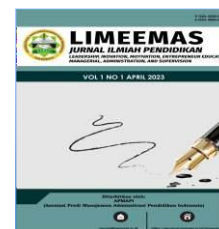


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## 21st Century Learning Innovations and Their Application in Marketing Management Courses

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**Abstract:** This study aims to explore the implementation of 21st-century learning innovations and their application in Marketing Management courses in higher education. Rapid developments in technology and industry demand learning approaches that not only emphasize theoretical understanding but also foster essential skills such as critical thinking, problem-solving, collaboration, communication, and digital literacy. This research employed a qualitative descriptive approach with a case study design. Data were collected through classroom observations, in-depth interviews with lecturers and students, student perception questionnaires, and document analysis of course syllabi, learning materials, learning management systems, and project assignments. The findings reveal that the integration of innovative learning methods, including Project-Based Learning, Case-Based Learning, digital marketing simulation tools, and collaborative learning activities, significantly enhanced student engagement and learning experiences. The application of these innovations enabled students to connect marketing theories with real-world practices, improve higher-order thinking skills, and develop creativity in marketing strategies. Despite these positive outcomes, several challenges were identified, such as lecturers' readiness, students' adaptation to active learning approaches, technological limitations, and time management issues. Overall, the study concludes that 21st-century learning innovations are highly relevant to Marketing Management courses and play a crucial role in preparing students for the demands of the contemporary marketing industry.

**Keywords:** 21st century learning, marketing management, innovative learning, higher education, student-centered learning

**Abstrak:** Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengeksplorasi implementasi inovasi pembelajaran abad ke-21 dan penerapannya dalam mata kuliah Manajemen Pemasaran di perguruan tinggi. Perkembangan pesat dalam teknologi dan industri menuntut pendekatan pembelajaran yang tidak hanya menekankan pemahaman teoretis tetapi juga menumbuhkan keterampilan penting seperti berpikir kritis, pemecahan masalah, kolaborasi, komunikasi, dan literasi digital. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan deskriptif kualitatif dengan desain studi kasus. Data dikumpulkan melalui observasi kelas, wawancara mendalam dengan dosen dan mahasiswa, kuesioner persepsi siswa, dan analisis dokumen silabus mata kuliah, materi pembelajaran, sistem manajemen pembelajaran, dan tugas proyek. Temuan ini mengungkapkan bahwa integrasi metode pembelajaran inovatif, termasuk Pembelajaran Berbasis Proyek, Pembelajaran Berbasis Kasus, alat simulasi pemasaran digital, dan kegiatan pembelajaran kolaboratif, secara signifikan meningkatkan keterlibatan siswa dan pengalaman belajar. Penerapan inovasi ini memungkinkan siswa untuk menghubungkan teori pemasaran dengan praktik dunia nyata, meningkatkan keterampilan berpikir tingkat tinggi, dan mengembangkan kreativitas dalam strategi pemasaran. Terlepas dari hasil positif tersebut, beberapa tantangan diidentifikasi, seperti kesiapan dosen, adaptasi mahasiswa terhadap pendekatan pembelajaran aktif, keterbatasan teknologi, dan masalah manajemen waktu. Secara keseluruhan, penelitian ini menyimpulkan bahwa inovasi

*pembelajaran abad ke-21 sangat relevan dengan kursus Manajemen Pemasaran dan memainkan peran penting dalam mempersiapkan siswa untuk tuntutan industri pemasaran kontemporer.*

**Kata Kunci:** *Pembelajaran abad ke-21, manajemen pemasaran, pembelajaran inovatif, pendidikan tinggi, pembelajaran yang berpusat pada siswa*

## INTRODUCTION

The development of globalization, advances in digital technology, and industrial dynamics have driven significant changes in higher education. Universities no longer serve only as providers of theoretical knowledge, but also as institutions that prepare students with 21st-century skills relevant to the world of work. These skills include critical thinking, creativity, communication, collaboration, and high digital literacy skills (Trilling & Fadel, 2009; Partnership for 21st Century Skills, 2019).

21st century learning emphasizes *a student-centered learning* approach that encourages students to actively build knowledge through experience (Purwanto, 2021), problem-solving (Purwanto et al., 2020), and collaborative work (Purwanto et al., 2026). This approach is different from the traditional *teacher-centered* learning model, where students tend to be passive and only receive information (OECD, 2018). Therefore, innovation in learning strategies is an urgent need, especially in courses that are directly related to professional practices, such as Marketing Management.

Marketing Management is a core course in the field of management and business that requires students not only to understand marketing concepts theoretically (Purwanto & Handayani, 2022), but also to be able to apply them in a real context (Hidayad, Umar, et al., 2023). Students are expected to be able to analyze the market, understand consumer behavior, develop marketing strategies, and make data-driven decisions and dynamic market situations (Kotler & Keller, 2016). This requires an adaptive, contextual, and practice-based learning model.

However, in practice, Marketing Management learning in universities is still often dominated by conventional lecture and assignment methods. The learning model tends to lack space for students to develop critical thinking skills, creativity, and problem solving optimally (Prince, 2004). As a result, there is a gap between the competencies of graduates and the needs of the marketing industry, which is increasingly complex and technology-based (Auliana et al., 2022; Hanadya et al., 2023).

21st century learning innovations offer solutions to bridge these gaps through the application of approaches such as *Project-Based Learning*, *Case-Based Learning*, *problem-solving activities*, and the use of digital technology in learning (Nuswantoro et al., 2023; Umar et al., 2023). This innovation allows students to be directly involved in simulations of the world of work, real-life case analysis, and the development of marketing projects based on industrial contexts (Bell, 2010; Larmer, Mergendoller, & Boss, 2015).

The integration of digital technology in Marketing Management learning is also an important element in the context of the 21st century. The use of *learning management systems* (Zubaidah et al., 2023), digital media (Agustin et al., 2023), marketing simulations (Hidayad, Agustin, & Purwanto, 2023a), and digital marketing analytics platforms can increase student engagement and enrich their learning experience (Redecker, 2017). Digital literacy is not only a learning support tool, but also a core competency that must be possessed by prospective marketing professionals

(Afini et al., 2023; Hidayad, Agustin, Despita, et al., 2023).

Several studies show that the application of 21st-century learning innovations has a positive impact on improving students' cognitive, affective, and psychomotor skills. (Marisyah et al., 2023; Nasar et al., 2023). Students become more active, reflective, and able to work collaboratively in solving complex problems (Beers, 2011; Griffin, McGaw, & Care, 2012). However, the implementation of this learning innovation still faces several challenges, including lecturer readiness, limited facilities, and resistance to change.

Based on this background, this study aims to examine in depth 21st-century learning innovations and their application in Marketing Management courses. This research is expected to make a theoretical contribution to the development of management education pedagogy as well as a practical contribution for lecturers and higher education institutions in designing learning that is relevant to the demands of the 21st century.

## **METHODOLOGY**

This research uses a descriptive, qualitative approach with a case study design to gain an in-depth understanding of the application of 21st-century learning innovations in Marketing Management courses. This approach was chosen because it allows researchers to explore the learning process contextually and naturalistically, as well as comprehensively capture learning experiences, perceptions, and practices. Case study design is considered relevant for examining innovative learning phenomena that occur in a particular learning environment over a specific period of time (Creswell, 2014; Yin, 2018).

This research was carried out at one of the universities that organizes Marketing Management courses in management or business study programs. The research subjects are students enrolled in the Marketing Management course and the course's lecturers. Participants were selected purposively based on their direct involvement in the 21st-century innovation-based learning process. Students are selected from classes that apply innovative learning models, while lecturers are selected based on their experience and active role in learning planning and implementation.

Data collection is conducted using several techniques to obtain rich, in-depth data. Observations are carried out to directly observe the learning process, lecturer-student interaction, and the application of learning innovations in the classroom. In-depth interviews were conducted with lecturers and selected students to explore perceptions, experiences, and challenges in implementing 21st-century learning. In addition, student perception questionnaires are used as supporting data to obtain an overview of student responses to implemented learning innovations. Document analysis was also conducted on the Semester Learning Plan (RPS), learning modules, the Learning Management System (LMS), and student project assignments to strengthen the research findings.

The 21st-century learning innovations applied in this study include Project-Based Learning (PBL), Case-Based Learning (CBL), the use of digital marketing simulation tools, and collaborative learning and problem-solving activities. PBL is implemented through real-context-based marketing project assignments, while CBL is used to analyze actual marketing cases. The use of digital marketing simulations aims to

improve students' digital literacy and practical understanding. At the same time, collaborative learning encourages the development of communication, teamwork, and problem-solving skills that are at the core of 21st-century skills.

The data obtained were analyzed using thematic analysis, which was carried out through the stages of coding, theme grouping, and interpretation of the qualitative data. Data from observations, interviews, and document analysis were analyzed simultaneously to identify key patterns and themes related to the application of learning innovations. Furthermore, data triangulation is achieved by comparing findings across various sources and data collection techniques to improve the accuracy of research results. Supporting quantitative data from the questionnaire were analyzed descriptively to strengthen the qualitative findings.

The validity and reliability of the data in this study are ensured through the application of the principles of trustworthiness, including credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Credibility is achieved through the triangulation of sources and data-collection techniques. Transferability is maintained by presenting a detailed description of the research context. Dependability is achieved through systematic recording of research procedures, while confirmability is maintained through the researcher's objectivity, as evidenced by trail audits and research reflections. Thus, the research results are expected to be highly reliable and accurate.

## **RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

### **Result**

#### **A. Identified 21st Century Learning Innovations**

The results of the study show that 21st-century learning innovations in Marketing Management courses are reflected in significant changes in the learning methods used. The learning process is no longer centered on one-way lectures but shifts to an active learning approach that puts students at the center. Students are encouraged to engage directly in the process of concept exploration, discussion, and problem-solving relevant to the real marketing context.

The most dominant learning method innovation is the application of project- and case-based learning. Students are allowed to analyze actual marketing problems, strategize, and present solutions collaboratively. This approach provides space for students to integrate theory and practice while practicing the high-level thinking skills that are a hallmark of 21st-century learning.

In addition to methods, innovation is also evident in the media and the learning technologies used. The use of Learning Management Systems (LMS), digital platforms, and online learning resources is an integral part of the learning process. Digital media is not only used to distribute materials but also as a space for interaction, discussion, and reflection on continuous learning.

Learning technology is also used to enrich the student learning experience through digital marketing simulations and multimedia content. Students can observe market dynamics, consumer behavior, and the impact of marketing strategies virtually. This helps students understand marketing concepts more concretely and contextually than text-based learning alone.

21st-century learning innovations are also reflected in evaluation and

assessment systems. The assessment does not only focus on the final result in the form of a written exam, but also includes the learning process, participation, group work, and project results. Assessments are authentic and competency-oriented, enabling them to describe students' learning outcomes more comprehensively.

## **B. Application of Learning Innovations in Marketing Management Courses**

The application of 21st-century learning innovations in Marketing Management courses is realized through the implementation of real-world, project-based learning. Students are asked to design a marketing strategy for a specific product or service, either from real case studies or business simulations. This project is carried out in stages, starting from market analysis to marketing strategy evaluation.

In its implementation, students work in groups to identify marketing problems, collect data, and make strategic recommendations. This process encourages students to think critically, conduct in-depth analysis, and make data-driven decisions. Project-based learning also provides a more meaningful learning experience as students are directly involved in a process that resembles professional practice.

The integration of digital marketing technology is an important part of implementing learning innovations. Students are introduced to various digital platforms relevant to marketing, including social media, digital analytics tools, and online marketing simulations. This technology is used to explore, analyze, and present marketing strategies developed by students.

The pattern of interaction between lecturers and students has also changed along with the implementation of learning innovations. Lecturers act as facilitators and supervisors, providing direction, feedback, and reflection, while students become more active in managing their own learning. Learning interactions take place in a two-way and collaborative manner, both in the classroom and through digital platforms.

In addition, collaborative learning is the main feature of 21st-century innovation. Group discussions, presentations, and teamwork are conducted intensively to encourage the exchange of ideas and viewpoints. This interaction pattern creates a dynamic, participatory learning environment and strengthens students' involvement in the Marketing Management learning process.

## **C. Students' Learning Outcomes**

The results of the study show that the application of 21st-century learning innovations has a positive impact on student learning outcomes. Students show improved critical thinking skills in analyzing marketing problems and formulating relevant solutions. They not only understand the concept theoretically but can also relate it to dynamic market situations.

Students' problem-solving skills have also increased significantly. Through project- and case-based learning, students are accustomed to facing complex problems that do not have one definitive answer. This process trains students to evaluate various alternative solutions and choose the most appropriate strategy based on logical and contextual considerations.

In addition to cognitive aspects, 21st-century learning innovations also strengthen students' collaboration skills. Intensive group work encourages students to learn to work together, share roles, and complete tasks collectively. Students become more familiar with teamwork dynamics that reflect a professional work environment.

Students' communication skills also develop as the number of presentations, discussions, and learning reflection activities increases. Students become more confident in conveying ideas, defending arguments, and receiving input from lecturers and peers. This communication ability is an important capital for students in the field of marketing, which requires intensive interaction with various parties.

Furthermore, the application of digital technology in learning has also increased students' digital literacy and marketing creativity. Students can effectively use digital media to design marketing content, analyze data, and develop creative strategies. This shows that 21st-century learning innovations not only improve academic understanding but also equip students with practical skills relevant to the world of work.

#### **D. Challenges in Implementation**

Although it offers numerous benefits, the application of 21st-century learning innovations in Marketing Management courses also poses several challenges. One of the main challenges is lecturers' readiness to design and manage innovative learning. Not all lecturers have adequate experience or training in implementing project-based learning models and digital technologies.

Student readiness is also an important factor in the successful implementation of learning innovations. Some students are still used to conventional learning patterns and need time to adapt to learning approaches that require independence and activity. Differences in students' motivation and ability also affect the dynamics of learning.

Another challenge concerns the limitations of learning facilities and technology. Not all students have adequate access to digital devices and a stable internet connection. These limitations can hinder the optimization of technology use in 21st-century Marketing Management learning.

Learning time management is also an obstacle in the implementation of learning innovations. Project-based and collaborative learning takes longer than conventional learning. Lecturers need to adjust the time allocation so that all learning outcomes are met without reducing the depth of the material.

However, these challenges do not diminish the potential of 21st-century learning innovations to improve the quality of Marketing Management learning. With careful planning, institutional support, and improved competence among lecturers and students, obstacles to implementation can be minimized, and learning innovations can be applied more effectively.

#### **Discussion**

The findings of this study show that 21st-century learning innovations are highly relevant to the characteristics of Marketing Management courses: dynamic, applicable, and contextual. This course requires students not only to understand marketing concepts but also to analyze market phenomena and consumer behavior, and to design marketing strategies that are adaptive to changes in the business environment. Therefore, the application of project-based learning, cases, and digital technology aligns with the learning needs of Marketing Management.

The results indicate that active, collaborative learning enables students to integrate theory and practice more effectively. 21st-century learning innovations encourage students to engage in higher-level thinking processes, such as analysis (Bonar Siagian & M Bambang Purwanto, 2023), evaluation (Dacholfany et al., 2024), and the

creation of marketing strategies (Melinda Puspita Sari Jaya et al., 2023). This reinforces the view that Marketing Management learning is more effective when it is designed as an authentic learning experience that reflects real-world situations (Astirini Swarastuti et al., 2024; Hidayad, Agustin, & Purwanto, 2023b).

In addition, the use of digital technology in Marketing Management learning strengthens students' digital literacy, a key competency in the modern marketing era. These findings show that 21st-century learning innovations not only enhance academic understanding but also equip students with relevant professional skills. Thus, 21st-century Marketing Management learning can be a bridge between academic needs and industry demands. (Aisyah et al., 2024; Budiyanto et al., 2024).

The findings of this study align with previous research, which confirms that the application of 21st-century learning can increase student involvement, critical thinking skills, and collaborative abilities in management education. (Novia et al., 2024). Previous research has shown that approaches such as Project-Based Learning and Case-Based Learning are effective in improving students' conceptual understanding and problem-solving skills in business and management. (Marsinah Marsinah et al., 2024; Rosyidin & Purwanto, 2024).

However, the study expands on previous findings by emphasizing the integration of digital marketing technology as an integral part of learning innovation. In contrast to previous research that emphasized aspects of learning methods, this study's results show that the combination of active methods and digital technology has a broader impact on student learning outcomes. It enriches the literature on 21st-century learning in the context of management education.

Pedagogically, the findings of this study have important implications for the learning design of Marketing Management courses. Lecturers need to design learning that is oriented towards achieving 21st-century competencies by integrating project-based activities, case studies, and digital technology. Learning design no longer focuses solely on delivering material but also on developing students' critical and creative thinking skills. (Purwanto et al., 2024; Ridayani & Purwanto, 2024).

Strengthening the student-centered learning approach is the main implication of applying 21st-century learning innovations. Students are encouraged to become active learners who are responsible for their own learning process. The role of lecturers shifts from being the primary source of knowledge to facilitators and mentors who provide ongoing direction, feedback, and reflection on learning. (Marsinah et al., 2024; Yuliana et al., 2024).

The collaborative learning applied in this study also shows the importance of social interaction in the learning process. Through group work and discussion, students learn to communicate effectively, respect differences, and resolve conflicts constructively. This implication suggests that the learning design for Marketing Management should provide sufficient space for structured collaborative activities.

In addition, the evaluation and assessment system needs to be adapted to the characteristics of 21st-century learning. Authentic assessments that holistically assess learning processes and outcomes are becoming more relevant than test-based assessments alone. Thus, the pedagogical implications of this study emphasize the importance of alignment between learning objectives, learning strategies, and evaluation methods.

At the institutional level, this research's results have practical implications for

curriculum development in higher education. The curriculum needs to be designed flexibly and adaptively to accommodate the application of 21st-century learning innovations, especially in applicable courses such as Marketing Management. The integration of 21st-century competencies into graduate learning outcomes is a strategic step toward increasing the relevance of higher education.

Other practical implications relate to the training and competency development of lecturers. Universities need to provide ongoing training programs that focus on mastering innovative learning methods and utilizing digital technology. Institutional support, including policies, facilities, and professional development for lecturers, is a key factor in the successful implementation of 21st-century learning.

The integration of learning with industry needs is also an important implication of this research. Universities need to collaborate with the business world and industry to ensure that the learning materials and projects provided to students are relevant to the latest marketing practices. The involvement of industry practitioners in learning can enrich students' experiences and improve graduates' job-readiness.

Overall, the practical implications of this study confirm that implementing 21st-century learning innovations requires a joint commitment from lecturers, institutions, and other stakeholders. With adequate support, Marketing Management learning can be a strategic means in producing graduates who are competent, adaptive, and ready to face the challenges of the world of work in the global and digital era.

## CONCLUSION

This study concludes that the application of 21st-century learning innovations significantly improves the quality of learning in Marketing Management courses. The integration of active learning methods such as Project-Based Learning and Case-Based Learning, the use of digital technology, and collaborative learning approaches has been proven to create a more contextual and meaningful learning experience. The innovation not only strengthens students' conceptual understanding but also encourages the development of 21st-century skills, including critical thinking, problem-solving, communication, collaboration, digital literacy, and creativity in designing marketing strategies. In addition, this study emphasizes that the successful implementation of 21st-century learning in the Marketing Management course is greatly influenced by lecturers' readiness, institutional support, and alignment between learning design, assessment, and industry needs. While there are still challenges related to limited resources and time management, 21st-century learning innovations still have great potential to bridge the gap between academia and professional practice. Therefore, this study recommends strengthening institutional policies, developing lecturer competencies, and integrating learning with the industrial context as strategic steps in increasing the relevance and competitiveness of higher education graduates.

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