



Liaison Officer and Business Consultant on Tenants Siomay Pa'dee and Cahaya Kebab & Burger

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Abstract. The Polbeng Business Exhibition is an event organized by students of the International Business Administration Study Program at the Bengkalis State Polytechnic as a form of applying the business theories learned during lectures. This event serves as a platform for promotion, entrepreneurship training, and a means of introducing MSME products to the community. This project focuses on Siomay Pa'dee and Cahaya Kebab & Burger, two participants in the Polbeng Business Expo Chapter II. The objective of this project is to analyze the preparation process, implementation, and results achieved by both MSMEs during the exhibition, particularly in terms of promotion, business management, and digital marketing. The methods used include observation and documentation. Additionally, the role of the liaison officer is crucial in bridging communication and coordination between organizers, MSME participants, and other stakeholders, while the business consultant provides recommendations for business development from preparation to evaluation during the expo. The project results show that the tenants' participation in the expo successfully increased product promotion through the creation of profile videos, promotional videos, product catalog, and digital marketing strategies on various social media platforms. In addition, financial reports and activity logs are important tools in evaluating the performance of MSMEs. This expo proved to be beneficial for students as practical experience in event and business management, as well as for MSMEs as a means to expand their market reach and enhance their business image.

Keywords: Business Consultant; Business Management; Digital Marketing; Liaison Officer; MSMEs *Siomay Pa'dee* and *Cahaya Kebab & Burger*; Polbeng Business Expo Chapter II; Product Promotion.

1. INTRODUCTION

Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) constitute one of the most important sectors supporting Indonesia's economic development. They significantly contribute to the national Gross Domestic Product (GDP), create employment opportunities, and improve community welfare. According to the Ministry of Cooperatives and Small and Medium Enterprises of the Republic of Indonesia, MSMEs account for more than 99% of all business entities and absorb the majority of the national workforce. Their strategic role makes MSMEs a key driver of economic resilience and sustainable development, particularly in developing countries. Despite their substantial contribution, many MSMEs continue to experience structural and managerial challenges that hinder their competitiveness and long-term business sustainability.

The rapid advancement of digital technology has transformed the business environment by changing consumer behavior, marketing strategies, and transaction systems. Consumers increasingly rely on digital platforms to search for products, compare prices, and complete purchasing decisions. Consequently, MSMEs are expected to adapt by adopting digital technologies that support business operations, marketing, and customer services. However, many small businesses still struggle to optimize digital marketing, establish strong brand

identities, implement digital payment systems, and manage business administration effectively. Limited digital literacy, inadequate technological skills, and insufficient managerial competencies remain significant barriers to MSME development.

Digital marketing has emerged as one of the most effective approaches for improving MSME competitiveness. Social media platforms such as Instagram, TikTok, and Facebook enable businesses to reach wider markets at relatively low promotional costs while facilitating direct interaction with consumers. Effective digital marketing not only enhances product visibility but also strengthens customer engagement and brand awareness. In addition, the adoption of digital payment systems, particularly the Quick Response Code Indonesian Standard (QRIS), has become increasingly important in supporting cashless transactions and improving service efficiency. Nevertheless, many MSMEs have yet to fully utilize these technologies due to limited knowledge, inadequate training, and the absence of structured business assistance.

Financial management represents another persistent challenge among MSMEs. Many business owners continue to maintain incomplete financial records and frequently combine personal and business finances, making it difficult to evaluate business performance accurately. Without proper bookkeeping practices, entrepreneurs face obstacles in monitoring cash flow, calculating profitability, and making strategic business decisions. Therefore, strengthening managerial capacity through practical mentoring and continuous business assistance is essential for improving MSME sustainability and competitiveness in the digital economy.

Higher education institutions have increasingly played an important role in supporting MSME development through community engagement programs, entrepreneurship education, and project-based learning (PjBL). As centers of knowledge and innovation, universities can facilitate technology transfer, provide business consultation, and introduce practical solutions to the challenges encountered by local entrepreneurs. One initiative reflecting this collaborative approach is Polbeng Business Expo Chapter II, organized by Politeknik Negeri Bengkalis. Unlike conventional business exhibitions that primarily function as promotional events, this program integrates entrepreneurship education with community engagement by involving students as Liaison Officers (LOs) who directly assist MSMEs in improving business management, branding, digital marketing, financial administration, and digital payment implementation. Through this collaborative mentoring model, students acquire practical entrepreneurial experience while MSMEs receive structured assistance tailored to their business needs.

Previous studies have consistently reported that mentoring programs, digital marketing adoption, and financial literacy contribute positively to MSME performance. Research has demonstrated that social media utilization enhances market reach and customer engagement, while financial management training improves business decision-making and operational efficiency. Similarly, digital payment systems such as QRIS have been shown to increase transaction convenience and support business digitalization. However, most previous studies have investigated these components separately, focusing either on digital marketing, financial management, digital payment adoption, or entrepreneurship education. Limited attention has been given to integrated mentoring programs that simultaneously combine business profiling, branding development, digital marketing optimization, QRIS implementation, financial reporting, and business exhibition activities within a Project-Based Learning framework. Furthermore, empirical studies examining the role of university students as active facilitators in MSME empowerment through business expo activities remain relatively scarce, particularly within Indonesian vocational higher education institutions.

Addressing this research gap, the present study investigates the implementation of an integrated MSME mentoring program conducted through Polbeng Business Expo Chapter II. Specifically, this research examines how business profiling, promotional media development, social media optimization, QRIS implementation, and financial reporting contribute to strengthening the managerial capacity and competitiveness of participating MSMEs. Unlike previous studies that primarily evaluate individual business development interventions, this study offers a comprehensive perspective by integrating multiple mentoring components into a single collaborative framework involving universities, students, and local entrepreneurs. This integrated approach represents the novelty of the research and provides a more holistic understanding of MSME capacity-building strategies.

The findings of this study are expected to contribute both theoretically and practically. From a theoretical perspective, this research enriches the literature on MSME development, entrepreneurial mentoring, digital transformation, and university–industry collaboration by demonstrating the effectiveness of integrated mentoring in enhancing business capacity. Practically, the study provides valuable recommendations for higher education institutions, policymakers, and business support organizations in designing sustainable mentoring programs that facilitate MSME digital transformation, strengthen business competitiveness, and promote local economic development. Therefore, this study contributes not only to the advancement of entrepreneurship education but also to the broader discourse on community-based economic empowerment and sustainable MSME development.

2. RESEARCH METHOD

This study employed a qualitative descriptive research design to examine the implementation of an integrated mentoring program for Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) through Polbeng Business Expo Chapter II, organized by Politeknik Negeri Bengkalis in 2025. A qualitative approach was selected because it enables an in-depth understanding of the mentoring process, identifies the challenges encountered by participating MSMEs, and evaluates the outcomes of the assistance program in improving business management, digital marketing, and digital transformation.

The research was conducted over approximately three months, beginning with the identification of business needs and continuing through project planning, mentoring implementation, business expo activities, and final evaluation. The study involved two MSMEs, namely Dhira Donut Kentang and Es Teler Tropical, which were purposively selected because they demonstrated business potential while experiencing limitations in branding, digital marketing, financial administration, and digital payment adoption. Throughout the program, the researchers served as Liaison Officers (LOs), facilitating communication between the organizing committee and the MSME owners while providing direct mentoring during the implementation of the business development activities.

Data were collected using three qualitative techniques. Participatory observation was conducted throughout the mentoring process to observe business operations, customer interactions, promotional activities, and the implementation of digital business practices. Semi-structured interviews were carried out with the MSME owners to obtain information regarding their business conditions, challenges, perceptions, and experiences before and after the mentoring program. Documentation was also utilized to collect supporting evidence, including business profiles, promotional videos, product catalogs, social media content, QRIS implementation, financial reports, photographs, and other project outputs produced during the mentoring activities.

The mentoring program consisted of several integrated activities designed to strengthen MSME capacity. These activities included the preparation of business profiles, development of promotional videos and product catalogs, optimization of social media marketing, implementation of the Quick Response Code Indonesian Standard (QRIS) as a digital payment system, and preparation of simple financial reports. These activities served not only as mentoring outputs but also as the primary sources for evaluating the effectiveness of the business assistance program. The overall research procedure is illustrated in Figure 1.



Figure 1. Research Procedure.

Source: Developed by the Authors (2025).

The collected data were analyzed using the interactive analysis model developed by Miles et al. (2014), which consists of three interconnected stages: data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing and verification. During the data condensation stage, all information obtained from observations, interviews, and documentation was organized, selected, and categorized according to the research objectives. The organized data were subsequently presented in descriptive narratives to facilitate interpretation. Finally, conclusions were drawn by identifying recurring patterns and verifying the consistency of findings across different sources of evidence.

To ensure the credibility and trustworthiness of the research findings, source triangulation and method triangulation were employed. Information obtained through observations was compared with interview results and supporting documentation to verify data consistency. In addition, continuous communication with the MSME owners was conducted throughout the mentoring process to confirm the accuracy of the researchers' interpretations and to minimize potential bias. These procedures enhanced the validity, dependability, and credibility of the study.

Table 1. Research Instruments.

Research Objective	Data Collection Technique	Research Instrument	Data Source
Identify MSME problems	Observation	Observation checklist	MSME owners
Analyze business conditions	Semi-structured interview	Interview guideline	MSME owners
Evaluate mentoring implementation	Observation and documentation	Field notes, photographs	Business activities
Analyze mentoring outcomes	Documentation	Business profile, promotional media, QRIS, financial reports	Project outputs

Source: Developed by the Authors (2025).

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Implementation of the MSME Mentoring Program

The mentoring program was implemented through Polbeng Business Expo Chapter II, an entrepreneurship program organized by Politeknik Negeri Bengkalis to support the development of Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs). The program was conducted over approximately three months, beginning with the identification of business needs and concluding with the evaluation of the mentoring outcomes. Two MSMEs, namely Dhira Donut Kentang and Es Teler Tropical, participated as business partners in this study. Throughout the program, the researchers acted as Liaison Officers (LOs), providing direct assistance in business development, digital marketing, branding, and financial administration.

The preliminary assessment revealed several challenges faced by both MSMEs. Although both businesses offered products with promising market potential, they experienced limitations in developing professional business branding, utilizing digital marketing strategies, maintaining systematic financial records, and adopting digital payment technologies. Promotional activities were mainly conducted through word-of-mouth communication and unstructured social media usage, while financial transactions were recorded manually without standardized bookkeeping practices. These conditions limited the owners' ability to evaluate business performance and expand market reach.

Based on the identified problems, an integrated mentoring program was designed to improve business management and digital capabilities. The mentoring activities included the preparation of business profiles, product catalogs, promotional videos, digital marketing optimization, implementation of QRIS as a digital payment system, and simple financial reporting. These activities were designed according to the specific needs of each MSME to ensure practical and sustainable implementation.

Business Profile Development

One of the first activities undertaken during the mentoring program was the preparation of comprehensive business profiles for both participating MSMEs. The business profiles contained essential information regarding business history, vision and mission, product descriptions, target markets, competitive advantages, and contact information. Prior to the mentoring program, neither MSME possessed a formal business profile that could be used for promotional or partnership purposes.

The preparation of business profiles significantly improved the professional image of both enterprises. Business owners acknowledged that the profiles enabled them to introduce their businesses more effectively to customers, potential investors, and business partners. Furthermore, the business profile became the foundation for developing additional promotional materials, including product catalogs, promotional videos, and social media content.

These findings indicate that business profiling is an important component of branding strategies for MSMEs. A well-developed business profile enhances organizational identity and increases business credibility by providing clear and structured information regarding business operations. This finding supports the argument of Kotler & Keller, (2022), who emphasize that strong brand identity contributes to customer trust and long-term business sustainability.

Development of Promotional Media and Digital Marketing

Another major outcome of the mentoring program was the development of various digital promotional media. The researchers assisted the MSME owners in producing promotional videos, designing product catalogs, creating promotional posters, and optimizing social media content. The promotional videos presented product variations, production processes, product quality, and unique selling points, while product catalogs provided detailed information regarding available products and pricing.

Following the development of promotional media, both MSMEs began implementing more structured digital marketing strategies through Instagram and TikTok. The researchers also introduced content planning, caption writing, hashtag utilization, and visual branding techniques to improve audience engagement. As a result, business owners reported increased customer inquiries and greater interaction with their online promotional content.

The findings demonstrate that digital marketing plays an essential role in expanding market reach and improving customer engagement. Social media platforms provide MSMEs with cost-effective opportunities to promote products while establishing direct communication with consumers. This result is consistent with previous studies indicating that digital marketing

enhances MSME competitiveness by increasing product visibility and strengthening customer relationships.

Moreover, the integration of visual branding elements into promotional materials contributed to creating a more professional business image. Attractive visual content has become increasingly important in influencing consumer purchasing decisions, particularly in digital marketplaces where competition among small businesses continues to intensify.

QRIS Implementation and Digital Payment Adoption

The implementation of the Quick Response Code Indonesian Standard (QRIS) represented another important achievement of the mentoring program, particularly for Es Teler Tropical. Before the mentoring activities, all customer transactions were conducted using cash payments. This practice occasionally created inconvenience for customers who preferred cashless payment methods.

Following the implementation of QRIS, customers were able to complete transactions using mobile banking and electronic wallet applications. According to the business owner, the availability of digital payment options improved customer convenience and accelerated transaction processing. In addition, QRIS reduced the need for cash handling and minimized errors related to manual cash transactions.

The adoption of QRIS also reflects the increasing digital transformation of MSMEs in Indonesia. Financial technology has become an essential component of modern business management because it enhances operational efficiency and improves customer satisfaction. Therefore, the successful implementation of QRIS demonstrates that digital payment systems can support MSME competitiveness by providing more efficient and secure transaction services.

Financial Administration Improvement

Financial administration constituted another important aspect of the mentoring activities. During the initial observation, both MSMEs maintained only simple manual financial records without separating business and personal finances. Consequently, business owners experienced difficulties in monitoring business income, expenses, and profitability.

To address this issue, the researchers introduced standardized sales reports and simple financial statements. Business owners were trained to record daily transactions systematically and organize financial information according to basic accounting principles. As a result, both MSMEs acquired better financial documentation that enabled them to monitor business performance more effectively.

Proper financial recording not only facilitates business evaluation but also supports strategic decision-making. Through systematic bookkeeping, business owners can identify profitable products, monitor cash flow, estimate operational costs, and develop future business plans. Therefore, financial literacy and administrative capability remain fundamental components of sustainable MSME development.

Discussion

The findings demonstrate that the integrated mentoring model implemented through Polbeng Business Expo Chapter II successfully improved multiple dimensions of MSME capacity, including branding, digital marketing, financial administration, and digital payment adoption. Rather than focusing on a single intervention, the program combined several complementary business development strategies into one comprehensive mentoring framework. This integrated approach enabled participating MSMEs to address managerial, promotional, and operational challenges simultaneously.

The improvement in business identity through business profiling and promotional media development supports branding theory, which emphasizes that organizational identity influences customer perception, business credibility, and competitive advantage. The professionally developed business profiles and promotional materials enabled the participating MSMEs to communicate their value propositions more effectively while strengthening customer confidence.

Similarly, the adoption of digital marketing strategies demonstrates the growing importance of digital transformation for MSME competitiveness. The structured use of Instagram and TikTok enabled business owners to reach broader audiences while maintaining continuous communication with customers. These findings support previous research indicating that digital marketing significantly contributes to increased market accessibility, customer engagement, and business sustainability.

The implementation of QRIS further illustrates the practical benefits of financial technology adoption among small businesses. Digital payment systems simplify transactions, reduce operational inefficiencies, and improve service quality. This finding reinforces previous studies emphasizing that digital financial services represent an essential element of MSME digital transformation.

Furthermore, improvements in financial administration demonstrate the importance of managerial capacity building for small businesses. Many MSMEs fail to expand their businesses because they lack systematic financial records and reliable business information. The introduction of standardized financial reporting during the mentoring program enabled

business owners to evaluate financial performance more accurately and make evidence-based managerial decisions.

Overall, the findings indicate that university-led mentoring programs can contribute significantly to local economic development by strengthening MSME capacity through practical business assistance. The active involvement of students as Liaison Officers created opportunities for knowledge transfer while simultaneously providing experiential learning in entrepreneurship and community engagement. Therefore, business expos should be viewed not merely as promotional events but also as collaborative platforms for innovation, entrepreneurship education, and sustainable MSME empowerment.

4. CONCLUSION

This study examined the implementation of an integrated MSME mentoring program through Polbeng Business Expo Chapter II, organized by Politeknik Negeri Bengkalis. The findings demonstrate that the mentoring program successfully enhanced the managerial capacity and business competitiveness of the participating MSMEs, namely Dhira Donut Kentang and Es Teler Tropical. Through a series of integrated activities, including business profile development, promotional media creation, digital marketing optimization, QRIS implementation, and financial reporting assistance, the participating MSMEs were able to improve their business identity, promotional strategies, financial management practices, and adoption of digital technology.

The study further indicates that university-led mentoring programs can serve as an effective strategy for supporting the digital transformation of MSMEs. The active involvement of students as Liaison Officers (LOs) facilitated knowledge transfer and provided practical business solutions that addressed the specific needs of the participating enterprises. In addition to improving branding and customer engagement through digital marketing, the implementation of QRIS and systematic financial recording contributed to greater operational efficiency and strengthened business management. These findings highlight the importance of integrating entrepreneurship education with community engagement to promote sustainable local economic development.

From a theoretical perspective, this study contributes to the growing body of knowledge on MSME development by demonstrating that an integrated mentoring model combining branding, digital marketing, financial management, and digital payment adoption is more comprehensive than interventions focusing on a single aspect of business development. The

findings also reinforce the role of vocational higher education institutions as strategic partners in fostering entrepreneurship, innovation, and digital transformation among MSMEs.

Practically, the results provide valuable insights for universities, policymakers, and business support institutions in designing structured mentoring programs that respond to the evolving needs of MSMEs in the digital era. Future business expo programs are recommended to incorporate continuous mentoring, business consultation, and post-program evaluation to ensure the long-term sustainability of business improvements. Furthermore, future studies should involve a larger number of MSMEs from various business sectors and regions, while incorporating quantitative performance indicators such as sales growth, customer acquisition, and financial performance to provide a more comprehensive evaluation of mentoring effectiveness.

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