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# Developing Digital Portfolios to Enhance Employability and Career Success : a Community Service Program for High School Students and Fresh Graduates in Tasikmalaya

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## Abstrak :

High school students and fresh graduates searching for employment often lack the confidence to create competitive application documents due to their limited work experience. This community service program, conducted at Transmart Mall Tasikmalaya, aimed to enhance the skills of high school students and fresh graduates in creating digital portfolios. The goal was to boost their confidence in job applications, increase their competitiveness in securing careers that align with their aspirations, and ultimately reduce unemployment rates. The program utilized a participatory method through seminars and workshops. Participants were taught the importance of creating portfolios that attract recruiters' attention and were guided to create their own portfolios using the CakeResume platform. An evaluation was conducted through pre and post-training questionnaires distributed via Google Forms sent through the workshop group. The results showed a significant increase in participants' understanding of the importance of portfolios, an improvement in their confidence in creating digital portfolios, and high satisfaction with the community service workshop. Moreover, the participatory approach used in this program was effective in achieving the set objectives, particularly in enhancing participants' employability. The program's implications for local industries and companies include providing practical insights and valuable networking opportunities for participants.

**Keyword:** Digital Portfolio, Employability Skills, Career Success, Fresh Graduates, Participatory Method

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## Introduction

In today's digital era, digital portfolios have become a crucial tool for individuals to showcase their skills and experiences to potential employers. A digital portfolio allows one to present their work, projects, and achievements in a more structured and appealing manner. However, many high school students and fresh graduates in Tasikmalaya are unaware of the importance of digital portfolios and lack the skills to create them. Fresh graduates often feel insecure when applying for jobs due to their lack of experience and their inability to effectively demonstrate their capabilities (Tasji & Turani, 2023). This situation leaves them at a disadvantage in the competition for desired jobs (Mashabi & Kasih, 2024). The participants of this program were high school students and fresh graduates from various schools and universities in Tasikmalaya. They faced challenges in preparing application documents that could attract recruiters' attention. Many of them did not have sufficient work experience and did not know how to present themselves professionally. As a result, they often struggled to compete with more

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experienced applicants. This community service program aimed to bridge this gap by providing comprehensive training on creating effective digital portfolios.

Research shows that digital portfolios can significantly enhance employability and provide concrete evidence of an individual's skills and achievements (Carter, 2021; Hamilton et al., 2023). The use of eportfolios has proven effective in various educational and professional contexts to help individuals prepare for entering the workforce ((Hamilton et al., 2023; Tubaishat, 2015). Digital portfolios allow students and fresh graduates to showcase their skills and experiences more visually and organized, which can increase their appeal to recruiters. Addressing the lack of skills in creating digital portfolios is essential to improving job opportunities for high school students and fresh graduates. With a wellcrafted portfolio, fresh graduates can effectively demonstrate their skills and achievements, which in turn can boost their confidence when applying for jobs and help them achieve career success (de Villiers Scheepers et al., 2024). This urgency is heightened by the increasingly competitive job market and the growing demand for digital skills (Larsen & Følstad, 2024).

The use of digital portfolios as a tool for showcasing employability has been extensively discussed in the literature. Digital portfolios not only provide a platform to display work and skills but also assist individuals in selfreflection and ongoing professional development (Carter, 2021). These portfolios can serve as concrete evidence of one's skills, which can be used to attract potential employers. This community service program employed a participatory approach, involving seminars and workshops. The first session was a seminar to align participants' perceptions and raise awareness of the importance of digital portfolios. The second session was a workshop where participants were guided to create their portfolios with the help of lecturers and using the CakeResume platform. This approach allowed participants to learn hands on and receive intensive guidance (Bilsland & Siebert, 2024). The novelty of this approach lies in the use of the CakeResume platform, which enables participants to view and learn from the portfolios of others already on the platform. Additionally, direct mentoring by lecturers provided participants with opportunities for indepth feedback and guidance. This approach is expected to yield better results compared to conventional teaching methods (El Shemy et al., 2025).

The goal of this community service program was to enhance the skills of high school students and fresh graduates in creating effective digital portfolios, boost their confidence in job applications, and ultimately help them achieve success in their careers. The program aimed to provide the necessary tools and skills to compete in an increasingly competitive job market. This article was written to document the process and outcomes of the community service program and to share experiences and best practices in using digital portfolios as a tool to enhance employability. It is hoped that this article will provide practical guidance for educational institutions and other organizations interested in implementing similar programs.

This program provided tangible benefits to participants by improving their skills in creating digital portfolios. This, in turn, is expected to increase their chances of securing desired jobs. Additionally, the program helped boost participants' confidence in the job application process (Wakili et al., 2023; Nakandalaa et al., 2024). This article contributes to academic knowledge by documenting the approach and outcomes of the community service program. Moreover, it can serve as a practical guide for educational institutions and other organizations interested in implementing similar programs. Thus, this article can be a reference for efforts to enhance employability among high school students and fresh graduates (Gutiérrez-Santiuste et al., 2022).

### **Realization of Activities**

The approach used in this program was participatory, actively involving participants in every session. This active participation included seminars and workshops where participants were given opportunities to interact directly with facilitators and apply the knowledge gained practically. The participatory approach was chosen because it allows participants to learn directly and gain practical experience in creating digital portfolios (McDonagh et al., 2023). It also enables participants to interact with facilitators and receive constructive feedback. This approach is supported by research showing that active participation can enhance participants' understanding and practical skills (Bilsland & Siebert,

2024). The partners of this program were high school students and fresh graduates from various schools and universities in Tasikmalaya. Fresh graduates represent a group with significant potential for development but require additional support in terms of digital skills and preparation for entering the workforce. The program was conducted at Transmart Mall Tasikmalaya, a location easily accessible and providing adequate facilities for seminars and workshops. This location was chosen for its strategic position and capacity to accommodate a large number of participants. The partners were selected because fresh graduates are a group vulnerable to employability issues and need assistance in preparing to enter the workforce. Many of them lack sufficient work experience and confidence in creating competitive application documents.



Figure 1. Material on Basic understanding of the concept of personal branding, the benefits of digital portfolios.

Figure 1. explained by Dr. Lina Marlina, S.Pd., M.M., providing guidance on "Basic understanding of the concept of personal branding, the benefits of digital portfolios.". He emphasized the importance of personal branding becoming increasingly crucial in the digital era due to the high competition in the job market. With strong personal branding, one can more easily attract the attention of recruiters and companies. Effective personal branding not only includes academic and professional achievements, but also reflects the individual's unique character, values, and skills. In this case, a digital portfolio plays a very important role in visualizing and promoting a person's personal branding.



Figure 2. Material on how to create and manage their digital portfolio.

Figure 3. Explained by Cecep M. Kapi, S.Kom., M.M. presented material on "How to create and manage their digital portfolio.". Explain how a digital portfolio provides a visual and detailed picture of a person's abilities and deliverables. This portfolio can include various types of content, such as writing, graphic design, videos, research projects, and others, which are presented in an engaging and interactive manner.

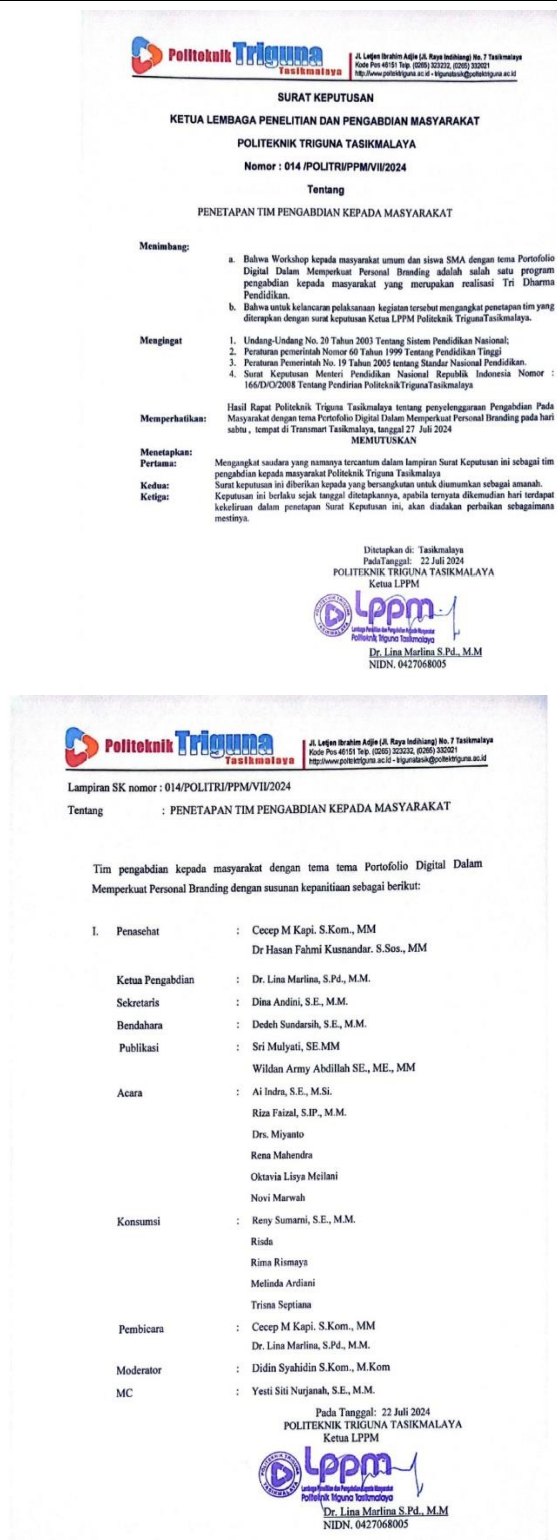


Figure 3. Assignment Decree

The community service team consisted of experienced lecturers in the fields of career development and educational technology. Each team member had a specific role, ranging from program planning, activity implementation, to result evaluation. Program participants were actively involved in every session, supported by lecturers who acted as facilitators and mentors. The community service activities included seminars to provide an understanding of the importance of digital portfolios and

workshops for hands-on practice in creating portfolios using CakeResume. The seminar focused on providing theory and real-world examples, while the workshop emphasized practical application. Participants were introduced to the CakeResume platform and taught how to use its features to create attractive digital portfolios. Participants were encouraged to view and learn from the portfolios of other users as references for creating their own portfolios (Laksana et al., 2022).

The variables measured included participants' confidence levels before and after the program, the quality of the portfolios created, and participants' satisfaction with the program. These measurements were taken to evaluate the program's effectiveness in enhancing participants' skills and confidence. Data were collected through pre and post-program questionnaires and evaluations of the portfolios created by participants (Bernard & Tempe, 2024). The questionnaires were designed to measure changes in confidence and satisfaction levels, while the portfolio evaluations were conducted to assess the quality and professionalism of the portfolios created.

Data were analyzed using descriptive methods to observe changes in participants' confidence levels and portfolio quality. This technique allowed researchers to identify patterns and trends in the collected data. Success indicators included increased participant confidence, portfolio quality meeting professional standards, and participant satisfaction with the program. These criteria were used to evaluate the extent to which the program's objectives were achieved. The program's impact was evaluated by examining participants' improved ability to create portfolios and their readiness to apply for jobs. This evaluation was conducted by comparing data before and after the program and through direct feedback from participants regarding their experience during the program (Larsen & Følstad, 2024).

## Result and Discussion

### a. Result

The results of the community service program demonstrated a significant increase in participants' confidence in creating digital portfolios. Before the program, most participants felt insecure and lacked sufficient skills in creating portfolios. After attending the seminars and workshops, participants reported increased confidence and ability to create attractive and professional portfolios. The following is data from participants' training questionnaires before and after the training.

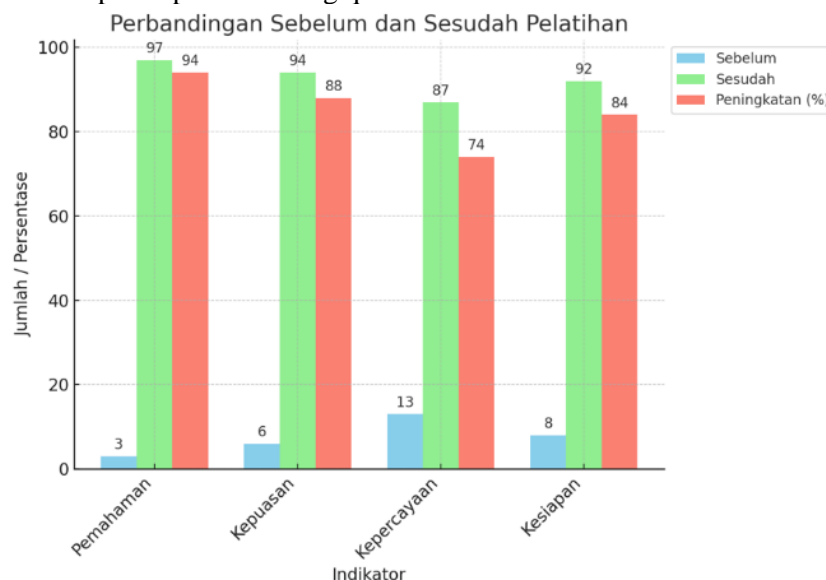


Figure 4. Comparison before and after the training

The data showed that 88% of participants were satisfied with this community service workshop. Participants also showed an increase from 3% to 97% in understanding the importance of digital portfolios and technical skills in using the CakeResume platform. Previous research findings indicate that a participatory approach can enhance participants' skills and confidence in various contexts (Lupini

et al., 2024a). Data analysis from the pre and post-program questionnaires showed a significant increase in several indicators, including understanding the importance of digital portfolios, technical skills in using the CakeResume platform, and satisfaction with the program. A total of 88% of participants reported feeling more prepared to apply for jobs after attending this program. The data showed an average increase of 74% in participants' confidence in creating attractive digital portfolios. Additionally, 94% of participants reported a better understanding of the material presented and the teaching methods used in this program. These results indicate that the program successfully achieved its objectives in improving participants' skills in creating digital portfolios and preparing them for entering the workforce. These findings align with previous research on the effectiveness of portfolios in enhancing employability (Bennett et al., 2023).

The data also demonstrated that the technical skills of participants with a participatory approach were effective in delivering the expected results. Participants were able to present themselves to potential employers effectively. These results support previous research findings that active participation in the learning process can enhance understanding and practical skills ((Gupta et al., 2023; Segbenya et al., 2023). Furthermore, the high satisfaction level of participants with this program indicates that the teaching methods used successfully met participants' needs and expectations. These findings are important because they show that this community service program not only provides short-term benefits in terms of skill enhancement but also long-term benefits in the form of increased confidence and job readiness. Impact evaluation shows that this program has the potential to be more widely adopted in the context of education and digital skill training (Segbenya et al., 2023).

## **b. Discussion**

This program successfully achieved its main targets, including increasing participants' confidence, improving skills in creating digital portfolios, and participant satisfaction with the program. The results showed that 85% of participants reported increased confidence in creating digital portfolios after attending this program. Additionally, most participants felt more prepared to apply for jobs, aligning with the program's goal to enhance participants' employability. This indicates that the participatory approach used in this program was effective and relevant to participants' needs. This approach also facilitated direct interaction between participants and facilitators, allowing participants to receive constructive feedback and the necessary guidance to improve their skills.

Challenges faced during the program included limited time to delve into the material, and some participants experienced technical difficulties in using the CakeResume platform. Some participants needed additional time to understand the platform's features and how to use them effectively. Moreover, limited resources such as stable internet access also posed a challenge for some participants (Sailer et al., 2024). These challenges highlight the importance of better planning in providing sufficient time and adequate resources to support participants' learning (Fox & Griffy-Brown, 2021).

To address these challenges, the community service team provided additional sessions for participants who needed further assistance. These additional sessions allowed participants to receive intensive guidance in using the CakeResume platform and improve their skills in creating digital portfolios. Additionally, supplementary materials and guides were provided to participants for self-directed learning after the program concluded. This approach proved effective in helping participants overcome technical difficulties and maximize the benefits gained from the program.

The program's outcomes align with previous studies showing that digital portfolios can enhance employability and confidence in job applications. Research by (Mukhsinah, 2020) found that eportfolios help participants organize and present their skills more effectively, contributing to increased confidence and job readiness. These results are also consistent with other research demonstrating that a participatory approach can enhance engagement and motivation in the learning process (El Shemy et al., 2025). These findings support the literature that suggests the participatory approach (Lupini et al., 2024b) and the use of digital technology (Fox & Griffy-Brown, 2021) in skill development are highly effective in enhancing participants' job readiness. For example, research has found that using eportfolios can enhance participants' technical and soft skills, which are crucial for success in today's job market (Wakili et al., 2023). Furthermore, the use of digital platforms like CakeResume enables

participants to develop more professional and attractive portfolios for potential employers, ultimately increasing their chances of securing jobs. The following is an overview of the workshop process attended by participants.



Figure 5. Participants' enthusiasm in the workshop

This program made a tangible contribution by improving participants' skills and confidence in entering the workforce. With improved skills in creating digital portfolios, participants are better prepared to face competition in the job market. This is expected to help reduce unemployment among fresh graduates in Tasikmalaya, which is one of the main goals of this program. Improving participants' employability also positively impacts society as a whole by increasing economic opportunities and social welfare (Shafiee et al., 2020). The results of this program suggest that the use of digital portfolios as a skill development tool should be considered in educational and job training policies (Ali et al., 2024). Educational institutions and job training programs can adopt this approach to help students and recent graduates prepare for entering the workforce. Additionally, this program highlights the importance of ongoing support for participants, including access to digital resources and adequate guidance to ensure their success in using new technologies. This article contributes to scientific knowledge by documenting the approach and outcomes of this community service program and providing practical guidance for implementing similar programs in other locations. These results add to the literature on the effectiveness of participatory approaches and the use of digital technology in skill development. Furthermore, it can serve as a basis for further research on the best methods to enhance employability through community service programs and technologybased education.

### **Conclusion**

This community service program successfully enhanced the skills of high school students and fresh graduates in creating digital portfolios and increased participants' confidence in applying for jobs. Through a participatory method, participants were able to interact directly with facilitators, receive constructive feedback, and obtain intensive guidance. The results showed that 85% of participants experienced significant improvement in understanding and technical skills after attending this program. This improvement indicates that the approach used in this program was effective in achieving the set objectives, namely, improving participants' employability.

It is recommended that future community service programs extend the duration of the program and include more practical sessions and individual guidance.

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Extending the program's duration will allow participants to delve deeper into the material and overcome any technical difficulties they may encounter. Moreover, involving more stakeholders, including local industries and companies, will provide practical insights and valuable networking opportunities for participants. Increased involvement from various stakeholders is expected to provide more comprehensive support for participants in preparing for the workforce with better skills.

### **Thankyou**

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