

The Implementation of MSME Marketing Strategies in Indonesia and Malaysia: An Effort to Develop Teaching Materials for Students

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Abstract.

Global Marketing Strategy Management for Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) in Developing Countries, Specifically Malaysia and Indonesia, plays a crucial role in supporting the economic growth of both nations. Malaysia, with its diverse ethnic composition—including Malays, Chinese, and Indians—and the establishment of the National Entrepreneur and SME Development Council (NESDC) in 2004, has successfully fostered MSME growth, achieving an average annual growth rate of 4.9%. On the other hand, Indonesia, which has the largest number of MSMEs in the world, contributing up to 60% of its GDP, also shows immense potential in this sector. However, there is a notable gap in practical understanding of marketing strategies and pricing decisions within MSMEs, particularly in academic settings in Malaysia, as observed at Lincoln University College (LUC). This research aims to provide a deeper insight into the implementation of MSME marketing strategies in Indonesia and Malaysia, and to develop a textbook that can serve as a guide for students in determining pricing and marketing strategies for new ventures. The activities include delivering material on marketing strategies in both countries and preparing a textbook that explores the aspects of marketing and pricing in depth. Expected outcomes include the publication of scholarly articles, educational videos, and a textbook that can serve as a reference for MSME development. Through this initiative, it is expected that students at LUC will enhance their knowledge of MSMEs in both countries and gain an understanding of the differences and similarities in marketing strategies implemented in Indonesia and Malaysia..

Keywords: Marketing strategy; pricing; entrepreneurship education; international collaboration and global marketing.

I. INTRODUCTION

Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) play a vital role in the economies of developing countries, including Malaysia and Indonesia. Both nations share similar social structures, consisting of diverse ethnic and cultural groups, which influence the management and marketing approaches of MSMEs. Malaysia, with its ethnic diversity—including Malays, Chinese, and Indians—and its administrative division into 13 states, has demonstrated significant progress in MSME development. The establishment of the National Entrepreneur and SME Development Council (NESDC) in 2004 was a strategic move by the Malaysian government to stimulate growth in the MSME sector. With an average annual growth rate of 4.9% for MSMEs, the Malaysian government continues to support capacity building through policies that focus on fostering new entrepreneurs and enhancing technology for product development and marketing (Zahrah, 2024). On the other hand, Indonesia, with a total of 65.4 million MSMEs in 2022, plays a significant role in the national economy, contributing up to 60% to the Gross Domestic Product (GDP). The use of technology in marketing, such as social media, e-commerce, and instant messaging apps, has been rapidly growing, presenting both opportunities and challenges for MSMEs to compete in the global market. Along with this growth, both countries face challenges in implementing effective marketing strategies for MSMEs that can support the sustainable development of their businesses.

At Lincoln University College (LUC), Malaysia, there is a significant need to provide students, particularly those in the Business and Accounting fields, with a deeper understanding of MSME marketing strategies in developing countries, especially through a comparison of practices between Indonesia and

Malaysia. The key issue in teaching marketing strategies is the lack of knowledge-sharing on marketing strategies between developing countries, such as Indonesia. Students are unaware of the practical process of building a business, specifically MSMEs, and are unfamiliar with the standard procedures or documents related to MSME products. While students in the course study marketing theories specific to their own countries, practical applications on MSMEs in their respective nations have not been adequately addressed. The solution, as discussed, is to provide knowledge on the implementation and evaluation of marketing strategies for MSMEs in both Indonesia and Malaysia for international students at LUC, Malaysia. This activity is expected to broaden the international perspective of business and administration students at LUC. Students will gain knowledge, including marketing strategies and current case studies along with practical insights that are not yet well-known to Malaysian students. As a result, a more enhanced learning quality will be achieved.

Furthermore, this international service initiative can strengthen the collaboration and partnership between Malaysian higher education institutions, particularly LUC. The outcome of this program will be a textbook that illustrates MSME marketing strategies in Indonesia and Malaysia. The discussion on marketing strategies in the developing countries of Indonesia and Malaysia can also be linked to their respective cultures and will provide insights into strategies that can be applied when engaging in international trade between these two countries. The international community service partnership aims to provide both theoretical and practical knowledge related to product marketing strategies, particularly at the MSME level. In addition, students are equipped with information about the similarities and differences in the conditions and marketing strategies of MSMEs in Indonesia and Malaysia. Students are also given knowledge about the legal standards for distributing MSME products. Furthermore, there will be a discussion session that not only covers the marketing strategies and challenges of MSMEs in Indonesia and Malaysia, but also those from the countries of origin of LUC's international students. After this activity, it is expected that LUC Malaysia students will be able to compare global marketing strategies with those of developing countries, using case studies from Indonesia and Malaysia. With this knowledge, students will also be able to understand how to approach marketing when aiming to introduce products to Indonesia. Marketing is not just about selling; it's a comprehensive strategic function that aligns the entire organization with customer needs, ensuring sustainable growth. Through effective marketing, businesses can engage customers in meaningful ways, creating loyalty and long-term value.

American Marketing Association (AMA) (AMA, 2015): "Marketing is the activity, set of institutions, and processes for creating, communicating, delivering, and exchanging offerings that have value for customers, clients, partners, and society at large. Effective marketing extends beyond product creation to encompass the strategic communication of value (Ballantyne et al., 2011). This involves crafting compelling narratives and utilizing diverse channels, such as advertising, social media, and public relations, to highlight a product's benefits and uniqueness. Marketing in the Digital, as the evolution of marketing has moved from a product-centric to a customer-centric approach, and now, to an era dominated by digital transformation. Technology has redefined how businesses engage with customers, offering deeper insights into their behaviors, preferences, and needs (Gupta & Ramachandran, 2021; Melović et al., 2020; Ziłkowska, 2021). The widespread adoption of digital tools—like social media, mobile apps, and data analytics—has empowered brands to interact with customers in real-time, enabling highly personalized marketing strategies. This shift from mass marketing to personalization allows companies to tailor their messages and offerings, making every customer interaction more relevant and impactful. Good Manufacturing Practice (GMP) is a guideline for the food industry on how to produce food properly in accordance with regulations to produce high-quality products that meet consumer demands. In Indonesia, GMP is known as Cara Produksi Makanan Yang Baik (CPMB) and has been introduced by Departemen Kesehatan RI since 1978 through Surat Keputusan Menteri Kesehatan RI No.23/MEN.KES/SK/I/1978 about Pedoman Cara Produksi Yang Baik untuk Makanan.

Then the regulation was developed into the Guidelines for the Implementation of Good Manufacturing Practices by Direktorat Jenderal Pengawasan Obat dan Makanan Departemen Kesehatan RI in 1996 (Ali et al., 2020). The implementation of Good Manufacturing Practices (GMP) provides several key

benefits. First, it assures consumers that the products they are about to consume meet the required safety and health standards. This, in turn, increases consumer trust in both the safety of the products and the overall production process. Additionally, GMP helps reduce losses and waste of raw materials, energy, and other resources by minimizing the occurrence of returned products that are damaged before their expiration date. It also gives business operators confidence in running their operations efficiently. Finally, GMP ensures that products comply with the applicable regulatory requirements, fostering a higher level of accountability and standardization in the manufacturing process (Integrated Assessment Services Indonesia, 2020). Small Micro and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) in Indonesia are a type of business with an important role in economic growth. MSMEs in Indonesia at the end of 2022 can contribute to the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of 61% and 16.65% of national export income and can absorb 97% of labor in Indonesia (Juwitasari, 2023). The growth in number of MSMEs in Indonesia is growing every year, in 2022 according to ukmindonesia.id data, there have been 8.71 million new MSMEs registering their businesses through the Online Single Submission – Risk Based Approach (OSS RBA) platform.

MSMEs in Indonesia not only contribute to the GDP sector but also help overcome labor problems. Starting in 2015 Indonesia has been able to absorb a workforce of 70 million workers. The most MSME sectors are service business, distribution, manufacturing, agribusiness, and retail business (Aryadi & Hoesin, 2022). The regulations that underlie MSME activities are Law No. 20 of 2008 concerning MSMEs and PP No. 7 of 2021 concerning the convenience, protection, and empowerment of cooperatives and MSMEs. In Indonesia, Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) are defined under Law No. 20 of 2008 on Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises, with criteria based on assets and annual sales turnover. Micro Enterprises are classified as those with assets up to IDR 50 million (excluding land and buildings) and an annual turnover of up to IDR 300 million. Small Enterprises, on the other hand, have assets ranging from IDR 50 million to IDR 500 million, with annual sales between IDR 300 million and IDR 2.5 billion. Lastly, Medium Enterprises are defined as having assets between IDR 500 million and IDR 10 billion, with annual turnover ranging from IDR 2.5 billion to IDR 50 billion. In Indonesia, SMEs are equally crucial to the country's economic stability, contributing approximately 60% to the national GDP and employing around 97% of the workforce (Kementerian Koordinator Perekonomian, 2022). SMEs form the backbone of Indonesia's informal economy and play a key role in poverty alleviation, job creation, and national economic resilience. Their economic contribution is particularly significant in sectors like agriculture, retail, and manufacturing, with their impact being most pronounced in rural areas where they drive local economic activities. Similar to Malaysia, SMEs in Indonesia are essential for job creation, employing a large portion of the labor force, especially in informal sectors.

This creates numerous job opportunities that help combat unemployment and poverty, particularly in smaller towns and rural areas. While SMEs in Indonesia are involved in innovation, the country faces challenges related to access to technology and capital for growth. Despite these challenges, Indonesian SMEs continue to contribute to the entrepreneurial landscape by adapting to market trends and creating new products, especially in the consumer goods and services sectors. Moreover, SMEs are pivotal to regional development in Indonesia, playing an active role in local initiatives and driving economic activities in less developed regions, thereby contributing to more balanced growth across the nation. In Malaysia, the definition of Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) is outlined by the Small and Medium Enterprises Development Bank Malaysia (SME Bank) (SME Bank, 2024). The classification is based on the size of the business in terms of annual sales turnover and the number of full-time employees. Micro-enterprises are defined as those with a sales turnover of RM 300,000 or below and fewer than 5 employees. Small Enterprises, on the other hand, have a sales turnover ranging from RM 300,001 to RM 15 million and employ between 5 to 75 full-time staff. Lastly, Medium Enterprises are characterized by a sales turnover of RM 15.01 million to RM 50 million, with a workforce of 76 to 200 employees. In Malaysia, Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) play a vital role in both local and national economies, serving as the backbone of the economy. They contribute approximately 38.3% to the country's GDP and account for 66% of total employment (Mohamad et al., 2021). SMEs are particularly important for regional economic development, as they help create job opportunities and reduce income inequality across different states.

Their economic contribution is substantial, especially in sectors such as manufacturing, services, and retail, where they are able to quickly adapt to market changes and innovate. SMEs are also a major source of employment, providing jobs to a large portion of the workforce, particularly in rural and underserved areas where they often serve as key employers. In addition, Malaysian SMEs are crucial for fostering innovation and entrepreneurship, with many involved in new product development, technology adoption, and exploring niche markets. Furthermore, they play an essential role in regional development by stimulating local demand for products and services and improving infrastructure in local communities. Women entrepreneurs are playing an increasingly important role in driving global economic growth and social development. Their businesses, particularly in developing countries, contribute significantly to poverty reduction and economic empowerment (GEM, 2022). However, they still face substantial challenges, including limited access to finance, societal expectations, and insufficient infrastructure. Gender biases in the financial sector make it harder for women to secure funding (World Bank, 2022), and balancing business responsibilities with family duties remains a significant obstacle (World Economic Forum, 2024). Despite these challenges, the rise of digital technology has opened new opportunities for women, enabling them to access global markets and innovate more easily. This is especially impactful in low-income countries, where traditional business models may be less effective (World Economic Forum, 2024). Supporting women entrepreneurs through targeted financial aid, community support, and better access to technology can help them overcome these barriers. By doing so, we can unlock their full potential, which will contribute to wider economic and social development (World Bank, 2022).

II. METHODS

2.1 Materials

a) Presentation Materials

The community service team conducted a discussion regarding the syllabi at LUC and UDINUS. The outcome of the discussion led to the selection of the study topics to be presented. By considering the syllabi of both universities—Universitas Dian Nuswantoro Semarang (UDINUS) and Lincoln University College Malaysia—the material was determined to include the development of MSMEs in Indonesia and Malaysia, the process of MSME legality in Indonesia, specifically regarding Food and Beverage products, as well as a comparison of local and global marketing strategies for MSMEs in both countries. The legal procedures for MSMEs in Indonesia refer to the regulations for obtaining BPOM (Food and Drug Authority) and PIRT (Traditional Food Registration) certifications.

b) Textbook Chapter

The textbook titled "Marketing and MSME Dynamics in Indonesia and Malaysia: Strategies, Challenges, and Cultural Influences" has been developed as both a theoretical and practical guide to understanding MSME marketing in the two countries. This book integrates strategic marketing approaches, public policy aspects, and the socio-cultural influences on the development of small and medium enterprises. It is intended to serve as a sustainable learning reference, particularly for students in the fields of business and management.

c) Assignment

Before the presentation of the material, international students at Lincoln University College Malaysia were given assignments related to the development, strategies, and challenges faced by MSMEs in developing countries. Students were allowed to choose the country of origin relevant to their studies. They were tasked with preparing a presentation, lasting approximately 15 minutes, to facilitate interaction during the session. During the activity, students also took a pre-test to assess their knowledge of MSMEs in Indonesia and Malaysia. In the final session of the program, before the post-test, students presented the results of the assignments they had completed.

d) Evaluation Instruments

The evaluation instruments used were quizzes based on Google Forms, consisting of 20 multiple-choice questions. Evaluation was conducted through pre-tests and post-tests to measure the improvement in participants' understanding of the material presented. The analysis of the evaluation results includes the

number of correct answers, the percentage of score improvement, and qualitative feedback as indicators of the effectiveness of the learning activity.

1.1. Methods

a) Preparation Stage

This stage consists of initial coordination and brainstorming with LUC, Malaysia. The coordination activities are related to the preparation of the proposal. The first step involves identifying the goals and objectives to be achieved in this program. The community service team held discussions regarding the syllabi at LUC and UDINUS. The outcome of these discussions led to the determination of the location for the activity, the target group, and the topics to be covered. After the initial coordination, the next stage is a needs analysis, which ensures that the activities align with the needs of the students. Once the needs analysis was completed, the implementation team coordinated with faculty members at LUC to develop a detailed plan for the activities, including scheduling and the selection of methods that would be used during the service, as well as the division of responsibilities among the team members involved.

b) Implementation

The activity was held at Lincoln University College, Malaysia, on Wednesday, February 5, 2025, from 1:00 PM to 5:30 PM. The event was attended by 6 faculty members from LUC and 29 international students. The implementation of the activity was divided into two sessions: the first session was a brainstorming meeting at LUC, and the second was an educational session for the students. The brainstorming session took place in the morning, prior to the educational session for the students. During the brainstorming session, we discussed the curricula and project-based programs of both LUC and UDINUS. The community service team also handed over the textbook, as one of the outcomes of the service, to the assistant pro dean at LUC, Malaysia.

Following this, the educational session was conducted by presenting materials to the LUC students using PowerPoint, based on the topics we had previously discussed. The content presented was aligned with the findings that had been compiled in the textbook. The implementation stages of the program are as follows:

Table 1. Program Implementation

Activity	Media
Discussion between the proposal team and marketing course lecturers at LUC, Malaysia	Zoom Discussion: Presentation of the marketing course syllabus Preparation of material Chapter of the textbook Pre-test Assignment for LUC students
Discussion on the growth and challenges of MSMEs in Malaysia and Indonesia, as well as the analysis of the role of stakeholders in MSME performance	Presentation of case study results in Indonesia and Malaysia
Presentation of comparative marketing strategies for MSME products in Indonesia and Malaysia in the domestic and global markets	Case Study Results in Indonesia Media: PowerPoint
Material on standards and health marketing policies for MSMEs, specifically in the culinary sector in Indonesia	Procedure for BPOM and PIRT (licensing) of food and beverage products
Discussion on the development, strategies, and challenges faced by MSMEs in developing countries	Analysis of MSMEs in the home countries of international students at LUC and presentation of results.

c) Evaluation

The stages of the activity related to monitoring and evaluation of the program are explained in the table below:

Table 2. Monitoring and Evaluation

Activity	Measurement	Success Indicator
Dynamics of MSMEs in Indonesia and Malaysia: Strategies and Challenges	Attendance List, Pretest and Posttest Activities	Increase in understanding and knowledge based on pretest and posttest scores
Comparison of MSME Strategies in Indonesia and Malaysia	Attendance List, Pretest and Posttest Activities	Increase in understanding and knowledge based on pretest and posttest scores
Procedure for product legality in the culinary business	Understanding the process and registration procedure for BPOM and PIRT	Increase in knowledge based on pretest and posttest scores
Dynamics of MSMEs in Developing Countries	Presentation of Case Study Results by International Students	Ability to present the development of MSMEs in their home countries

After the activity was completed, feedback will be collected from both the participants and the faculty members at LUC. Following this, a report will be prepared, including the minutes of the implementation and the summary of the community service outcomes. Additionally, as part of the program's sustainability, a Guest Lecture was conducted by Dayangku Azriani for the course on Financial Management.

III. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

a) The outcome of the community service program conducted by the team is an increased understanding among the students of Lincoln University College (LUC), Malaysia, regarding the marketing strategies of MSME products in Indonesia and Malaysia. The material presented included topics such as the development of MSMEs in Indonesia from both academic and practical perspectives, as well as the legal procedures for obtaining distribution permits in the food and beverage sector. In this program, the team also provided comparative knowledge on MSMEs in Indonesia and Malaysia, considering cultural factors, market influences, and innovations adopted by MSMEs in both countries. In the initial phase, discussions were held with the course lecturers for marketing at LUC Malaysia to present the objectives of the activity and to formulate an implementation approach that was tailored to the context of MSMEs in both countries. An overview of the activities is shown in Figure 1.

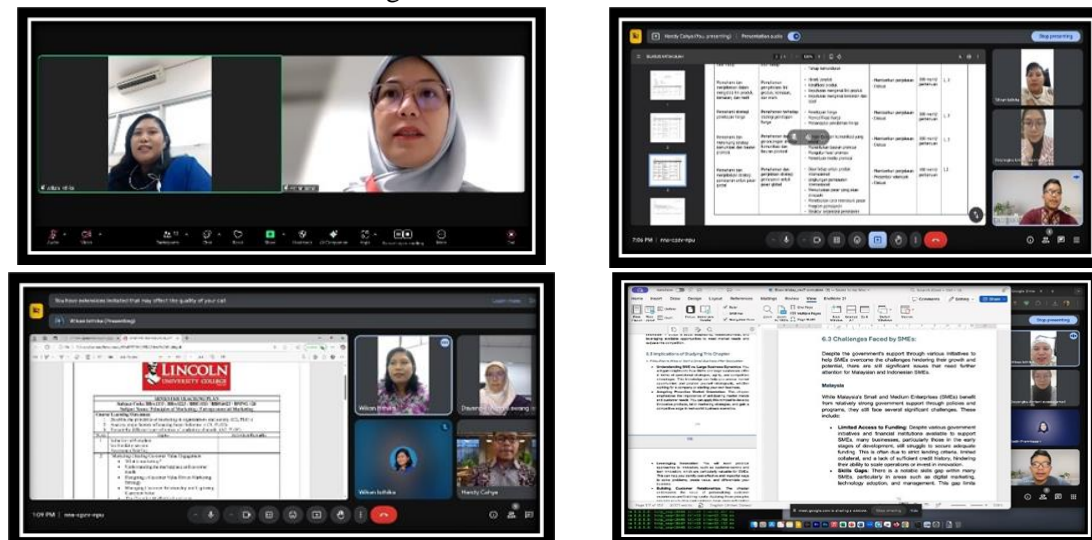


Fig 1. Coordination with the marketing course lecturers at LUC, Malaysia, regarding Global Marketing Strategies.

b) Presentation on the Development of MSMEs from Both Academic and Practical Perspectives in Indonesia and Malaysia. In this session, the knowledge shared focused on the use of information technology systems in Indonesia, as well as the strategies and human resource management practices that drive MSMEs. Further, students were provided with information on how MSMEs in Indonesia fulfill their tax obligations and prepare financial reports for their businesses. The session also discussed the extent of MSME development that has adopted Sharia-compliant systems in their operations. In addition to these topics, the session also highlighted the role of women in MSMEs in Malaysia. The documentation of the activity is shown in Figure 2.

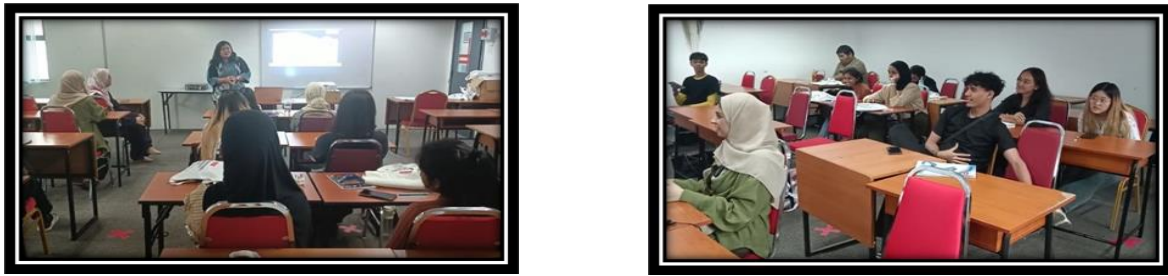


Fig 2. The Development of MSMEs in Indonesia and Malaysia

c) Further Presentation on Marketing Strategies for MSME Products in Indonesia, Both in the Domestic and Global Markets. This presentation aimed to provide an introductory understanding of the dynamics of MSME marketing in Indonesia, covering the characteristics of the local market, the challenges of international expansion, and the adaptive strategies used by MSME players to reach global consumers. The material was presented to students at Lincoln University College (LUC), Malaysia, as part of an international partnership-based community service program. This presentation also provided insights into the role of digital technology, local wisdom-based branding, and the importance of market segmentation in the development of micro-enterprises. Students gained a comprehensive understanding of how Indonesian MSMEs survive and grow in an increasingly competitive global market. The activity enriched the students' cross-cultural understanding and served as an initial reference for analyzing marketing strategies in developing countries, as shown in Figure 3 below:



Fig 3. Marketing Strategies for MSME Products in Indonesia in Domestic and Global Markets.

d) Presentation on Standards and Marketing Policies for Health in MSMEs in the Food and Beverage Sector in Indonesia. The presentation focused on the importance of product legality through the BPOM (Food and Drug Monitoring Agency) and PIRT (Traditional Food Registration) licensing procedures. This material aimed to enhance the understanding of MSME players and international students regarding the urgency of meeting food safety standards as part of an ethical and sustainable marketing strategy. Through a systematic presentation, participants were introduced to the product registration stages, documentation requirements, and the legal and market implications of unregistered products. Emphasis was placed on how legality is not only an administrative obligation but also a strategic element in building consumer trust, expanding distribution reach, and improving competitiveness in both domestic and export markets. This activity encouraged the integration of health aspects in MSME marketing planning, especially in the food and beverage sector.



Fig 4. Health Standards and Marketing Policies for MSMEs in the Food and Beverage Sector in Indonesia

e) This activity presented a case study analysis on marketing strategies for MSMEs in Malaysia, compared with MSME practices in Indonesia. The analysis focused on promotional approaches, distribution, digitalization, and government policy interventions in the growth of MSMEs. The comparison results showed that Indonesian MSMEs are more adaptive in utilizing social media organically and employing community-based approaches to build customer loyalty. In contrast, Malaysian MSMEs tend to implement more formal and integrated strategies, supported by business incubation systems and more structured digital financing access. The similarity in strategies between the two countries lies in the use of e-commerce and local value-based marketing trends, but there are significant differences in infrastructure readiness and partnership models. These findings provide cross-country insights for students and MSME practitioners in designing more adaptive and competitive marketing strategies at the regional level.



Fig 5. Similarities and Differences in Marketing Strategies for MSMEs in Indonesia and Malaysia.

f) Learning Evaluation. The learning evaluation was conducted to measure the effectiveness of the material presented by the community service team through an interactive discussion approach, direct simulations, and case study practices. The assessment was carried out using a post-test based on Google Forms, consisting of 20 questions designed to test the participants' conceptual and practical understanding of MSME marketing strategies, pricing decisions, and a comparison of business practices between Indonesia and Malaysia. The evaluation instruments were developed based on the established learning achievement indicators, covering material that included conceptual understanding, case analysis, and the ability to develop practical marketing strategies. Based on the post-test results, it was found that the majority of students scored higher compared to their pre-test results. The results of the pre-test and post-test are shown in the figure below:

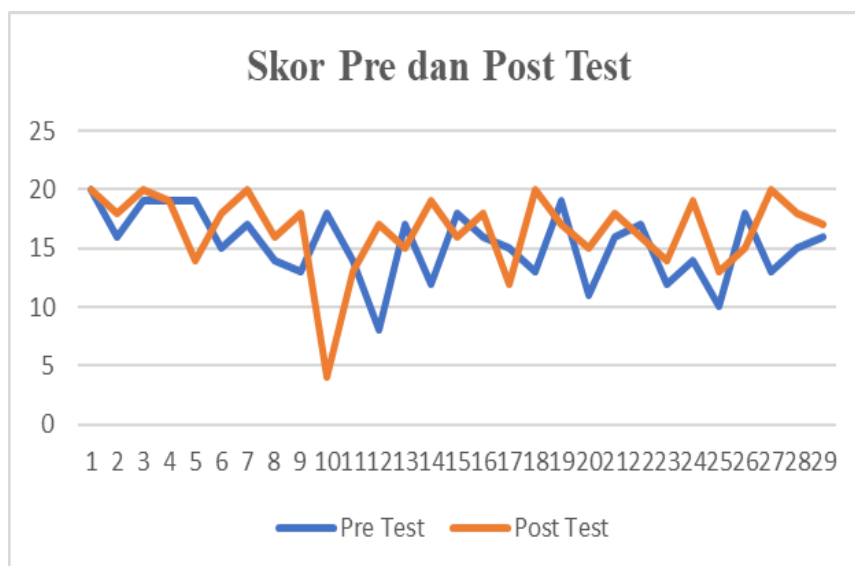


Fig 6. Pre-test and Post-test Results



Fig 7. Documentation of the International Community Service Activity

IV. CONCLUSION

The International Community Service Partnership Program (PkM-KI) has successfully addressed the need for strategic insights among students regarding MSME marketing management in developing countries, particularly Indonesia and Malaysia. Through a series of activities such as case study presentations, interactive discussions, and practical exercises on pricing and marketing strategies for new businesses, this program enriched the global perspective of LUC Malaysia students in understanding the challenges and potential of cross-border MSMEs. The activity also highlighted the importance of product legality, marketing digitalization, and the role of government policies in shaping an inclusive and competitive business ecosystem. This collaboration not only facilitated knowledge transfer but also opened up opportunities for cross-border synergies that could strengthen MSMEs in the ASEAN region. Future efforts will focus on strengthening follow-up actions based on direct implementation and continuous evaluation to create a broader and sustainable impact.

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