

Female Entrepreneurship in Leading Digitalization as a Marketing Strategy for Prosperous MSMEs and Women's Empowerment: A Case Study of Latifa Indonesia

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Abstract

Female entrepreneurship involves a movement where women can empower oneself and share their values with others. This study explores a business initiative led these principles: Latifa Indonesia, a maternal wellbeing therapy business founded by a female entrepreneur named Verawati. It describes the digital marketing strategy implemented by the company and analyzes several its impacts. The research employs a qualitative case study as well as semi-structured interviews, observation, and textual documentation to collect the data required. Thematic analysis, triangulation, and member checking are used while analyzing the obtained data. The finding of this study reveals that the digital marketing strategy used by Latifa Indonesia in establishing its business is implemented through the utilization of some digital platforms such as website, Facebook, and Instagram, but that transactions occur through WhatsApp, which is considered a more user-friendly application. The use of digital platforms positively impacted the company's development, leading to increasing numbers of both new therapists and customers, improving the company's accessibility, growing business income, and forming partnerships with other companies. Latifa's business data from 2021 showed that both customers and income are increasing approximately 20 percent each year since the commencement of the business' digital marketing strategy in 2017.

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1. Introduction

Women's entrepreneurship and digitalization are very interconnected in the twenty-first century. Both play important roles in social development and prosperity, especially for women (GEM 2021; Idris & Tan, 2017; Mahajan & Bandyopadhyay, 2021). Female entrepreneurs advance a movement in empowerment which enables them to increase their opportunities to contribute to their communities and lives, while digitalization allows women to connect to major markets through digital marketing. In some cases, digitalization also helps women to start businesses without any cost. Therefore, digitalization has brought with it several positive impacts for women entrepreneurs to start and grow their businesses, especially for those who have limited budgets.

The 2020 Global Entrepreneurship Monitor (GEM) survey estimates that there are 274 million women globally involved in business start-ups, in addition to 139 million women owners or managers of established businesses and 144 million women informal investors globally. GEM data also found that 30 percent of women entrepreneurs expected to hire six or more employees in the next five years compared to 48 percent of men entrepreneurs. In other words, women entrepreneurs represent about one in three growth-oriented entrepreneurs active in the world today. Further supporting this is data from UN Women from July 2020, at the level of micro-business, 54 percent of women have adapted to use the internet in product marketing and sales to simplify transactions and expand markets, both domestic and foreign (Dewi, 2021). The 2021 Mastercard Index of Women Entrepreneurs in 2021 also revealed that 14 economies saw increased women's entrepreneurial activity during the pandemic, and that one key element was women's advancement in technology (Mastercard, 2021).

Previous literature has shown that the role of women entrepreneurs has significantly changed the path of economic development, including in Indonesia. Studies from Handayani (2021) and Ester (2012) found that economic empowerment for women serves as not just a means to earn income but also a tool to avoid violence and discrimination. Hasan and Almubarok (2016) found that the most influential factor for women entrepreneurship is followed by entrepreneurial goals and motivations, and legal factors. A similar study from Abiodun and Amos (2018) identified that women entrepreneurs play a vital role in a country's economic growth and development, and have a major impact on business performance. These studies therefore show that women entrepreneurs spark a positive contribution to business and economic development from many sides. Several studies also

provide stories of successful businesses built by skilled and well-educated female entrepreneurs, such as Setiawati (2014) and Ameen et al. (2021). According to the Indonesian Minister for Women's Empowerment, Bintang Puspayoga (in Laksmanawati et al., 2021), women entrepreneurs have good potential to leave behind the crisis caused by the COVID-19 pandemic because women's strength in the entrepreneurship field is excellent.

A review of the literature on digitalization and women's entrepreneurship identified the need for the integration of the two concepts. Bobade and Shelar (2018) elaborate the powerful impacts of technology on the success of women entrepreneurs around the world. They reveal that digitalization advances mobility and specifically that cloud computing has reduced barriers to entry, enabling women in all parts of the world to start and grow businesses more effectively than ever before. A study from Djakasaputra et al. (2021) also reveals that digital marketing has a significant effect on company growth, especially on sales performance, through the provision of quality service. Similar findings come from Alghizzawi (2019), Alves et al. (2016), and Tiago et al. (2014), who place a high importance on digital marketing in influencing consumer behavior through the use of social media and mobile applications.

Ameen et al. (2021) studied the roles of smartphones and mobile applications in developing strong marketing strategies. They found that both items could provide women entrepreneurs with innovative ways to overcome the challenges faced while running their business. Interestingly, a finding from Olsson and Bernhard (2020) showed that there was no significant gender stereotyping in online platforms, and that women entrepreneurs could obtain the much desired work-life balance.

This study investigates further the practical implications of digitalization on women's entrepreneurship in Indonesia. It explores a particular business, Latifa Indonesia, which has gone beyond simply achieving economic outcomes from digital marketing to provoking women's empowerment in Indonesia. This study not only describes the role of digital marketing in running Latifa Indonesia, it also determines the elements of the strategy's development. Furthermore, there is a discussion of the critical points of implementing digital strategies, capturing the main factors that influence digitalization in women's entrepreneurship, within and beyond the business context.

This study attempts to answer the following two questions: how does Latifa Indonesia use digital platforms as marketing tools and how do digital platforms contribute to the Latifa Indonesia's business? Qualitative study methods are employed to answer these questions through interviews, observation, and

documentation. The study highlights how digital marketing can assist women to contribute to the economy. It has implications for a range of stakeholders to consider women-friendly software in business and provide human resource development to improve the digital literacy of women-led businesses. As Latifa Indonesia is founded by a woman who is actively involved in empowering other women in Indonesia, another key component of this study on how to inspire women to strengthen or start their business through digitalization, including businesses run from home.

After providing a brief review of literature on women's entrepreneurship and digitalization, the authors provide suggestions for women entrepreneurs to establish and maintain productive business activities through digital strategies. This research, focusing on Latifa Indonesia as a leading start-up business, will be beneficial for the development of ideas on how to better utilize digital platforms in developing micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) in Indonesia.

2. Method

2.1. Participants

The study took place in Tangerang, Banten, Indonesia, where the main office of Latifa Indonesia is located. The participants were eighteen people who are involved in the establishment and running of the business: the founder, two administrative staff, ten therapists, and five customers. The study focuses on the development of digital marketing and how it is used in the business. Other information obtained includes the background from the founder regarding building the business and her achievements in establishing the company through digitalization.

2.2. Limitation

This study focuses solely on Latifa Indonesia as the source of information. It also limits the discussion for the use of digital platforms in marketing strategies to develop the prosperity of the business.

2.3. Research Design

This study uses a qualitative case study of the digital marketing strategy implemented by Latifa Indonesia. A case study method is employed because it is a strategy of inquiry in which the researcher explores in depth a program, event, process, or one or more individuals (Creswell, p, 30). In more detail, this study

employs a descriptive case study method, through multiple-case design for answering two research questions. The case study on the use of digital marketing in women's entrepreneurship was synthesized after interviewing, observing the participants, and analysing textual documentation. Interviews included ten in-depth semi-structured interview questions with participants chosen by exempting a purposive data sampling, ensuring that the questions asked were not too rigid. The interviews explored how digitalization has positively impacted the development of Latifa Indonesia as a female-run company.

Interview sessions were conducted by phone and direct communication. Interviews were conducted in the Indonesian language, so used member checking to avoid any misinterpretation. Direct observation was also conducted by visiting Latifa Indonesia's main office to obtain further insights through documents as well as comprehensive information on its digital marketing system. Observation was conducted at Latifa Indonesia's office in Cikupa, Banten, between approximately 9 a.m. and 11 a.m. on weekdays during May 2022. Data was analyzed at the beginning of June 2022.

Careful analysis of interview transcripts was conducted to extract the needed information. The data collected during interviews and observation was analysed using thematic analysis, with data organized categorically and chronologically, reviewed repeatedly, and continually coded (Creswell, p. 184). The taped interviews, field notes, and documents were transcribed verbatim and reviewed regularly. Triangulation and member checking were also employed to ensure internal validity of this study. This done to best converge information from various sources in different ways and times (Creswell & Creswell, 2017, p. 51).

3. Result and Discussion

3.1. The Company Profile

This case study focuses on a service-based business called Latifa Indonesia. Latifa was founded in 2013 by a woman named Verawati. It provides maternal services at home, such as massage therapies for pregnant women and mothers to help them relax, destress, reduce risk and impact of post-natal depression, and relieve back pain. Latifa considers pregnant and post-partum women as the business' target group because they are among those who more likely to experience depression. Latifa has the vision to level up mothers' happiness through massage, because the founder believes mothers are the key aspect in building happiness for the whole family at home. Therefore, Latifa serves mothers, especially those

who are in the postpartum period, to access maternity treatment on demand by ensuring services that are safe and good quality. Latifa also offers other services related to these values, such as private birth classes, doula support, lactation counselling, and psychological counselling. These services are purposively designed to meet mothers' needs in obtaining necessary information to raise their families, with Latifa's slogan being positioned as "joyful mums for a happy family and the civilization starts from a family".

Latifa Indonesia began with the founder's own maternity experience. Verawati suffered from post-partum depression while she breastfed her first child. At the time, Verawati did not know where to find help in obtaining comprehensive information and treatment to comfort herself and find happiness during the breastfeeding period. Instead, she embraced the challenge, and started to explore how to turn it into a business. She named her business Latifa, which means 'softness' in the Arabic language. The name was chosen to offer a source of warmth for mothers' hearts. The main services provided by Latifa Indonesia are wellbeing massages for mothers, babies, and children. Over the past few years, Latifa has also begun providing parental services such as parenting classes and maternal consultation.

Verawati said that Latifa Indonesia was built from a desire to empower women around the community. She recognized that women have many potential aspects to empower themselves in many fields of life. Therefore, she engaged with some unemployed women to support them to becoming therapists with Latifa Indonesia to provide home services for their customers. The women were trained through Latifa Academy. This is all in line with the founder's values of providing prosperity for all women.

At the beginning of its business journey in 2013, Latifa was a small *Muslimah* salon which targeted working- and middle-class communities. The business was a home-based business, with the office located in the founder's house. By 2014, Latifa has progressively evolved by leasing a building in a busier area to reach middle- and upper-class communities. Then, Latifa changed its branding from began a *Muslimah* salon to be a mother and baby spa, and started provided in-home services for customers. At first, all systems – including managerial and marketing – were conducted in a conventional way, such as using printed banner promotion and on-the spot registration. But since 2017, Latifa has digitalized both management and marketing. Latifa established its own website and social media (Facebook and Instagram) accounts, and uses WhatsApp and Google forms for customers to order services.

Figure 1. Latifa Indonesia’s journey



This case has two main points of discussion: digital marketing strategies and its impacts on the company. Both elements show that the implementation of digital marketing follows the company’s development. Digital marketing introduces two important factors that significantly impact the business: simplifying transactions and improving accessibility (Abiodun and Amos, 2018; Mastercard, 2021; Dewi, 2021). By doing so, digitalization helped Verawati and her team discover flexibility in running the business.

3.2. Latifa and women’s empowerment

One of aims of Latifa Indonesia is ensure the business can have a positive impact on many women. Therefore, it aims not only to turn a profit, but also to empower women around it. This is why Latifa does not specify any particular skills needed to sign up to become a therapist with the company, or what Latifa calls a ‘partner’. All kinds of skills and personal characteristics are accepted; the only requirements are that people follow the company rules, such as participating in therapist certification training and showing good behavior. Another reason behind being open to all backgrounds is assist women who need more income to become therapists, which allows them to work without leaving their children for long periods of time. Therefore, Latifa represents a company which allows their employees to have flexibility in their working hours. They also can bring their children to work, as long as they are cooperative during the provision of services to customers.

In other words, Latifa's recruitment aims to achieve women's empowerment. The term 'women's empowerment' itself is a fairly new concept that became popular in the second half of the twentieth century (Mandal, 2013). The word originates from the verb 'to empower', meaning 'to give power to', and was first used in the seventeenth century; the verb also has other meanings like 'authorize', 'delegate', or 'enable' (Mandal, 2013, p. 18). Tandon (2016) argues that women's empowerment often refers to women's ability to make decisions and affect the outcomes of things that are important to themselves and their families (p. 7). Sharma (2007) agrees, saying that empowerment of women may be defined as an increase in participation control and responsibility of women in the various facets that affect their lives (p 16). From those definitions, it can be concluded that women's empowerment is a means through which women can use their abilities and independence in expressing themselves in their lives to achieve wellbeing.

Women's empowerment is crucial for Latifa Indonesia because Verawati, the founder, believes that women must have the chance to express themselves in a positive way. She always says to the therapists and other staff that Latifa is the prominent work in her life to contribute to the of economy. Verawati told the authors, "I established this company, Latifa Indonesia, based on my intention for Indonesian women [to] have an equal opportunity in reaching wellbeing in their life. The main idea provoked me to empower women in Indonesia through what I can do."

Therefore, Latifa Indonesia has become a women-friendly company which intends to cover all the needs of women. This is in line with comments given by one Latifa therapist, who first joined Latifa several years ago. She said, "Latifa has given me a chance to obtain additional income for my family by having flexible time and ways [of working, using only my phone at home]." Another therapist said she was grateful for the chance to join the company: "Latifa has indeed empowered me as a woman. It gives me massage skills that will be beneficial for me to be more independent in the future." At Latifa, the purpose of the massage training is to allow staff to develop new skills, so that the company does not limit them to take orders from other customers beyond Latifa's own customer base.

Through digitalization, Latifa Indonesia allows its female therapists to work from home and with flexible working hours. When there is an order, it means there is an offer. Latifa's staff contact the relevant therapist and connect them to the customer in line with the customer's needs. This sort of digitalization employed by the company has successfully empowered women by focusing on creating flexibility in work. Therefore, the therapists can dedicate themselves to both family and income (Bintang Puspayoga, 2021; Handayani, 2021; Ester, 2012; Hasan and

Almubarok, 2016). This way, digitalization at Latifa Indonesia can be seen as a way of optimalization for women to empower themselves.

3.3. Digital Strategic Marketing

In running the business, Latifa Indonesia uses digital platforms as the marketing strategy to promote its services to the public. It uses a commercial website, Facebook, Instagram, WhatsApp, and Google forms to reach a wider market. Latifa Indonesia advertises itself through its website, Facebook, or Instagram, but orders are placed through WhatsApp, which is considered more accessible for most people in Indonesia. Meanwhile, Google forms are used as a tool for customers to give feedback or complaints regarding Latifa’s services.

According to Chaffey & Bosomworth (2013), the key elements of digital strategy involve revisiting and aligning the main thrust of the marketing strategy in an online context (p. 12). This is similar to what Kingsnorth (2022) says on digital strategies, that they are visions and paths to get where we need to be to achieve what we want to achieve (p. 1). Kingsnorth also mentions that this a part of almost every key business decision from product development and pricing through to public relations and even recruitment. From both definitions, we can see digital marketing is a pathway to promote the development of a business throughout almost the whole process.

The digital marketing approach used by Latifa must work to successfully engage customers and therapists from several places in Indonesia. These include the Greater Jakarta region as well as the nearby cities of Serang, Cilegon, and Bandung. In 2022, Latifa Indonesia has begun to expands its network further, reaching more cities on Java (such as Yogyakarta, Surabaya, Surakarta, and Semarang) as well as cities on other islands (Padang and Palembang). Latifa Indonesia says it aims to provide services in “all cities in Indonesia”.

Figure 2. Mind mapping for expansion through 2022 and beyond.



Figure 3. Service Areas in 2021.



Based on the preceding information, there appears to be a clear positive impact of digitalization on the expansion of Latifa Indonesia. In its first year, 2013, Latifa promoted its services through offline marketing to the surrounding area. The customers were the local people and acquaintances of the founder. When the company changed the strategy into the online system, approximately around the mid of 2017, Latifa’s customers were significantly increased. The power of digital platform has supported Latifa Indonesia to reach a wider area to support its business development. The administrative staffmember who was bridging communication between customers and the service mentioned this change as one of the key influences of the digital strategy. She said as follows:

“Social media such as Facebook and Instagram play an important role to the development of Latifa Indonesia. Most of therapists and customers know about Latifa from both digital platforms. They text me to register or to place an order based on the information they obtained from [digital] media.”

Latifa Indonesia’s digital strategy also allows the company to have many therapists in many different places across Indonesia. The business now has at least 60 therapists in different regions. Although Latifa’s main office is in Banten, it uses a remote system for operations, especially for therapists and customers outside Jakarta. Digital marketing therefore allows Latifa to improve accessibility for customers, meaning that Latifa’s services are not limited to a particular region – as long as there are registered therapists, Latifa services can be accessed within the customers’ region. In other words, accessibility has become the main strength for Latifa in utilizing digital marketing as its primary business strategy.

The easy access of Latifa was explained by one of customers as follow:

“The thing that I like most [about] Latifa besides its therapists’ manner is the ease of placing an order. By only using WhatsApp, I can get the best treatment through the home-based services offered by Latifa.”

Another customer also mentioned her positive experience in using Latifa's services:

“For me, Latifa offered easy access because I did not need to install an application which seemed complicated for me.”

From both comments, it can be seen that a user-friendly platform is a key requirement for successful digital marketing, and that Latifa has tried to fulfil this by using existing platforms rather than creating a new one. Furthermore, using Google forms for customer feedback ensures Latifa is more environmentally friendly by going paperless. Latifa's therapists have no complaints regarding Latifa's digital approach because WhatsApp, as a global communication tool they use to be connected with customers, is an application that they already use in their daily lives.

By using its website, Facebook, and Instagram, Latifa Indonesia also acts as an online media partner to help mothers across Indonesia become happier and more prosperous. Latifa's digital presence opens up an array of opportunities for women in various parts of the country to register as therapists and provide services to Latifa's customers within their local areas. This also means that Latifa does not limit its employee numbers; as long as employees can commit to the vision stated by Latifa, they can join up.

The digital strategy employed has given Latifa the opportunity to significantly expand the business. This can be seen from how Latifa has expanded from one small region in 2013 (Tangerang) into multiple big cities across Indonesia. They have been able to do so through digitalization. Furthermore, new therapists joined Latifa Indonesia thanks to its digital basis, as have new customers, because digital platforms can be accessed by people whenever and wherever. As Drucker (2014) states, entrepreneurial strategies are as important as purposeful innovation and entrepreneurial management (p. 251).

The founder of Latifa, Verawati, told the researchers that she would improve the business' marketing service to its partners. She states aims to add other digital marketing tools to reach people who do not have an Instagram account, for example, saying that using other digital platforms will broaden Latifa's reach, potentially even globally. This is in line with Verawati's dream to see Latifa become a business which can have great impact on many people, by empowering the employees (therapists) and spreading happiness to mothers as the users of Latifa's services.

As mentioned, the digital strategy employed in Latifa Indonesia is not only used to look for customers, but also to recruit therapists. Since its services are spread

out around Indonesia, a digital strategy allows people in all locations to register and become Latifa partners. The registration is done through a digital platform, through which potential partners send their registration data through the website without having to visit the main office in Tangerang. This ensures the recruitment system can be easily reached from anywhere in the country. The ecosystem of digital business as implemented by Latifa can help female entrepreneurship grow in developing economies (Ojo, et al, 2020), by providing more work opportunities for women.

The COVID-19 pandemic has provided Latifa with a great chance to continue developing its marketing through further digitalization. Data from katadata.com on the percentage of mothers exclusively breastfeeding their babies in Jakarta during 2020 reveals that there was an increase in mothers' awareness of the importance of exclusive breastfeeding. This indicates that mothers' awareness is relatively high, which helps Latifa promote its mother-focused services in more areas of Indonesia. According to data from databoks Indonesia (2020), the number of women giving birth also increased in Indonesia in the past two years, reaching four million in 2020. This data could also be of use to Latifa Indonesia. By understanding this data, through social media platforms, Latifa Indonesia promotes the values of breastfeeding to catch up with customers globally.

3.4. Digital Share Values

Latifa Indonesia believes that marketing is not merely about promoting its own services and achieving sales. It is also about sharing values with others. This second element has become a key marketing strategy employed by Latifa through uploading regular positive posts on social media platforms such as Instagram on all topics relating to Latifa's values. This is also a strategy to strengthen Latifa Indonesia's personal branding, by discussing topics regarding mothers' wellbeing and babies' development. For instance, Latifa might raise the topic of breastfeeding and working mothers, which is considered as a crucial topic for working mothers, especially new mothers. Latifa also invites experts to talk during scheduled sessions on Instagram live. These kinds of activities are part of Latifa's strategy to promote the company through its personal branding.

This relates to what Patrutiu-Baltes (2016) says, that, in marketing, the attention paid to the consumer is one of its foundations (p. 61). Patrutiu-Bates also mentions the 'golden rule' practiced by companies in content marketing, where content should be focused 80 percent on providing consumers information and education,

and the rest for sales growth. The educational activities during digital marketing are primarily aimed to build customers' trust and loyalty, which is key in building value to increase company sales.

Latifa Indonesia understands that running a business is not only about earning a profit, but also contributing to social education. Latifa's therapists are also trained in the business' value during initial training, so that they do not only serve customers physically but also educate them emotionally by providing any information they need, such as the lactation process or factors affecting it.

This kind of program is intentionally used by Latifa by employing the Attention, Interest, Desire, and Action (AIDA) approach. According to Hassan, et al. (2015), AIDA has been widely applied in online marketing strategy. By conducting digital events on social media platforms, Latifa Indonesia tries to connect to prospective customers and build their awareness of the services that Latifa offers. Latifa hopes this will influence them to place an order (Mumtaz, 2019, p. 212).

3.5. The Influence of Digitalization on Latifa's Income

The use of social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter as a promotional tool has brought positive impacts to Latifa in the formed of both more therapists and more customers. Digital marketing tools allow Latifa to promote its business into a broader array of areas. Most of Latifa's customers place an order because they heard about the company through social media, primarily Instagram.

Data provided by Latifa Indonesia indicates their customer numbers are increasing each year. Data taken in 2021 show increases of up to 20%, primarily as an impact of digital marketing. Unfortunately, the administrative staff would not share the exact numbers in detail for privacy and confidentiality issues. However, the staff member described that there was an increase of 20% in customers in the last year. The majority ordered lactation massages and accessed the company via their Instagram account.

Latifa's financial reports have also improved with business digitalization, according to the company's finance team. However, the researchers have no access to the financial reports and could merely obtain descriptive information from the finance staff, who state that the significant numbers for company income have increased approximately 10-20 percent per annum following the implementation of digital marketing. A finance staff member described Latifa's income growth as follows:

“Since the use of social media and other digital platform as marketing tools, there has been an improvement in the number of customers, therapists, and also the income. [According to] the latest data, in 2021, it is approximately 10-20 percent [improvement], with the highest [growth] in customers and the greatest use of digital platform is for Instagram. In some cases, we needed to reject orders because of inaccessibility for the therapists to go to the customers’ address.”

This insight reveals that Latifa Indonesia’s use of digital marketing has positively impacted the company. It sparks new customers to place orders and new therapists to register. From the income, it also shows a positive impact that it increases to the level up to 20% each year. The finding reveals that integrating digitalization into the marketing strategies brings strong benefits to Latifa Indonesia, both in terms of users and income (Djakasaputra, et al, 2021).

3.6. Digitalization and Partnership

In 2022, Latifa Indonesia began working together with Kimia Farma, a large state-owned pharmaceutical company in Indonesia, in a joint venture. Latifa becomes a vendor for Kimia Farma to provide massage services for pregnant and post-partum mothers. Latifa staff reported that the partnership came about due to the company’s success with digitalization. The partnership will be beneficial for both Latifa Indonesia and Kimia Farma, especially as Latifa can use the opportunity to expand into other big cities across the country. The founder was very enthusiastic in responding to this partnership because it connects with her dream in sharing happiness to all mothers and empowering Indonesian women through Latifa.

Overall, the experience of Latifa Indonesia indicates that digitalization can help improve a business’ functioning and its impact on society, especially in terms of accessibility. It seems that MSMEs can derive benefits from the fundamental changes in nature of expansion brought about by digitalization (Taiminen & Karjaluoto, 2015). The findings also suggest that digital marketing can posit learning and value creation as a way to develop a strong and productive company (Zahay, 2021).

4. Conclusion

In this paper, we explore the role of digitalization in the establishment and growth of women-led business Latifa Indonesia. By prioritizing the value of women’s empowerment, Latifa is open for all women to register as massage therapists; the only requirement is to undertake training before taking orders. The idea behind

digitalization comes from Latifa's mission to reach all mothers across Indonesia; digital platforms allow the company to fulfil this goal. Latifa is committed to serve pregnant and post-partum mothers with high quality and accessible home-based services, meeting their needs physically and emotionally. Latifa also meets its therapists' income needs, as they can work flexibly and in their home region.

Digitalization has ensured that people to find any information more easily than ever before. Therefore, digital marketing is prominent option to raise a company's profile and gain valuable feedback. Latifa Indonesia has followed this path, employing digital marketing since 2017, when it changed the company's branding. Over time, the strategy has proved to be appealing to its customers. Latifa has seen an increase of approximately 20 percent in the number of customers who order a massage service through the company. The number of registered therapists has also increased from just two people in Tangerang in 2013 to over 60 therapists in 2022, spread across the country. As the numbers of customers increased, so has Latifa's income, with staff indicating that income has been growing by up to 20 percent annually.

Digitalization has also allowed Latifa Indonesia to expand to other regions beyond it's home area of Tangerang. Latifa's geographical expansion is quite significant because, in just five years, Latifa has brought on many therapists in various big cities in Indonesia. It will be likely expand further to other cities, and, in the long term, even overseas.

Although the findings of this research have revealed the positive impacts on digitalization, not all elements are always positive. Based on the observation of Latifa Indonesia, some still resists specific points such as customers' sharing of feedback. For instance, digitalization is intended to not merely be used as a marketing tool; it will be more valuable if a digital approach is also used for providing feedback for its improvement, such as asking about customer satisfaction or suggestions. In other words, the great influence of digitalization can be a way to build a robust company in maximizing the services to the end users. However, this element is, in some cases, is avoided, meaning that digitalization is not only creating a solution for marketing but in fact causing new problems if digital approaches are only implemented in the context of services.

The other point to be highlighted in the context of using digital marketing is regarding the cost. Based on information obtained from the founder, Latifa Indonesia does not have its own smartphone application because of the cost. Application developers charge high fees, making it unaffordable for Latifa. This issue could become a concern for the government to regulate the policy for MSMEs, by increasing the possibility of providing more affordable support services. In

terms of impact, this would improve accessibility and help develop the Indonesian economy as a whole.

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