



## The Role of Entrepreneurship in Enhancing the Creativity of SMK Muhammadiyah Watansoppeng Students in the Digital Era

Mutmainnah<sup>1</sup>, Erlangga<sup>2</sup>, Nurul Ashira<sup>2</sup>, Mariana<sup>4</sup>, Nurmayanti<sup>5</sup>, Sam Hermansyah<sup>6</sup>

<sup>123456</sup>Universitas Muhammadiyah Sidenreng Rappang

\* Corresponding Author. E-mail: [mutmainnahinnah389@gmail.com](mailto:mutmainnahinnah389@gmail.com)

Receive: 13/09/2024

Accepted: 15/09/2024

Published: 01/10/2024

### Abstract

The increasing pace of globalization presents various challenges that affect multiple aspects of human life, including the economy. This phenomenon necessitates immediate change and innovation. One effective approach to addressing these issues is equipping the younger generation with entrepreneurial skills, preparing them to compete in an increasingly competitive market and creating new opportunities that can enhance national competitiveness. This study explores how entrepreneurship contributes to fostering creativity among students at SMK Muhammadiyah Watansoppeng. By integrating entrepreneurial concepts into classroom learning, students gain the opportunity to develop creative ideas, solve problems, and enhance their creative thinking skills. The research demonstrates that when entrepreneurship is applied in education, students not only learn to be innovative and entrepreneurial but also build the necessary competencies to succeed in the modern workforce. Keywords: Entrepreneurship, Creativity, SMK Muhammadiyah Watansoppeng.

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### Abstrak

Peningkatan laju globalisasi menghadirkan berbagai tantangan yang memengaruhi berbagai aspek kehidupan manusia, termasuk ekonomi. Fenomena ini memerlukan perubahan dan inovasi yang segera. Salah satu pendekatan yang efektif untuk mengatasi masalah ini adalah dengan membekali generasi muda dengan keterampilan kewirausahaan, yang mempersiapkan mereka untuk bersaing di pasar yang semakin kompetitif dan menciptakan peluang baru yang dapat meningkatkan daya saing nasional. Penelitian ini mengeksplorasi bagaimana kewirausahaan berkontribusi dalam meningkatkan kreativitas di kalangan siswa SMK Muhammadiyah Watansoppeng. Dengan mengintegrasikan konsep kewirausahaan dalam pembelajaran di kelas, siswa mendapatkan kesempatan untuk mengembangkan ide kreatif, memecahkan masalah, dan meningkatkan keterampilan berpikir kreatif mereka. Penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa ketika kewirausahaan diterapkan dalam pendidikan, siswa tidak hanya belajar untuk menjadi inovatif dan wirausaha, tetapi juga membangun kompetensi yang diperlukan untuk sukses di dunia kerja modern.

**Kata kunci:** Kewirausahaan, Kreativitas, SMKS Muhammadiyah Watansoppeng

## INTRODUCTION

Suherman (2008:9) defines entrepreneurship as “a pioneer in business, an innovator, a risk bearer, a forward thinker, and achiever,” and explains entrepreneurship as “an imprecise act that creates high added value, is potent, and adds value to products or services for consumers or society.” From this definition, it can be concluded that entrepreneurship is the character of an entrepreneur, reflecting the desire and ability to think productively and creatively. In other words, based on entrepreneurship, every individual has the opportunity to measure and make decisions about their own business or alternatives, utilizing all available resources and potential to achieve their business goals. It can be said that entrepreneurship is a manifestation of an individual’s characteristics, where entrepreneurship can be learned.

“... entrepreneurship has models, processes, and case studies that allow the topic to be studied and the knowledge to be acquired” (Kuratko & Hodgetts, 2007: 34). “Entrepreneurship is a way of thinking, analyzing, and acting based on business opportunities, a holistic approach, and balanced leadership” (Timmons & Spinelli, 2004: 31). Alma (2008) states that entrepreneurship can lead to the enhancement of the workforce capacity, economic growth, making individuals better, inspiring and motivating others, adhering to rules and laws, helping others, living frugally, and maintaining harmony with the environment.

The ability or desire of students to prepare what is needed for entrepreneurship is known as entrepreneurial skills. An entrepreneur must have the ability to set life goals and manage their own business, motivate themselves, raise capital, manage time, mental capabilities grounded in religion, and the ability to learn from their experiences (Heru Kristanto, 2009).

Vocational High Schools (SMK) play a significant role in producing graduates who

are not only job-ready but also possess a strong entrepreneurial spirit. With technical skills acquired in school, SMK graduates have great potential to become successful entrepreneurs. SMK has ample opportunity to contribute to the economy as teachers guide students to become entrepreneurs during their adolescent development stage. The late stage of adolescent development is characterized by a stronger interest in intellectual functions (Sarwono, 2011: 30).

Student entrepreneurship is crucial in preparing them for the future as it encompasses a broad range of objectives. To teach students, build independence and innovation, help them learn not to depend on others, and empower them to create their own opportunities and problems. By being innovative, students can enhance creativity and the ability to think critically to create new and unique products or services. Developing communication skills is also essential for students to effectively communicate with various stakeholders, such as suppliers, investors, and customers. Teamwork skills are also nurtured to achieve common goals. A strategic step to take is to provide entrepreneurial knowledge to SMK students.

Students with entrepreneurial knowledge not only gain a better understanding of the business world but also develop the capacity to think more innovatively and creatively when facing challenges in the workforce. One of the main issues many SMKs face today is their limited focus on theoretical aspects. Students are less exposed to real entrepreneurial experiences if learning focuses only on theory without supporting real-world practices. Nevertheless, a school environment rich in entrepreneurship simulations and engaging activities is crucial in fostering students' enthusiasm and courage to engage in entrepreneurship.

A paradigm shift is needed in the learning process of SMK. Ideal learning should involve not just imparting knowledge, but also providing practical skills through various activities such as managing school enterprises, internships in companies, project-based entrepreneurship programs, and business

simulations. This way, students can directly experience the entrepreneurial process, from developing ideas to managing projects.

SMK students are expected to not only understand entrepreneurship but also develop the skills to become competent young entrepreneurs ready to compete in the workforce. Thus, schools will not only produce graduates who are job-ready but also generate employment opportunities.

Entrepreneurship in education is not solely about money. It is important to remember that entrepreneurship in education must be systematic, creative, innovative, productive, and responsive to achieve educational goals. These qualities are the primary assets in entrepreneurship, both commercially and non-commercially, whether for profit or nonprofit. Systematic can be defined as an integrated process with a clear organizational structure, led by individuals with a clear vision and mission. To be creative, one must create something new; to be innovative, one must change something creatively; and to be productive, one must continue to work and produce creative and innovative outputs. Responsiveness is the ability to adapt to changing times.

According to Daryanto (2012: 6), entrepreneurship is the attitude, spirit, and noble aspirations of someone who is innovative, creative, and strives for personal advancement. Therefore, entrepreneurship for SMK students is not just an option. As a vocational school, SMK Muhammadiyah Watansoppeng has a vision to produce graduates who not only possess technical competence but also a strong entrepreneurial spirit. Entrepreneurship is not merely a subject but an integral part of shaping the character of students at SMK Muhammadiyah Watansoppeng. By equipping students with entrepreneurial skills, the school aims to produce graduates who are job-ready and capable of creating positive change in society.

## RESEARCH METHOD

To ensure the effectiveness and meaningful impact of the training, the method employed aims to equip students with practical skills that they can apply in their lives, particularly to drive the transition towards digitalization in education. This approach is designed to prepare students for the challenges and opportunities that arise in the digital world, enabling them to become more adaptable and innovative. The methodology includes a step-by-step implementation process that incorporates both theoretical and practical elements, aiming to bridge the gap between classroom knowledge and real-world applications.

The first stage of the implementation process involves conducting a needs analysis to identify the challenges and barriers that students face when starting their digital entrepreneurship journey. This step is crucial for understanding the specific difficulties students encounter in this area and helps in tailoring the training to meet these needs. Surveys and interviews are carried out to assess students' perceptions of digital entrepreneurship and their readiness to participate in the program. This stage also helps gather insights into the existing knowledge students have about the subject and their willingness to engage in digital business ventures.

This data collection process is instrumental in ensuring that the training materials are relevant and directly address the students' needs. By analyzing the gathered information, trainers can design a curriculum that is both engaging and applicable to the real-world challenges students might face. This stage also lays the foundation for the next steps of the training, where students will be introduced to new concepts and practical strategies for starting and running a digital business.

The second stage of the methodology is the actual implementation of the training. During this phase, students are introduced to the fundamentals of digital entrepreneurship. They are taught how to leverage technology to start a business, with a focus on practical skills such as creating an online shop, managing product

listings, and using social media platforms for marketing. This stage aims to provide students with the tools and knowledge they need to operate a digital business effectively.

In addition to theoretical lessons, the training includes practical sessions where students actively apply what they have learned. During these sessions, students practice creating an online store using real products sourced from a cooperative. They are taught how to market these products on digital platforms such as Instagram, where they can learn about the process of engaging with potential customers and handling online transactions. This hands-on approach ensures that students not only understand the concepts but also gain experience in executing them in real-world scenarios.

The inclusion of practical exercises is designed to help students gain confidence in using digital tools and platforms to run a business. By providing real-life examples and allowing students to create their own online businesses, the training helps them develop important skills such as digital marketing, customer service, and business management. This approach is particularly useful for students who may be unfamiliar with the digital world, as it provides them with the opportunity to learn by doing, making the learning process more dynamic and impactful.

As students engage in these practical activities, they are encouraged to think creatively and innovatively about how they can use digital tools to solve problems and improve their business operations. The training fosters an entrepreneurial mindset, teaching students to identify opportunities, take risks, and find solutions to challenges that may arise. This mindset is essential for students to thrive in the competitive digital economy and become successful digital entrepreneurs.

Finally, the success of the training is evaluated based on the students' ability to apply what they have learned in real-world contexts. Post-training assessments, such as surveys and feedback sessions, are conducted to gauge the students'

understanding of the material and the impact the training has had on their entrepreneurial skills. These evaluations help trainers refine the training program and ensure that it continues to meet the evolving needs of students in the digital age.

## **FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION**

This training was held at SMK Muhammadiyah Watansoppeng in November 2024. The training was attended by students, which means that a significant amount of effort went into internalizing the knowledge on how to engage in digital entrepreneurship. The involvement of students in this training helped them gain a deeper understanding of the concepts and practices of entrepreneurship in the digital age. Through this engagement, students were able to enhance their skills and knowledge in ways that will prepare them for future entrepreneurial opportunities. The training aimed to foster not just technical business skills, but also a mindset of innovation and creativity among the students.

One of the key findings from the training is the significant increase in students' knowledge about entrepreneurship. This was measured through a post-test administered after students had applied the digital entrepreneurship methods they had learned during the sessions. The results showed that the majority of students demonstrated a greater understanding of entrepreneurship compared to before the training. Initially, many students were unfamiliar with the concept of digital entrepreneurship, but by the end of the training, they had gained a clearer understanding of how to start and manage a business using digital tools. The training also had a positive impact on the students' self-confidence and motivation to pursue entrepreneurship. Identifying their own strengths and weaknesses in terms of self-confidence was an important step in increasing their self-awareness. This process helped

students develop their entrepreneurial potential by fostering a mindset that is more confident and motivated. With these newly developed skills and attitudes, students are now more equipped to explore entrepreneurial ventures and take calculated risks in the future.

In addition to boosting confidence, the training provided students with the motivation to improve their entrepreneurial skills. By focusing on creativity, students were encouraged to think outside the box and develop new ideas for products or services. This motivational aspect of the training helped students not only improve their creativity but also their problem-solving abilities, allowing them to tackle challenges more effectively in their entrepreneurial pursuits.

Another significant outcome of the training was the enhancement of students' independence and their readiness to face the workforce. The training emphasized the importance of being responsible for one's decisions and actions, and students became more independent in their approach to entrepreneurship. This development of autonomy was accompanied by a focus on communication skills, which are essential for engaging with various stakeholders, such as customers, suppliers, and potential investors. Students were also better prepared to start their own businesses in the digital era, thanks to the practical knowledge they gained during the training.

The training also aimed to build an entrepreneurial mindset in the students, which is crucial for cultivating a generation of young entrepreneurs who are resilient and innovative. This mindset goes beyond business knowledge and encompasses the attitudes, values, and behaviors that contribute to entrepreneurial success. The training successfully instilled this entrepreneurial mindset in the students, encouraging them to be proactive, creative, and solution-oriented when facing business

challenges. Through the practical sessions where students applied what they learned, they were able to gain hands-on experience in digital entrepreneurship. The training included activities such as creating online stores, using social media for marketing, and learning about digital sales platforms. These practical experiences provided students with valuable insights into the real-world challenges of running a business, giving them the confidence to pursue entrepreneurship independently.

Finally, the success of the training was evaluated based on the students' ability to apply the concepts and skills learned in real-world situations. The post-training assessments indicated that the students were not only able to understand the material but were also capable of implementing it effectively. This success underscores the importance of providing students with both theoretical knowledge and practical experience, as it ensures they are better prepared for future entrepreneurial endeavors.

## **CONCLUSION**

Entrepreneurship in education can be defined as an ongoing process that enables the creation of strategies that are not only productive but also adaptable to the changing times. Entrepreneurship is crucial for transforming innovative and creative ideas into real-world learning experiences. This process begins by giving students the space to try new concepts, solve problems, and acquire skills relevant to the real world. The students at SMK Muhammadiyah Watansoppeng have become more creative thanks to the role of entrepreneurship. They have the opportunity to develop creative ideas, learn to solve problems, and enhance their creative thinking skills when facing challenges, provided that the concept of entrepreneurship is applied in their learning.

Students become more creative because entrepreneurship education teaches them to be more independent, take risks, and become good leaders. They not only gain technical

knowledge through entrepreneurship training and learning but also acquire innovative and creative skills that can be applied in business. Therefore, integrating entrepreneurship into the SMK curriculum is a vital part of preparing students to become innovative individuals who are ready to compete in the global era.

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