

Developing an Entrepreneurial Spirit: Case Study of Entrepreneurial Vocational School Students in Jombang

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Abstract. This research investigates the phenomenon of students who are active in entrepreneurship, explaining the motivations behind their involvement, the obstacles they face, as well as the development of emerging aspects of entrepreneurship and ways to improve them. Qualitative methods with a case study approach were used in this research. Data were analyzed through reduction, display and inference, with triangulation to ensure validity. Respondents consisted of students who had been running a business for at least 1 year, with a minimum turnover of 2 million per month, and were actively involved as owners in business development. Research findings show that students' main motivation for entrepreneurship is earning income for living and tuition fees, optimizing time, and the desire to strengthen themselves and contribute to society. In addition, aspects of entrepreneurship that develop include leadership, independent work, hard work, collaboration, creativity, innovation, as well as courage in making decisions and facing risks.

Keywords: Entrepreneurship; entrepreneurial spirit; student.

INTRODUCTION

Vocational High School students are vital potential in the country's development. They have a young age range, strong energy, and high thinking and creative abilities, becoming the foundation for the nation's progress. However, data shows that the unemployment rate, especially among youth, has reached 6 million, with 4 million of them aged 15-24 years (detik.com, 2022). This indicates the need for skills that suit the demands of the world of work. Many vocational school/equivalent graduates are unemployed due to a lack of the necessary skills. Therefore, to overcome this problem, it is important for the government and related institutions to direct graduates as job creators through developing an entrepreneurial spirit. (McClelland, 1973) highlights the importance of entrepreneurship in the progress of a country. With the entrepreneurial rate in Indonesia only reaching 1.56%, while developed countries such as the United States (11.5%), Singapore (7.2%), Malaysia (5%), and Thailand (4%), emphasize the need to increase the number of entrepreneurs. Entrepreneurship can be taught and learned, with characteristics including leadership, independence, teamwork, creativity, innovation, and the ability to take risks. To equip students with an entrepreneurial spirit, they need to be facilitated and encouraged, and even receive assistance from experienced business

mentors. Through more in-depth research, we can identify and develop the entrepreneurial spirit that exists in students, helping them better prepare for their future.

Entrepreneurship, as a trait that can be learned and taught, marks individuals who have potential as entrepreneurs, although this is not a guarantee of becoming an entrepreneur. Every entrepreneur basically has an entrepreneurial spirit, with main characteristics such as the ability to lead, be independent, work in a team, be creative, innovative, and dare to face risks. The younger generation, including students, need to be encouraged and equipped with knowledge, insight, real experience, and accompanied by experienced business mentors to encourage them to become agents of change for society and the country. In the midst of competition to find work, an interesting phenomenon has emerged where students actively choose entrepreneurship amidst busy campus activities, showing strong motivation to empower themselves and society. Initial studies show that entrepreneurship can develop positive characters such as leadership, hard work, creativity, and others. From here, researchers are interested in further investigating the development of an entrepreneurial spirit in students, including the aspects that drive it and efforts to develop it.

THEORETICAL STUDY

The theoretical review described in this research comes from several relevant previous studies, as a basis for the theoretical framework, determination and research analysis as follows.

Entrepreneurship

Entrepreneurship has a broad theoretical foundation, encompassing a variety of approaches and concepts that support the understanding and development of entrepreneurial skills. These theories include psychological approaches that highlight individual characteristics such as Personality Theory, where factors such as risk-taking, initiative and tolerance for uncertainty are considered important for entrepreneurs. The concept of motivation is also an important part of entrepreneurship theory, with a focus on individuals' drive to achieve their goals and involvement in entrepreneurial activities. Apart from that, there is also an economic approach that refers to the Theory of Innovation and Entrepreneurship, which emphasizes the role of innovation as the main driver of economic and social change, as well as the Resource Theory, which highlights the importance of access to resources such as capital, networks and knowledge in business success. All of them provide an important foundation in understanding the psychological, economic and organizational aspects of entrepreneurship, supporting the

understanding and development of entrepreneurial practices in various business and social contexts.

Entrepreneurial Spirit

The concept of entrepreneurial spirit shows the characteristics and traits that encourage individuals to become successful entrepreneurs. The entrepreneurial spirit theory is rooted in the understanding that a person not only faces business opportunities, but also has certain attitudes, motivations and traits that support the ability to take advantage of these opportunities. This theory is often related to psychological aspects, such as Personality Theory which highlights individual qualities such as courage, perseverance, creativity, and the drive for achievement. In addition, Motivation Theory is also relevant in this context, with its emphasis on the factors that drive individuals to achieve goals, such as a sense of accomplishment, the need for recognition, or the aspiration to build something new. The entrepreneurial spirit is also seen as a combination of the courage to take risks, resilience in the face of failure, the ability to adapt to change, and the ability to innovate. Holistically, the entrepreneurial spirit theory provides a basis for understanding the characteristics and motivations that drive individuals to become successful entrepreneurs.

RESEARCH METHODS

This research applies qualitative methods with a case study approach to explore related problems. Qualitative methods were chosen to answer research questions in depth, in accordance with (Moleong, 2005) views on the characteristics of qualitative research which focuses on field data sources, descriptions, work processes, inductive analysis, and emphasis on meaning in research. Case studies are considered appropriate for several reasons; first, being able to answer the questions "how" and "why" in research, in accordance with Yin's (1994) argument about the need for in-depth exploration in solving problems. Second, it is used when the subject's behavior cannot be manipulated, and third, it focuses on relevant contemporary phenomena, as described by Yin. This research focuses on students who are entrepreneurs with certain criteria such as being active in their studies, business ownership for at least 1 year, role as a business owner, and a minimum turnover of 2 million. Data collection was carried out through in-depth-focused interviews and observations, to ensure accuracy and avoid bias in respondents' answers. Data analysis uses a theoretical coding model, which allows the development of data-based theory (grounded theory) as well as testing existing theories. This analysis process includes three types of coding: open, axial, and selective, until a central

phenomenon is found that summarizes the data and answers the research questions comprehensively.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Research result

The findings in this research emphasize the uniqueness of each respondent in terms of reasons for starting an entrepreneur, obstacles faced, development of an entrepreneurial spirit, and strategies for developing an entrepreneurial spirit. The main reason for most respondents was to increase income and finance education, but there were variations in the reasons among them. In respondent I, entrepreneurship was started to optimize free time when the college schedule was not busy. The main obstacle is dividing time between business and studies, plus the difficulty of building trust from customers. Entrepreneurial experience hones independence, hard work, and the ability to take decisions and risks. The development strategy involves reading business books, discussing with experts, and joining business communities for strong networking and knowledge.

In respondent II, entrepreneurship is considered a future need to help other people with employment opportunities. The biggest obstacles are patience and self-change, while this experience enriches leadership, hard work, cooperation and resilience. They develop themselves through reading, mentoring, and entrepreneurship development centers. Respondent III indicated that the reasons for entrepreneurship expand from financial aspects to a broader vision for a strong future. The main obstacle is building trust within the team and from others. Entrepreneurial experience strengthens the ability to manage a team, creativity and resilience. Self-development through reading, workshops, business incubators, and experience has formed solid courage and knowledge.

For respondent IV, although the main motive was to increase income, the focus was more towards empowering other people and society. The biggest obstacle is changing the mindset to create an independent society. Entrepreneurship strengthens the spirit of leadership, cooperation, independence and courage. Self-development through literature, discussions, training and the business community has equipped them with knowledge and experience that ensures business development and empowers others. In order to understand more deeply about the development of students' entrepreneurial spirit, the results from each respondent provide a diverse picture and are the main focus of this research.

Development of an Entrepreneurial Spirit

Developing an entrepreneurial spirit in vocational school students has an important role in equipping them with practical skills that are relevant to the world of work. Vocational High Schools (SMK) are often a vehicle for students to gain a practical understanding of the business world. The approach to developing an entrepreneurial spirit in vocational school students involves a number of initiatives, such as implementing a curriculum that integrates applicable entrepreneurship material, practical teaching about financial management and marketing, as well as providing opportunities for students to be involved in real entrepreneurial projects. Vocational school education programs can include subjects or activities that emphasize entrepreneurial aspects, such as creating a business plan, managing a small business within the school environment, or even interning at a local company or business. These steps allow students to experience firsthand what it takes to run a business, from planning to execution.

Vocational school students can also be empowered through mentoring programs, which provide the opportunity to learn from experienced business practitioners. Through interactions with these mentors, students can gain deep insight into the business world, understand the decision-making process and the challenges faced by entrepreneurs on a daily basis. Apart from that, providing a learning environment that supports innovation and creativity is also very important in developing the entrepreneurial spirit of vocational school students. Activities outside the classroom such as seminars, workshops, or business competitions can be a place for students to hone their practical skills, expand their network, and build confidence in facing the complex world of business.

By creating an inclusive and supportive learning environment, as well as by implementing learning methods that emphasize practical application, Vocational Schools can play an important role in forming students who are ready to face the challenges of the world of work and have strong entrepreneurial skills.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusion

Based on the research results above, researchers can conclude that the development of an entrepreneurial spirit in vocational school students aims to provide practical skills that are relevant to the world of work. This is done through an integrated curriculum, direct teaching of financial management and marketing, and entrepreneurial projects. The program also collaborates with business practitioners for mentoring, facilitating student interactions with experienced entrepreneurs, providing business insight, and facing daily challenges. An

inclusive learning environment, extracurricular activities, seminars and business competitions support the development of students' practical skills and creativity. With this approach, Vocational Schools play an important role in equipping students to face the world of work with strong entrepreneurial skills.

Suggestion

Based on the research results, there are several research suggestions that can be submitted. To increase the development of an entrepreneurial spirit in vocational school students, more real entrepreneurial projects can be provided as part of the curriculum. A further introduction to financial management and marketing, as well as a more in-depth business plan, may be included in the program. Through an expanded mentoring program, students can gain broader insight into the business world and the challenges they face. A learning environment that supports innovation is also important, therefore, extracurricular activities and business competitions should be increased to train students' practical skills. In this way, vocational schools can better prepare students to respond to challenges in the world of work with strong entrepreneurial skills.

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