisarurrahmi Luqman Halim. By learning from the experiences and strategies of their peers, these five local teachers can gain practical insights into how to effectively navigate the online business landscape and achieve similar success.

2. METHODOLOGY

Online business is a type of enterprise conducted digitally via the internet. According to [1], online business encompasses various commercial activities conducted electronically through computer networks, including marketing, sales, and distribution of products or services. The main characteristics of online business are its broad market reach, flexibility in time and location, and lower operational costs compared to conventional businesses. Kindergarten teachers can run an online business without disrupting their teaching schedules. They can manage their work hours according to their convenience, allowing them to balance their primary job with a side business [2]. According to Chaffey and Ellis-Chadwick (2019), online business requires lower costs compared to conventional businesses, as there is no need to rent physical space or pay numerous employees [3]. With the internet, products or services can reach customers from various regions, even internationally, thereby increasing potential revenue [4]. Online businesses face stiff competition due to easy access and low entry costs. To succeed, kindergarten teachers need to understand effective digital marketing strategies [5].

Starting and running an online business requires certain skills in technology and digital marketing. Therefore, training and mentoring are essential [6]. Kindergarten teachers can leverage their teaching skills by creating online courses or selling digital teaching materials. They can also sell handmade creative products made during their free time. According to a report from the Ministry of Education and Culture (2018), teachers often have creative skills that can be developed into profitable business ventures through online platforms or social media [7].

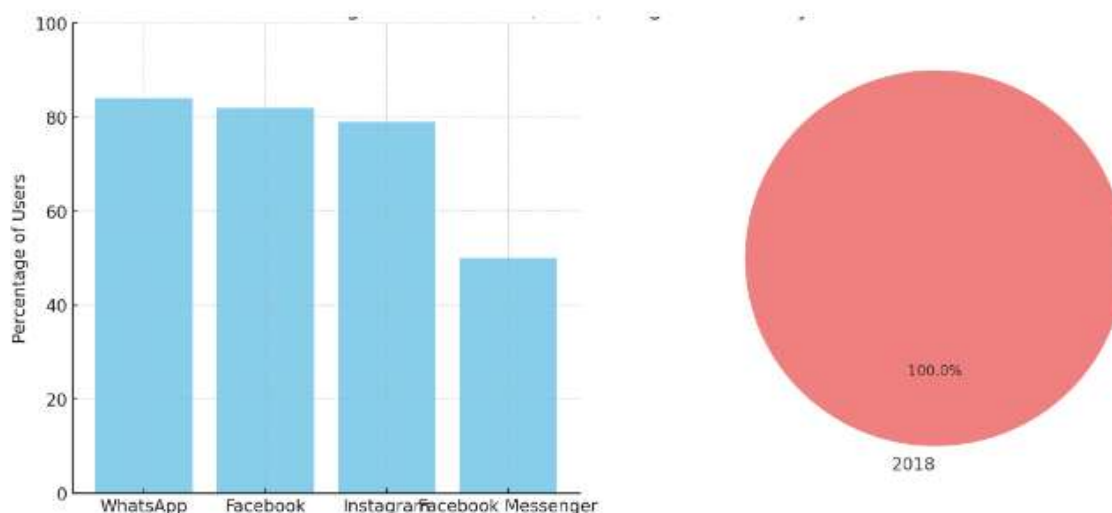


Figure 1. Social Media Usage and Digital Economy in Indonesia, Social Media Platform Usage in Indonesia (2019) Digital Economy Contribution to PDB Indonesia (2018)

From the Bar Chart, it can be concluded that the percentage of social media platform usage in Indonesia in 2019, such as WhatsApp is the most widely used platform (84%), followed by Facebook (82%), Instagram (79%), and Facebook Messenger (50%). Meanwhile, based on the Pie Chart, it shows the contribution of the digital economy to Indonesia's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in 2018, which reached 5.5% [8], [9].

Overall, this data shows that social media is very influential in the daily lives of Indonesian people and the digital economy has a significant impact on the country's economy.

With changes in consumer behavior who are more confident in shopping online, as well as government support in the form of policies that support the digital economy and digital literacy initiatives, the e-commerce market in Indonesia is experiencing rapid growth. We can see this in the following statistical data:

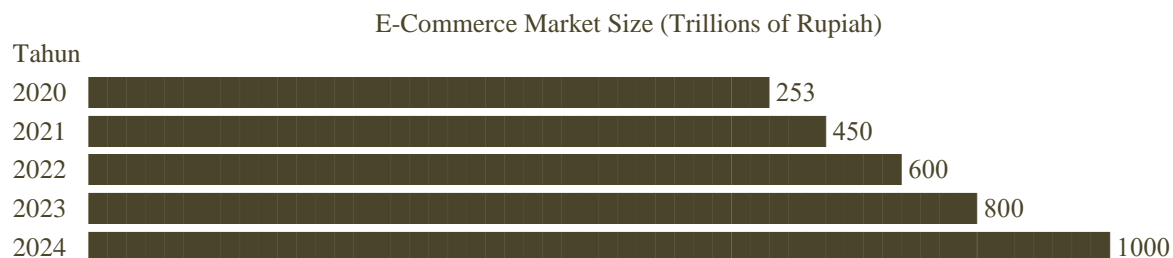


Figure 2. E-Commerce Market Size (Trillions of Rupiah)

Changes in consumer behavior, which are increasingly comfortable and accustomed to shopping online, are key factors in accelerating the growth of this sector. Consumers are now increasingly confident in carrying out online transactions, thanks to the convenience and security offered by e-commerce platforms.

Government support through policies that support the digital economy, as well as efforts to increase digital literacy, also play an important role in encouraging the growth of e-commerce. This policy includes developing digital infrastructure, improving regulations, and supporting technological innovation and payment methods. Digital literacy initiatives help people to better understand and exploit the opportunities that exist in the digital space, which in turn increases e-commerce adoption.

The combination of these factors has created a conducive environment for the growth of e-commerce, making it a very promising sector with significant growth projected until 2024.

The stages of this activity include:

- a. Preparation and Planning
 1. Identify the needs and interests of kindergarten teachers at Yayasan Chalisarurrahmi Luqman Halim: Conduct surveys or interviews to understand the interests and needs of kindergarten teachers regarding online business.
 2. Determine the materials and speakers: Develop relevant training materials and select experienced speakers in online business.
- b. Implementation
 1. Introduction to online business and its opportunities: Provide an overview of the various types of online businesses that can be run.
 2. Online business platforms that can be used: Teach about platforms such as marketplaces, social media, and personal websites for online business.
 3. Creating and managing an online store: Practical training on how to create an online store, upload products, and manage inventory.
 4. Digital marketing strategies (e.g., SEO, social media, online advertising): Teach digital marketing techniques to increase the visibility and sales of the online store.
 5. Support and monitoring of online business development: Provide regular support to ensure that kindergarten teachers can effectively run their online businesses.
- c. Evaluation and Follow-Up
 1. Assess the success of the program: Measure the results and impact of the service activity on the economic welfare of kindergarten teachers.
 2. Follow-up plan for the development of kindergarten teachers' online businesses: Provide recommendations for the next steps in developing their online businesses.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

From each activity, of course, there are results that the activity implementing team wants to achieve. The results of each activity are an indicator of the success of implementing Community Partnership Program (PKM) activities. The results that have been achieved in the Community Partnership Program (PKM) include observation and coordination activities, preparation of equipment and tools for training, socialization of activities, implementation of training, and reflection on training results.



Figure 3. Community Service Collaboration Team Consisting of Lecturers and Students

3.1 Results

From the initial coordination results, the implementation team prepared training materials according to the teachers' needs. In addition to preparing materials, the implementation team also prepared pre-tests and post-tests as indicators of the implementation team's success in delivering the materials. The training began with a pre-test given to kindergarten teachers who took part in the training through a link provided by the implementation team. The results of the pre-test will later be used as a comparison against the post-test given after the training is complete. Then after the pre-test is given, the training stage begins with an introduction to digital marketing strategies (e.g., SEO, social media, online advertising). The team teaches digital marketing techniques to increase the visibility and sales of online stores. In this activity, the implementation team involves mentors and students as tutors.

3.1.1 Pre-Test

Objective: To assess kindergarten teachers' initial knowledge about online business before participating in the training.

- a. What do you know about online business? Briefly explain.
- b. Have you ever run an online business before? If yes, explain the type of business you ran.
- c. Mention some platforms that can be used to run an online business.
- d. In your opinion, what are the advantages of running an online business compared to a conventional business?
- e. What challenges do you imagine you will face in running an online business?
- f. Do you know how to create and manage an online store? Explain if yes.
- g. How would you rate your ability to use social media for business purposes?
 1. Very good
 2. Good
 3. Fair
 4. Poor
- h. Have you ever attended a training or seminar on online business before? If yes, mention the topic.
- i. Do you have plans to start an online business in the near future? If yes, what type of business do you want to run?
- j. Mention one example of a successful person who runs an online business that you know of.

3.1.2 Post-Test

Objective: To assess kindergarten teachers' knowledge and skills after participating in the training.

- a. What is meant by online business? Briefly explain.
- b. Mention the main steps in starting an online business.
- c. List some platforms that can be used to run an online business and choose the one that suits you best. Explain why.
- d. What are the advantages of running an online business that you learned during this training?
- e. Mention the common challenges faced in running an online business and how to overcome them.
- f. Briefly explain the process of creating and managing an online store.
- g. How would you rate your ability to use social media for business purposes after participating in the training?
 1. Very good
 2. Good
 3. Fair
 4. Poor
- h. Do you feel more prepared to run an online business after this training? Explain why.
- i. Do you have concrete plans to start an online business after this training? If yes, explain what kind of business you want to run and the first step you will take.
- j. Mention one example of a successful person who runs an online business that you learned about during the training. What is the main lesson you took from that example?

3.2 Discussion

The results of the pre-test and post-test showed that this training was highly relevant to the needs of kindergarten teachers who desire additional income but lack the knowledge and skills necessary to start an online business. The significant increase in knowledge and skills after the training indicates that the program successfully addressed their needs, enhancing their readiness and motivation to start an online business.

The improvement in confidence and skills among kindergarten teachers after the training supports this view, demonstrating that with the right knowledge and support, teachers can take advantage of online business opportunities to enhance their well-being. Referring to Law No. 20 of 2003 on the National Education System, which emphasizes the importance of educators' welfare, also supports the significance of initiatives like this. With increased economic well-being through online business, kindergarten teachers can perform their duties more effectively and with greater focus [10].

This training not only provided knowledge and skills but also encouraged economic independence and improved the long-term well-being of kindergarten teachers. The enhancement in digital skills and understanding of online business can also open new opportunities for teachers to continue developing and innovating in other areas related to technology and education.

4. CONCLUSION

The results of the pre-test and post-test indicate that this online business training successfully improved the knowledge, skills, and readiness of kindergarten teachers to start an online business, which in turn can enhance their economic well-being. This training is relevant to the needs of teachers and is supported by expert opinions and legislation that emphasize the importance of educators' welfare. With continued support and follow-up programs, kindergarten teachers can continue to grow and achieve economic independence through online business.

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