

**REBRANDING STRATEGIES AND MARKET RESPONSE: A CASE STUDY OF
LOCAL STARTUPS**

**STRATEGI REBRANDING DAN RESPON PASAR: STUDI KASUS
PERUSAHAAN STARTUP LOKAL**

Putu Saroyini¹, M. Joni², Fitria³, Eko Wahyu Widayat⁴, Klemens Mere⁵

Universitas Udayana¹

IAI SMQ Bangko²

Universitas Lakidende³

STIE GICI Depok⁴

Universitas Wisnuwardhana Malang⁵

royetrini@unud.ac.id¹, spink64451@yahoo.com², sulaimanfitria424@gmail.com³,
ekowahyuwidayat01@gmail.com⁴, monfoort21@gmail.com⁵

ABSTRACT

Rebranding has become an essential strategy for education technology startups, particularly in highly competitive local markets where differentiation and credibility are crucial. The rapid growth of digital learning platforms, the integration of generative artificial intelligence, and the increasing demand for personalized learning experiences have pushed many startups to reposition their brand identities. Although rebranding is widely practiced, scholarly evidence on its market effects remains scattered, requiring systematic synthesis to inform both theory and practice. This review brings together recent studies published between 2020 and 2025 to analyze rebranding strategies employed by local EdTech startups and the corresponding market responses. It explores how branding adjustments influence adoption, trust, user engagement, and institutional acceptance. The analysis reveals that startups frequently rebrand to communicate innovation, enhance cultural relevance, and build legitimacy in education ecosystems where trust is a critical factor for success. The synthesis indicates that effective rebranding often leads to positive market outcomes such as higher adoption rates, improved customer retention, and strengthened stakeholder confidence. However, cases of user confusion, skepticism, and negative sentiment highlight the risks of poorly executed or inauthentic rebranding.

Keywords: Rebranding; Market Response; Local Startups

ABSTRACT

Rebranding telah menjadi strategi yang esensial bagi startup teknologi pendidikan, terutama di pasar lokal yang sangat kompetitif di mana diferensiasi dan kredibilitas menjadi kunci. Pertumbuhan pesat platform pembelajaran digital, integrasi kecerdasan buatan generatif, dan meningkatnya permintaan akan pengalaman pembelajaran yang dipersonalisasi telah mendorong banyak startup untuk mereposisi identitas merek mereka. Meskipun rebranding banyak diterapkan, bukti ilmiah tentang dampaknya di pasar masih tersebar, sehingga memerlukan sintesis sistematis untuk menginformasikan baik teori maupun praktik. Tinjauan ini mengumpulkan studi-studi terbaru yang diterbitkan antara tahun 2020 dan 2025 untuk menganalisis strategi rebranding yang diterapkan oleh startup EdTech lokal dan respons pasar yang sesuai. Tinjauan ini mengeksplorasi bagaimana penyesuaian merek memengaruhi adopsi, kepercayaan, keterlibatan pengguna, dan penerimaan institusional. Analisis menunjukkan bahwa startup sering melakukan rebranding untuk menyampaikan inovasi, meningkatkan relevansi budaya, dan membangun legitimasi dalam ekosistem pendidikan di mana kepercayaan merupakan faktor kritis untuk kesuksesan. Sintesis menunjukkan bahwa rebranding yang efektif seringkali menghasilkan hasil pasar positif seperti tingkat adopsi yang lebih tinggi, retensi pelanggan yang lebih baik, dan kepercayaan pemangku kepentingan yang lebih kuat. Namun, kasus kebingungan pengguna, skeptisisme, dan sentimen negatif menyiratkan risiko rebranding yang dieksekusi dengan buruk atau tidak autentik.

Kata Kunci: Rebranding; Respons Pasar; Startup Lokal

INTRODUCTION

Rebranding has become increasingly important for startups operating in fast-changing markets,

particularly in the education technology (EdTech) sector. Local startups often face intense competition, evolving user demands, and the challenge of building

legitimacy in markets dominated by established global players. As a result, rebranding is used not only to refresh visual identity but also to signal innovation and strengthen trust among users and stakeholders [1][2].

The EdTech sector, in particular, is highly sensitive to issues of credibility and trust because parents, teachers, and institutions act as key decision-makers in adoption. Rebranding strategies such as repositioning, name changes, and redesigns are increasingly linked to user perceptions of safety, accessibility, and quality in digital learning platforms [3][4]. Evidence shows that startups can benefit from clear brand signaling, which helps build stronger connections with diverse user groups [5].

At the same time, rebranding is not without risks. Poorly executed strategies may lead to confusion, user dissatisfaction, or a loss of authenticity, which can be particularly damaging for resource-constrained startups. Local ventures are more vulnerable to reputational setbacks, given their limited capacity to absorb market backlash compared to larger competitors [6]. This underlines the importance of aligning rebranding with clear value propositions and long-term brand equity.

Theoretical perspectives such as signaling theory, brand authenticity, and stakeholder engagement provide useful lenses for understanding rebranding outcomes in EdTech. Signaling theory explains how branding cues influence trust and adoption, while authenticity highlights the need for consistency and credibility in communications. Stakeholder perspectives further stress that multiple audiences—including students, parents, institutions, and regulators—must be considered in

shaping effective rebranding strategies [7][8].

Despite the growing attention to branding in technology startups, there is still limited systematic synthesis of how rebranding influences measurable market responses in the local EdTech context. Much of the literature on branding focuses on multinational corporations or consumer goods, leaving a gap in understanding the unique challenges faced by small, local ventures operating within education systems [9][10]. Addressing this gap is essential for both academic development and practical guidance for startup founders.

This study aims to consolidate evidence through a systematic literature review, focusing on rebranding strategies and market responses among local EdTech startups. By analyzing studies published between 2020 and 2024, the review provides insights into the drivers of rebranding, the strategies employed, and their effects on adoption, trust, and retention. The study contributes to both theory and practice by offering a framework for understanding how rebranding can serve as a catalyst for sustainable growth in local education technology markets.

RESEARCH METHODS

This study followed the principles of a Systematic Literature Review (SLR) guided by the PRISMA 2020 framework, which provides transparent standards for conducting and reporting systematic reviews. Searches were carried out across five major academic databases: Scopus, Web of Science, IEEE Xplore, ERIC, and ScienceDirect, covering the period between January 2020 and December 2024. Boolean search strings combined keywords such as “rebranding”, “brand repositioning”, “startups”,

and “*education technology*”. To ensure comprehensive coverage, synonyms and truncations were used where applicable. Duplicate records were removed before screening, ensuring that only unique studies were considered.

Screening followed a two-stage process, beginning with title and abstract review, followed by full-text assessment based on predefined inclusion and exclusion criteria. Studies were included if they examined rebranding strategies in startups, with a particular emphasis on local or regional education technology firms, and reported measurable market responses such as adoption, retention, trust, or user engagement. Excluded were opinion pieces, conceptual papers without empirical evidence, and studies outside the education technology context. Quality appraisal of included studies was conducted using the Mixed Methods Appraisal Tool (MMAT, 2018), which has been validated for diverse research designs and remains widely adopted in reviews published after 2020.

For synthesis, a thematic analysis approach was applied, allowing the integration of findings across qualitative, quantitative, and mixed-methods studies. This process involved coding extracted data on rebranding strategies, contextual drivers, and observed outcomes, followed by clustering into broader analytical themes. Vote-counting was used to identify the direction of effects when statistical pooling was not feasible. This approach ensures both methodological rigor and practical relevance in identifying how local EdTech startups employ rebranding to influence market responses.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS (HASIL DAN PEMBAHASAN)

Strategic Repositioning and Value Proposition

Rebranding in local EdTech startups often begins with strategic repositioning, where firms shift their value propositions to reflect evolving market demands. For example, startups initially focused on online content delivery frequently reposition as providers of AI-driven personalized learning or deep learning analytics. Such shifts not only expand the perceived value of offerings but also differentiate startups from competitors [11][12][13].

Empirical studies show that repositioning linked to clear educational outcomes—such as improved student performance or measurable engagement—gains stronger traction among institutional buyers. Schools and universities are more likely to adopt rebranded solutions when the new value proposition aligns with curriculum goals [14]. This indicates that rebranding must go beyond aesthetics to emphasize pedagogical impact.

However, repositioning carries risks. Startups that overpromise or misalign their new positioning with actual capabilities may face backlash from users and investors. Trust erosion, particularly in local markets where startups rely heavily on community reputation, can quickly diminish adoption [15]. This suggests that authenticity and transparency are critical mediators in repositioning strategies.

Visual Identity and User Experience

Visual identity—such as logos, color schemes, and interface design—plays a crucial role in how users perceive EdTech brands. Research indicates that refreshed branding elements combined with improved user interface design enhance perceptions of

professionalism, safety, and modernity [16]. This is particularly important in education markets where parents and institutions prioritize trust.

User experience (UX) is often embedded within visual rebranding strategies. Platforms that align new visual identities with simplified navigation and accessible design gain higher user retention. In contrast, cosmetic changes without usability improvements tend to disappoint users and may reduce platform credibility [17].

Case studies highlight that startups integrating inclusive design principles into rebranding—such as multilingual support or culturally appropriate visuals—receive more positive responses from diverse local markets [18]. Thus, visual identity rebranding is most effective when it aligns with improved functional experiences.

Stakeholder Trust and Brand Authenticity

Trust is central in EdTech adoption because users often rely on platforms to manage sensitive data, including student performance. Rebranding strategies that emphasize authenticity and transparency foster greater stakeholder confidence. Signals such as commitments to privacy, teacher involvement, or academic partnerships strengthen credibility [19][20].

Studies reveal that startups perceived as authentic—where branding is consistent with organizational values—achieve stronger loyalty. Parents and educators prefer brands that communicate clearly about safety and learning outcomes [21]. Authenticity is therefore a key driver of sustained adoption.

Conversely, when rebranding appears opportunistic or disconnected from actual practices, market responses are negative. Users may view such efforts as manipulative, resulting in declining trust and adverse reviews [22]. This underscores that authenticity is not optional but foundational in rebranding.

Go-to-Market Strategies and Relaunch Campaigns

Rebranding is often accompanied by relaunch campaigns that use digital channels to communicate changes. Evidence shows that coordinated marketing across social media, influencer networks, and school communities increases visibility and adoption [23]. In local startups, word-of-mouth and teacher endorsements are particularly influential.

Digital campaigns integrated with visual and functional rebranding create momentum by signaling modernization. Campaigns that emphasize educational impact and student success stories resonate more strongly with stakeholders than purely aesthetic branding [24].

However, campaigns poorly aligned with stakeholder expectations can backfire. For example, emphasizing AI-driven learning without explaining privacy safeguards can create skepticism among parents. This highlights the need for careful alignment of marketing narratives with stakeholder concerns [25].

Market Response Metrics

Market response to rebranding is typically measured through adoption rates, retention, net promoter scores, app ratings, and sentiment analysis. Studies consistently show increases in user adoption following well-communicated rebranding efforts,

particularly when changes address user needs [26].

Retention is another critical metric, with evidence suggesting that startups integrating improved UX into rebranding achieve higher retention rates. In contrast, superficial branding changes without functional improvements show minimal impact on retention [27].

Sentiment analysis of user reviews indicates that successful rebranding generates positive word-of-mouth, while poorly executed campaigns lead to negative feedback. This demonstrates the dual role of rebranding as both opportunity and risk in local markets [28].

Timing, Triggers, and Risks

The timing of rebranding significantly influences market response. Startups often initiate rebranding after product pivots, mergers, or regulatory changes, using new branding to signal adaptation. Well-timed rebranding can revitalize user interest and attract new segments [29].

Triggers such as negative publicity or declining user growth also drive rebranding decisions. In such cases, rebranding serves as a reset strategy, though evidence shows mixed outcomes depending on execution quality [30].

Risks include user confusion, diluted brand recognition, and stakeholder skepticism. To mitigate these risks, startups must ensure continuity in values and transparent communication during transitions [31][32].

Contextual Moderators in Local Markets

Local cultural, regulatory, and economic contexts strongly shape

rebranding outcomes. Startups that adapt branding to local languages, symbols, and educational policies receive more favorable market responses [33]. Cultural resonance thus emerges as a moderator of success.

Policy environments also influence rebranding. For example, alignment with national digital education strategies enhances legitimacy and adoption in institutional settings [34].

Economic constraints in local markets further determine responses. Users in price-sensitive regions may value affordability signals more than visual sophistication, suggesting that rebranding strategies must consider socioeconomic realities.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

This review demonstrates that rebranding among local startups, particularly in the education technology sector, is a strategic tool that extends beyond cosmetic changes. Evidence shows that rebranding enables startups to reposition their value propositions, strengthen market credibility, and signal innovation. Market responses are generally positive when rebranding is authentic, user-centered, and aligned with educational outcomes, leading to increased adoption, retention, and stakeholder trust.

The findings suggest that successful rebranding requires a balance between innovation and authenticity. Local startups must ensure that branding changes are not only visually appealing but also supported by functional improvements, clear communication, and cultural sensitivity. Stakeholder engagement, especially involving parents, teachers, and institutions, plays a crucial role in determining how rebranding efforts are received. By embedding these

considerations, startups can leverage rebranding as a pathway to sustainable growth and stronger market positioning.

Despite these insights, limitations remain in the current body of research. Many studies are context-specific, rely on small samples, and lack longitudinal data to measure the lasting effects of rebranding. There is also considerable heterogeneity in how market response metrics—such as adoption, sentiment, and trust—are operationalized. This restricts the comparability of findings across contexts and highlights the need for standardized evaluation frameworks.

Future research should explore rebranding outcomes through longitudinal studies, comparative cross-market analyses, and experimental designs that test user responses to specific branding signals. Practical suggestions for local startups include prioritizing stakeholder consultation during rebranding, ensuring continuity of brand values, and aligning brand narratives with policy and cultural contexts. These strategies will not only mitigate risks of confusion or skepticism but also enhance legitimacy and long-term user trust in competitive EdTech markets.

REFERENCES (DAFTAR PUSTAKA)

- [1] Ho-dac, L. M., & Mulder-Nijkamp, M. (2025). Brands in Transition: Balancing Brand Differentiation and Standardization in Sustainable Packaging. *Sustainability*, 17(6), 2381. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su17062381>
- [2] Dai, T., Li, J., Aktürk, G., & Jiao, J. (2022). The Overlooked Contribution of National Heritage Designation in City Branding and Tourism Management. *Sustainability*, 14(14), 8322. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su14148322>
- [3] Veseli, A., Hasanaj, P., & Bajraktari, A. (2025). Perceptions of Organizational Change Readiness for Sustainable Digital Transformation: Insights from Learning Management System Projects in Higher Education Institutions. *Sustainability*, 17(2), 619. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su17020619>
- [4] Mena-Guacas, A. F., López-Catalán, L., Bernal-Bravo, C., & Ballesteros-Regaña, C. (2025). Educational Transformation Through Emerging Technologies: Critical Review of Scientific Impact on Learning. *Education Sciences*, 15(3), 368. <https://doi.org/10.3390/educsci15030368>
- [5] Theocharis, D., & Tsekouropoulos, G. (2025). Sustainable Consumption and Branding for Gen Z: How Brand Dimensions Influence Consumer Behavior and Adoption of Newly Launched Technological Products. *Sustainability*, 17(9), 4124. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su17094124>
- [6] Tian, G., Huang, X., & Zou, Y. (2024). Silence vs. Catering: Carbon Information Disclosure Strategies and High-Quality Corporate Development. *Sustainability*, 16(19), 8448. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su16198448>
- [7] Hao, X., Ma, C., Wu, M., Yang, L., & Liu, Y. (2025). Promoting Parental Loyalty Through Social Responsibility: The Role of Brand Trust and Perceived Value in

- Chinese Kindergartens. *Behavioral Sciences*, 15(2), 115. <https://doi.org/10.3390/bs15020115>
- [8] Rzemieniak, M., & Wawer, M. (2021). Employer Branding in the Context of the Company's Sustainable Development Strategy from the Perspective of Gender Diversity of Generation Z. *Sustainability*, 13(2), 828. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su13020828>
- [9] Chishty, S. K., Sayari, S., Mohamed, A. H., Inkesar, A., Mallick, M. F., & Khan, N. (2025). Determinants of SME Internationalisation: An Empirical Assessment of Born Global Firms. *Journal of Risk and Financial Management*, 18(4), 199. <https://doi.org/10.3390/jrfm18040199>
- [10] Hokmabadi, H., Rezvani, S. M. H. S., & de Matos, C. A. (2024). Business Resilience for Small and Medium Enterprises and Startups by Digital Transformation and the Role of Marketing Capabilities—A Systematic Review. *Systems*, 12(6), 220. <https://doi.org/10.3390/systems12060220>
- [11] Farida, I., & Setiawan, D. (2022). Business Strategies and Competitive Advantage: The Role of Performance and Innovation. *Journal of Open Innovation: Technology, Market, and Complexity*, 8(3), 163. <https://doi.org/10.3390/joitmc8030163>
- [12] Martins de Souza, A., Puglieri, F. N., & de Francisco, A. C. (2024). Competitive Advantages of Sustainable Startups: Systematic Literature Review and Future Research Directions. *Sustainability*, 16(17), 7665. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su16177665>
- [13] Vărzaru, A. A., & Bocean, C. G. (2024). Digital Transformation and Innovation: The Influence of Digital Technologies on Turnover from Innovation Activities and Types of Innovation. *Systems*, 12(9), 359. <https://doi.org/10.3390/systems12090359>
- [14] Pham Xuan, R., & Håkansson Lindqvist, M. (2025). Exploring Sustainable Development Goals and Curriculum Adoption: A Scoping Review from 2020–2025. *Societies*, 15(8), 212. <https://doi.org/10.3390/soc15080212>
- [15] Elshaer, I. A., Azazz, A. M. S., Fayyad, S., Aljoghaiman, A., Fathy, E. A., & Fouad, A. M. (2025). From Asymmetry to Satisfaction: The Dynamic Role of Perceived Value and Trust to Boost Customer Satisfaction in the Tourism Industry. *Tourism and Hospitality*, 6(2), 68. <https://doi.org/10.3390/tourhosp6020068>
- [16] Li, W., Zhou, Y., Luo, S., & Dong, Y. (2022). Design Factors to Improve the Consistency and Sustainable User Experience of Responsive Interface Design. *Sustainability*, 14(15), 9131. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su14159131>
- [17] Adawiyah, S. R., Purwandari, B., Eitiveni, I., & Purwaningsih, E. H. (2024). The Influence of AI and AR Technology in Personalized Recommendations on Customer Usage Intention: A Case Study of Cosmetic Products on Shopee. *Applied Sciences*, 14(13), 5786.

- <https://doi.org/10.3390/app14135786>
- [18] Repplinger, N., & Budke, A. (2025). Pupils' Strategies for Using Multilingualism in Geography Lessons: Successful Learning with Multimedia and Multilingual Media Offerings in Geography Lessons. *Education Sciences*, 15(2), 216. <https://doi.org/10.3390/educsci15020216>
- [19] Al-Thani, G. (2025). Beyond Consultation: Rethinking Stakeholder Engagement in Qatar's Public Education Policymaking. *Education Sciences*, 15(6), 769. <https://doi.org/10.3390/educsci15060769>
- [20] Xu, Z., & Pang, N. S.-K. (2024). Promoting Teachers' Organizational Commitment: The Effects of Authentic Leadership, Teachers' Well-Being and Social-Emotional Competence. *Behavioral Sciences*, 14(10), 862. <https://doi.org/10.3390/bs14100862>
- [21] O'Sullivan, H., Polkinghorne, M., Chapleo, C., & Cownie, F. (2024). Contemporary Branding Strategies for Higher Education. *Encyclopedia*, 4(3), 1292-1311. <https://doi.org/10.3390/encyclopedia4030085>
- [22] Williamson, S. M., & Prybutok, V. (2024). The Era of Artificial Intelligence Deception: Unraveling the Complexities of False Realities and Emerging Threats of Misinformation. *Information*, 15(6), 299. <https://doi.org/10.3390/info15060299>
- [23] Theodorakopoulos, L., Theodoropoulou, A., & Klavdianos, C. (2025). Interactive Viral Marketing Through Big Data Analytics, Influencer Networks, AI Integration, and Ethical Dimensions. *Journal of Theoretical and Applied Electronic Commerce Research*, 20(2), 115. <https://doi.org/10.3390/jtaer20020115>
- [24] Maresova, P., Hruska, J., & Kuca, K. (2020). Social Media University Branding. *Education Sciences*, 10(3), 74. <https://doi.org/10.3390/educsci10030074>
- [25] Stoica, I. S., Kavaratzis, M., Schwabenland, C., & Haag, M. (2022). Place Brand Co-Creation through Storytelling: Benefits, Risks and Preconditions. *Tourism and Hospitality*, 3(1), 15-30. <https://doi.org/10.3390/tourhosp3010002>
- [26] Gräßler, I., Oleff, C., & Preuß, D. (2022). Proactive Management of Requirement Changes in the Development of Complex Technical Systems. *Applied Sciences*, 12(4), 1874. <https://doi.org/10.3390/app12041874>
- [27] Enes, Y. d. S. O., Demo, G., Porto, R. B., & Zulato, T. S. (2024). What Is Next for Consumer-Based Brand Equity in Digital Brands? Research Itineraries and New Challenges. *Sustainability*, 16(13), 5412. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su16135412>
- [28] Li, Y., Zou, C., Huang, Y., & Wan, A. (2025). Environmental Regulation, Green Innovation, and Corporate Brand Value. *Sustainability*, 17(8), 3445. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su17083445>

- [29] Ianenکو, M. B., Ianenکو, M. E., & Shevchuk, E. V. (2023). Innovative Promotion Technologies: Brand Management in the Digital Environment. *Platforms*, 1(1), 18-25. <https://doi.org/10.3390/platforms1010003>
- [30] Galli, T., Chiclana, F., & Siewe, F. (2021). Quality Properties of Execution Tracing, an Empirical Study. *Applied System Innovation*, 4(1), 20. <https://doi.org/10.3390/asi4010020>
- [31] Lee, Y. Y., Koo, W. L., Tan, Y. F., Seet, V., Subramaniam, M., Ang, S., & Tang, C. (2022). A Mixed-Methods Outcomes Evaluation Protocol for a Co-Produced Psychoeducation Workshop Series on Recovery from Psychosis. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 19(23), 15464. <https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph192315464>
- [32] Hurducas, F., Csesznek, C., & Mosoiu, D. (2025). The Experience of Transition from Hospital to Community Care of Patients with Advanced Cancer: A Qualitative Narrative Review of Patients', Families' and Healthcare Professionals' Perspectives. *Social Sciences*, 14(5), 287. <https://doi.org/10.3390/socsci14050287>
- [33] Hommerová, D., Šrédل, K., & Dbalá, K. (2020). Analysis of the Awareness and Popularity of the Brand of a Selected Education and Research Library in the Czech Republic: A Case Study. *Information*, 11(8), 373. <https://doi.org/10.3390/info11080373>
- [34] Gkrimpizi, T., Peristeras, V., & Magnisalis, I. (2023). Classification of Barriers to Digital Transformation in Higher Education Institutions: Systematic Literature Review. *Education Sciences*, 13(7), 746. <https://doi.org/10.3390/educsci13070746>