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The Role of Entrepreneurship Education in Cultivating Entrepreneurial Interest among Students of the Islamic Economics Study Program

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to determine the role of entrepreneurship education in fostering entrepreneurial interest among students in the Sharia Economics study program, Faculty of Sharia and Islamic Economics, Tomakaka University, Mamuju. It also aims to identify supporting and inhibiting factors in starting a business. This study uses a qualitative research method with data collection through interviews with students who have received entrepreneurship education through entrepreneurship courses. The results show that entrepreneurship education provided through entrepreneurship courses can foster students' entrepreneurial interest. This is indicated by growing self-confidence in students, the ability to think creatively, being more able to face challenges and exploit opportunities, and increasing insight into the business world. Supporting factors in starting a business are interest, motivation, mentality, and talent, as well as external factors such as market opportunities, capital, economic conditions, and family support. Inhibiting factors in starting a business are fear of failure, lack of confidence, lack of capital, lack of mentor guidance, and minimal insight into the world of entrepreneurship.

Keywords: Entrepreneurship education, interests, entrepreneurs

INTRODUCTION

Education as a place where a person consciously tries to acquire knowledge, experience, skills, and abilities is believed to cause psychological changes from adolescence to adulthood, which must be reflected in lifestyle changes and contextual changes in everyday life (Ariffin et al., 2022; Opstoel et al., 2020). The goal of education is essentially to humanise humans, or to guide students to discover their true selves. Humanising humans means placing Indonesians in accordance with their human proportions and essence (Guevara-Herrero et al., 2023; Kolleck et al., 2020). Therefore, if a naming of education is unable to bring benefits to students, then it is not worthy of being called education.

Entrepreneurship is defined as a creative and innovative ability (creating new and different things) which is used as a strategy, basis, resource, process, and struggle to create added value for goods and services, which is carried out with the courage to face risks. (Miranda et al., 2023; Prince et al., 2021).

Entrepreneurship education is a foundational education and understanding that helps students develop and hone their creativity, initiative, responsibility, and decision-making skills, as well as learn to face risks (Amankwah & Miller, 2024; Fernandes et al., 2021; Roslan et al., 2022). Entrepreneurship education begins with attitude formation and the development of an entrepreneurial mindset, followed by the organisation and formation of creative and innovative behaviours for students, enabling them to be creative (Jiatong et al., 2021; Kuratko et al., 2021). Education is an external factor that can influence a person's interests. Entrepreneurship education is one way to foster an entrepreneurial spirit, making them more

willing to take risks, be more responsible, be more creative, and be more innovative (Tripopsakul et al., 2022; Wiyono & Wu, 2022).

Interest is a strong tendency of the heart towards something; one of the interests in question is the interest in entrepreneurship (Chong, 2022; Eva, 2023; Tripopsakul et al., 2022). Several factors, both internal and external, can influence this interest. Internal factors originate from within a person, while external factors originate from outside the individual, including family, school, peers, and community.

Entrepreneurship education is expected to be able to build and grow an interest in entrepreneurship in students so that it can reduce the number of unemployed in Indonesia (Kebede, 2023; Kim et al., 2020). According to data from the Central Statistics Agency (BPS), the number of unemployed people in Indonesia in February 2025 reached 7.28 million and increased compared to February 2024 by 7.20 million. The age group that is mostly unemployed is dominated by young people (15-24 years old) at 16.16%, compared to the 25-59 age group at 3.04% and the group 60 years and above at 1.67%. Vocational high school graduates still dominate, followed by high school graduates and university graduates. BPS also stated that as of February 2025, the unemployment rate in urban areas was higher (reaching 5.73%) compared to rural areas (3.33%). Unemployment at the undergraduate level is feared to increase if universities are unable to provide specific guidance to both students and alumni in creating their own jobs, in addition to filling job vacancies that are generally classified as minimal when compared to the number of people ready to work (Goodall et al., 2022; Somani, 2021).

Thus, by providing entrepreneurship education in higher education, it is hoped that students will be able to create their own jobs and foster a creative and innovative spirit. As stipulated in Law No. 20 of 2003, Article 3, Chapter II of the National Education System states that national education develops skills and shapes the nation's character and culture as its educational objectives. For public life, it develops the potential of students to become faithful, pious, capable, healthy, creative, independent, responsible, and democratic citizens.

The Faculty of Sharia and Islamic Economics, Tomakaka University, Mamuju, conducts entrepreneurship courses for students in the Sharia Economics study program. These courses provide students with material and practical experiences related to entrepreneurship. Entrepreneurship courses are expected to attract students' interest in becoming entrepreneurs and improve their skills in starting businesses, creating products/services, and developing marketing skills.

The Sharia Economics study program, Faculty of Sharia and Islamic Economics, Tomakaka University, Mamuju, has implemented an entrepreneurship education program in the fourth semester, but observations indicate that there are still few students starting businesses. This may be because the primary purpose of taking the entrepreneurship course is simply to fulfil assignments and earn grades. Two students stated that they did not start businesses due to fear of failure and risk, as well as financial constraints.

For these reasons, further research will be conducted on the role of entrepreneurship education in fostering entrepreneurial interest among students in the Sharia Economics study program, Faculty of Sharia and Islamic Economics, Tomakaka University, Mamuju. A study conducted by Arum and Anasrulloh (2024) entitled, "The Role of Entrepreneurship Education in Fostering Entrepreneurial Interest among Students in the Economics Education Study Program, Bhinneka PGRI University." The results show that entrepreneurship education at Bhinneka PGRI University directly and indirectly serves as a university step to equip its students to foster and develop an interest in entrepreneurship. The implementation of entrepreneurship education learning activities not only emphasises material and theory but also includes practical training through direct fieldwork. Student interest in entrepreneurship is influenced by several factors, including entrepreneurship education, environmental factors,

family factors, relationship factors, expectations, and capital factors (Hulaikah et al., 2020; Kolb & Kolb, 2022; Morris, 2020).

Research conducted by Wardhani & Nastiti (2023) shows that entrepreneurship education is implemented from entrepreneurship education to students, namely by integrating entrepreneurship education into entrepreneurship courses; Implementation of entrepreneurship education in lectures to grow interest in entrepreneurship in students is integrated in the form of teaching in the form of materials and practices; Factors that can foster interest in entrepreneurship include both internal and external influences, as well as factors that support or inhibit this interest. The benefits of entrepreneurship lectures positively impact students by equipping them with entrepreneurial skills, enhancing their entrepreneurial insight, motivating them, and developing their mindset for business.

Research conducted by Siregar et al. (2023) indicates that entrepreneurship education is useful for equipping students with the knowledge and skills necessary to start and manage a business, helping create jobs by encouraging students to become entrepreneurs and create job opportunities, stimulating innovation by teaching students to think creatively, and identifying business opportunities and developing new ideas.

Research by Yusuf & Sutanti (2020): The results of the study indicate that entrepreneurship education has a positive and significant effect on entrepreneurial interest among FEB UMJ students; the environment has a positive and significant effect on entrepreneurial interest among FEB UMJ students; and entrepreneurship education and the environment have a positive and significant effect on entrepreneurial interest among FEB UMJ students.

METHODS

This study employed a qualitative method, collecting data using interviews with students in the Islamic economics study program. Interviews were conducted with students in the Islamic economics study program who had received entrepreneurship education through entrepreneurship courses. Participants were selected using a purposive sampling technique deemed appropriate to the research criteria. The number of participants in this study was not fixed, as it could change as the research progressed until sufficient information was gathered to answer the research questions.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Entrepreneurship education implemented in the Sharia Economics study program takes the form of an entrepreneurship course in the second semester. This course is expected to foster students' interest and entrepreneurial spirit, which they can utilise upon graduation. Research also shows that four students, in different semesters, who have completed entrepreneurship education have already established their own businesses, albeit on a small scale. However, their efforts in building these businesses are commendable.

Students receive entrepreneurial education through the entrepreneurship course, which develops a lesson plan for each semester. The course delineates the expected outcomes for students upon completion. One goal is to foster students' entrepreneurial interest and enable them to build their own businesses upon graduation. We must create our own jobs since we can't predict where we'll work after graduation.

Based on an interview with student 1 (SN), who was asked how entrepreneurship education sparked his interest in entrepreneurship, his response was as follows:

Examples, real-world problems, and practical applications that are applicable in everyday life make the entrepreneurship material highly engaging. The entrepreneurship course also teaches students to cultivate entrepreneurial determination and perseverance."

Student SN is a sixth-semester student who runs a body care reseller business. He started his business after gaining motivation, partly through entrepreneurship education. He wanted to become an entrepreneur not only to improve his skills but also to introduce himself to people through the products he sells. Family support also fuelled his entrepreneurial spirit. Besides financial support, his family also supported him by purchasing the products he offered.

Another interview with a kindergarten student also revealed,

"The real-world application of entrepreneurship and its potential to achieve financial independence make it an intriguing topic." The practical experience involved a "Healthy Snacks" business bazaar, selling products like chicken dim sum and fruit sandwiches. I marketed the products online and offline, travelling around Anjungan Manakarra Beach and Arteri."

Through these practices, kindergarten students understand that the key to entrepreneurship isn't just capital but also creativity, the courage to take risks, and the ability to recognise opportunities. Besides the education they receive, they also see the support they receive from their entrepreneurial families.

Entrepreneurship education can motivate kindergarten students to manage their time and work styles, as well as to achieve financial independence. This matches the goal of studying entrepreneurship: to inspire students to be more self-sufficient in work and other areas.

As Widodo (2012: 2) points out, the personality traits an entrepreneur needs include self-confidence, goal-orientedness, persistence, risk-taking, leadership, originality, creativity, and a constant pursuit of excellence.

Several factors can contribute to starting a business. For example, an interview with an AA student stated that she was interested in entrepreneurship to earn her own income and understand economics, as well as to identify potential customers and understand the market. After taking an entrepreneurship course, she became motivated to start a business. Although her makeup service business started modestly, it attracted quite a lot of interest, especially from friends she knew.

The interviews clearly indicate that the factors supporting the start of a business include not only internal elements like interest, motivation, mentality, and talent but also external elements such as market opportunities, capital, economic conditions, and family support.

In addition to these supporting factors, there are also several factors that can be inhibiting. This is illustrated in interviews with DR students who, despite running a printing service business, still faced obstacles in starting their business, including initial lack of confidence, limited insight into entrepreneurship, intense competition, and limited capital. DR students felt motivated by the entrepreneurship course because it built their confidence and broadened their horizons through relevant material, interactive teaching methods, inspiring case studies, opportunities for discussion and exchange of ideas, and hands-on practice.

Student N also stated that among the obstacles encountered in starting a business were a lack of capital and experience, fear of failure or embarrassment, and a lack of guidance from a mentor. However, after receiving entrepreneurship education, students learn directly from real-world experiences, improve their management, communication, and creativity skills, and build mental resilience and self-confidence in facing challenges.

After highlighting the many factors encountered, it was revealed that in addition to education, other factors influence students' interest in entrepreneurship, such as family support, market opportunities, financial/economic conditions, facilities (which can be in the form of business permits or capital), and government policies that support the development of small and medium enterprises (MSMEs).

CONCLUSION

The conclusion of this study is that entrepreneurship education provided through entrepreneurship courses can foster students' interest in entrepreneurship. This is indicated by growing self-confidence, creative thinking, greater ability to face challenges and capitalize on opportunities, and increased insight into the business world. Supporting factors in starting a business include interest, motivation, mentality, and talent, as well as external factors such as market opportunities, capital, economic conditions, and family support. Inhibiting factors in starting a business include fear of failure, lack of confidence, limited capital, lack of mentor guidance, and limited insight into the world of entrepreneurship. This research can contribute to the world of education related to entrepreneurship education in general and serve as a reference for Islamic economics study programs and Islamic economics students in particular regarding related material. Recommendations for future research include the addition of other variables related to the research title.

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