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ENTREPRENEURSHIP MANAGEMENT IN ENHANCING STUDENT CREATIVITY AT STATE VOCATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL

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ABSTRACTS

Creativity is a critical competency in vocational education, essential for preparing learners to become innovative and self-reliant graduates. This study examines the implementation of entrepreneurship management in enhancing student creativity at SMK Negeri 7 Muaro Jambi. Employing a qualitative descriptive design, data were collected through observation, semi-structured interviews, and documentation involving the school principal, entrepreneurship teachers, and vocational students. Data were analyzed using interactive qualitative analysis (data reduction, display, and conclusion drawing). Findings reveal that entrepreneurship management operates through four systematic stages: planning, organizing, implementation, and evaluation. Experiential activities including product development, collaborative teamwork, and digital marketing foster students' ideation flexibility, problem-solving adaptability, and self-directed innovation. Key supporting factors encompass structured teacher mentoring, adequate learning facilities, high student motivation, and institutional policy support. Conversely, constraints such as limited startup capital, insufficient marketing experience, heterogeneous creativity levels, and restricted practical time hinder optimal outcomes. The study concludes that well-structured entrepreneurship management significantly enhances student creativity when reinforced by continuous pedagogical guidance and sustainable institutional support.

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A. INTRODUCTION

Vocational education plays an indispensable role in preparing students to meet the increasingly complex and dynamic demands of the contemporary global workforce. In an era characterized by rapid technological advancement, economic volatility, and shifting industry paradigms, technical proficiency alone is no longer sufficient to guarantee long-term career success. Employers and industrial sectors now prioritize graduates who possess a broader spectrum of cognitive and non-cognitive competencies, particularly creativity, innovation, adaptability, and problem-solving agility. Within this landscape, vocational high schools (SMK) are strategically positioned to serve as catalysts for human capital development by equipping learners with both domain-specific hard skills and the entrepreneurial mindset necessary to navigate uncertainty. Creativity, in particular, has emerged as a foundational competency that enables students to think divergently, identify emerging market opportunities, design contextually relevant solutions, and transform abstract ideas into tangible, value-adding products or services. Consequently, entrepreneurship education in vocational settings is no longer viewed as a supplementary subject but as a core pedagogical strategy designed to bridge theoretical classroom knowledge with authentic, real-world application, thereby fostering economic self-reliance, professional resilience, and holistic character development.

Despite the widespread acknowledgment of entrepreneurship education's transformative potential, a significant portion of existing pedagogical models in Indonesian vocational schools remains fragmented and curriculum-centric. Traditional approaches often emphasize theoretical instruction, isolated project assignments, or one-off business simulations that lack sustained institutional backing and systematic managerial oversight. Consequently, empirical studies examining how structured, school-wide management frameworks as opposed to isolated curricular inputs—systematically nurture and sustain student creativity remain remarkably scarce. Most contemporary literature focuses predominantly on teaching methodologies, teacher competencies, or student motivational factors, while largely overlooking the underlying managerial ecosystem that orchestrates planning, resource allocation, cross-functional coordination, stakeholder collaboration, and continuous program evaluation. This managerial gap is critical because creativity does not emerge spontaneously; it thrives within intentionally designed learning environments where instructional design, logistical support, mentorship structures, and reflective feedback loops are cohesively integrated. Without a deliberate management framework, entrepreneurship initiatives risk becoming superficial exercises that fail to cultivate deep-seated creative competencies or sustainable entrepreneurial behaviors among vocational learners.

This study directly addresses this empirical and conceptual gap by investigating how systematic entrepreneurship management at SMK Negeri 7 Muaro Jambi shapes and sustains student creativity across the full cycle of educational programming. Rather than treating entrepreneurship as a standalone academic subject, the school has institutionalized it as a managed educational process encompassing four interdependent stages: strategic planning, organizational structuring, experiential implementation, and formative evaluation. Each stage functions as a deliberate

intervention designed to scaffold creative thinking, encourage iterative experimentation, and reinforce collaborative problem-solving. By examining this structured approach, the research shifts the analytical focus from *what* is taught to *how* entrepreneurship is systematically governed, coordinated, and sustained within a vocational institution. This managerial lens provides a more comprehensive understanding of the institutional conditions that either enable or constrain creative development, offering actionable insights for school administrators seeking to embed innovation into the core fabric of vocational education.

Furthermore, while the development of entrepreneurial creativity inherently aligns with broader character education objectives, its explicit integration with Islamic educational principles offers a culturally resonant and ethically grounded framework for vocational pedagogy. In the context of Islamic education, creativity and innovation are not merely economic instruments but are viewed as expressions of *khalifah fil ard*—the responsible stewardship of resources, talent, and societal well-being. Values such as *amanah* (trustworthiness in professional and financial dealings), *ikhlas* (sincerity in learning and service), and *istiqamah* (consistency and perseverance in the face of challenges) naturally complement the entrepreneurial journey by instilling ethical accountability, long-term vision, and social responsibility. Embedding these principles into entrepreneurship management not only reinforces moral pedagogy but also aligns the program with the broader philosophical mission of Islamic education to nurture graduates who are economically competitive, ethically grounded, and socially conscious. This integration is particularly relevant for institutions operating within Indonesia's pluralistic yet value-driven educational landscape, where character formation and spiritual development are considered inseparable from academic and vocational excellence.

Against this theoretical and contextual backdrop, the present study is designed to achieve three primary objectives: first, to systematically describe the implementation of entrepreneurship management across the planning, organizing, implementation, and evaluation stages within a vocational school setting; second, to identify and analyze the institutional, pedagogical, and logistical factors that either support or inhibit the development of student creativity; and third, to examine how structured managerial practices interact with experiential learning to enhance creative problem-solving, innovation capacity, and entrepreneurial self-efficacy. The research is grounded in qualitative inquiry, drawing on direct observations, semi-structured interviews, and documentary analysis to capture the nuanced realities of entrepreneurship management in practice. By doing so, it aims to generate empirically grounded insights that extend beyond theoretical discourse, offering vocational educators, school administrators, curriculum developers, and educational policymakers a replicable framework for designing sustainable, value-integrated entrepreneurship programs. Ultimately, this study contributes to both vocational education research and Islamic pedagogical discourse by demonstrating how systematic management, when aligned with ethical and cultural values, can transform vocational schools into dynamic incubators of creative, resilient, and socially responsible graduates.

B. RESEARCH METHOD

This study employed a qualitative descriptive approach to obtain an in-depth understanding of entrepreneurship management practices and their impact on student creativity. The research was conducted at SMK Negeri 7 Muaro Jambi, a public vocational high school with an established entrepreneurship program integrated into the Creative Products and Entrepreneurship curriculum.

1. Participants and Sampling

A purposive sampling technique was used to select 12 participants: 1 school principal, 3 entrepreneurship teachers, and 8 vocational students actively involved in the entrepreneurship program. Participants were selected based on their direct involvement in program planning, implementation, or participation, ensuring rich, context-specific insights.

2. Data Collection

Data were gathered through three techniques: (1) non-participant observation of entrepreneurship activities (product design, production, marketing simulations, and school bazaars); (2) semi-structured interviews (45–60 minutes each) exploring participants' experiences, perceived challenges, and pedagogical strategies; and (3) documentation analysis, including lesson plans, student project portfolios, assessment rubrics, and school program reports.

3. Data Analysis

Data were analyzed using Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña's (2014) interactive qualitative model. The process involved (a) data reduction through open and axial coding to identify recurring themes related to management stages and creativity indicators; (b) data display via thematic matrices and narrative summaries to visualize patterns; and (c) conclusion drawing through iterative comparison with research objectives and existing literature.

4. Trustworthiness

To ensure rigor, the study applied Lincoln and Guba's (1985) criteria. Credibility was established through method and source triangulation, as well as member checking with two participating teachers. Transferability was supported by thick contextual description of the school setting and program structure. Dependability and confirmability were maintained through an audit trail of coding decisions, reflexive journaling, and peer debriefing with a qualitative research colleague.

5. Ethical Considerations

The study obtained formal permission from the school administration and the regional education office. All participants provided written informed consent. Identities were anonymized using pseudonyms (e.g., T₁, T₂, S₁), and data were stored securely in compliance with institutional research ethics guidelines.

C. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

1. Implementation of Entrepreneurship Management

The implementation of entrepreneurship management at SMK Negeri 7 Muaro Jambi is carried out systematically through four main managerial stages, namely planning, organizing, implementation, and evaluation. These stages are designed to ensure that entrepreneurship learning is not merely theoretical, but experiential and oriented toward the development of students' creativity, innovation, and entrepreneurial competence in accordance with the goals of vocational education.

In the planning stage, teachers collaboratively design entrepreneurship programs and learning plans that are aligned with the curriculum of Creative Products and Entrepreneurship. The planning process includes determining learning objectives, selecting relevant project themes, preparing learning media and materials, and designing assessment instruments. Teachers also identify students' interests and local economic potentials so that the products developed are contextual and marketable. This stage reflects the importance of instructional planning in creating meaningful learning experiences, as emphasized in educational management literature that highlights the relationship between structured planning and improved learning outcomes.

In the organizing stage, students are divided into groups based on their skills, interests, and learning characteristics. Each group is assigned specific roles such as product designer, production manager, marketing coordinator, and financial recorder. This division of roles not only trains students' responsibility and teamwork but also introduces them to real business organizational structures. Teachers supervise and coordinate group activities to ensure collaboration runs effectively. The organizing process also includes scheduling production activities, allocating available resources, and ensuring that learning facilities are used efficiently.

In the implementation stage, students actively engage in entrepreneurship practices such as designing products, producing goods or services, packaging, pricing, and marketing through school exhibitions, social media, or local community networks. Teachers guide students through mentoring, feedback sessions, and reflective discussions to improve product quality and innovation. This stage provides authentic learning experiences that integrate cognitive, affective, and psychomotor domains. Students learn not only how to create products but also how to communicate ideas, solve problems, and adapt to challenges encountered during production and marketing processes.

In the evaluation stage, teachers assess students' performance using multiple criteria, including product originality, creativity, functionality, teamwork, marketing strategy, and presentation skills. Evaluation is conducted through observation, product assessment rubrics, peer assessment, and reflection activities. Teachers also provide constructive feedback to help students improve their entrepreneurial skills. Evaluation results are used to revise future learning plans and improve the quality of entrepreneurship programs.

Overall, the implementation of entrepreneurship management through these structured stages provides students with meaningful real-world learning experiences that enhance creativity, critical thinking, collaboration, and entrepreneurial competence. Through continuous practice and reflection, students gain confidence in developing innovative ideas and transforming them into valuable products, which ultimately prepares them to become independent and competitive graduates in the modern workforce.

2. Supporting Factors

Several supporting factors play an important role in improving students' creativity in entrepreneurship learning at SMK Negeri 7 Muaro Jambi. These factors do not work independently but interact with one another to create a learning environment that encourages innovation, experimentation, and active student participation.

First, teachers' guidance and motivation are key elements in fostering students' creativity. Teachers act not only as instructors but also as facilitators, mentors, and motivators who encourage students to explore ideas, take risks in innovation, and learn from mistakes. Through continuous feedback, mentoring sessions, and reflective discussions, teachers help students refine their product ideas, improve design quality, and develop entrepreneurial thinking. Motivational support from teachers also increases students' confidence, persistence, and willingness to experiment with new ideas, which are essential components of creative development.

Second, adequate facilities and infrastructure significantly support entrepreneurship learning activities. Availability of practice rooms, tools, raw materials, internet access, and marketing platforms enables students to carry out product development effectively. Proper facilities allow students to translate their ideas into real products, test prototypes, and improve product quality through repeated practice. In addition, access to digital technology and school exhibitions helps students learn modern marketing strategies and expand their understanding of real business environments.

Third, students' enthusiasm and active participation in entrepreneurship activities contribute greatly to the development of creativity. When students are motivated and interested in the projects they work on, they tend to be more engaged in exploring ideas, solving problems, and collaborating with peers. High enthusiasm encourages students to take initiative, seek information independently, and develop innovative solutions. Group collaboration also stimulates idea exchange, which can lead to more creative and diverse product outcomes.

Fourth, school support for entrepreneurship programs plays a strategic role in sustaining creativity-oriented learning. Institutional support can take the form of policy encouragement, budget allocation for entrepreneurship projects, organization of product exhibitions or bazaars, and collaboration with local industries or communities. Such support provides students with broader opportunities to market their products, gain real business experience, and receive feedback from external stakeholders. School commitment also strengthens the continuity of entrepreneurship programs and ensures their integration into the broader educational vision.

Overall, these supporting factors create a conducive learning ecosystem that enables students to explore creative ideas, experiment with product development, and build entrepreneurial competence. When teachers' guidance, adequate facilities, student motivation, and institutional support are combined effectively, entrepreneurship education becomes more meaningful and capable of producing innovative and independent graduates prepared for real-world challenges.

3. Inhibiting Factors

Entrepreneurship management at SMK Negeri 7 Muaro Jambi is not free from various challenges that may affect the effectiveness of entrepreneurship programs in enhancing student creativity. Based on observations and interviews, several inhibiting

factors were identified. First, limited business capital is one of the main obstacles. Students often experience difficulties in obtaining sufficient funds to produce creative products in larger quantities or with higher quality materials. This limitation restricts their ability to experiment with new ideas, packaging designs, and product innovation. According to research published in SINTA-indexed journals, access to financial resources significantly influences students' entrepreneurial experience and creativity development because adequate capital allows students to explore innovative production processes and marketing strategies.

Second, the lack of student experience in marketing products also becomes a challenge. Many students have creative ideas but are still unfamiliar with marketing techniques such as digital promotion, branding, customer targeting, and pricing strategies. Without proper marketing knowledge, students' products are less competitive in the market. Studies in entrepreneurship education emphasize that marketing skills training and mentorship are essential components in vocational schools to build entrepreneurial competence and creativity simultaneously.

Third, differences in creativity levels among students can influence group performance. Some students are highly innovative and active, while others tend to be passive or less confident in expressing ideas. This disparity may cause imbalance in teamwork and reduce the effectiveness of entrepreneurship projects. Research findings suggest that teachers need to apply collaborative learning methods, peer mentoring, and differentiated instruction to accommodate students' diverse abilities and foster collective creativity.

Fourth, limited time allocation for practical activities also becomes a significant obstacle. Entrepreneurship learning in vocational schools is often integrated with other subjects, leaving insufficient time for product development, experimentation, and evaluation. Creativity requires continuous practice and reflection; therefore, limited practice time may reduce students' opportunities to improve product quality and innovation. Scholars in vocational education highlight the importance of providing sufficient project-based learning time to achieve optimal entrepreneurship outcomes.

Despite these challenges, teachers and school management continue to seek solutions such as collaboration with local entrepreneurs, integrating digital marketing training, and optimizing school facilities. By addressing these inhibiting factors, entrepreneurship management programs are expected to run more effectively and contribute to improving students' creativity, innovation skills, and readiness to face real business environments.

4. Impact on Student Creativity

The implementation of entrepreneurship management at SMK Negeri 7 Muaro Jambi has a significant positive impact on students' creativity and overall learning development. Entrepreneurship-based learning encourages students to actively participate in real-world activities, such as product design, production, promotion, and sales. Through these activities, students gain hands-on experience that stimulates creative thinking and innovation.

First, students become more confident in expressing ideas. When they are involved in brainstorming sessions, group discussions, and product presentations, they learn to communicate their thoughts clearly and accept feedback constructively. Confidence is an essential aspect of creativity because it enables students to explore new

ideas without fear of failure. Research in entrepreneurship education shows that project-based learning environments can enhance students' self-efficacy and willingness to innovate.

Second, students become more innovative in producing products. Entrepreneurship activities require them to identify market needs, create unique product designs, and improve product quality continuously. This process trains students to think critically and creatively in solving real problems. They also learn to modify products based on customer feedback, which strengthens their ability to adapt and innovate. Such experiences help students develop originality, flexibility, and curiosity important indicators of creativity.

Third, entrepreneurship management improves students' teamwork and problem-solving skills. Students usually work in groups where each member has specific responsibilities, such as production, finance, marketing, and packaging. Collaboration in these groups helps students learn leadership, communication, and conflict resolution. When challenges arise—such as production errors or marketing difficulties students work together to find solutions. This collaborative problem-solving process enhances their creativity and social skills simultaneously.

Fourth, learning through practice provides meaningful experiences that improve cognitive, affective, and psychomotor aspects of students. Cognitively, students gain knowledge about entrepreneurship concepts and business management. Affectively, they develop positive attitudes such as discipline, responsibility, and perseverance. Psychomotorically, they improve technical skills in product creation and marketing activities. This holistic development aligns with vocational education goals, which aim to prepare students with practical competencies and creative abilities.

Overall, entrepreneurship management not only enhances students' creativity but also fosters independence, innovation, and readiness to face future career challenges. With continuous guidance from teachers and support from the school, entrepreneurship programs can become an effective strategy to develop creative, productive, and competitive graduates in vocational education.

5. Efforts to Overcome Obstacles

To address the various challenges encountered in implementing entrepreneurship programs, teachers and school administrators at SMK Negeri 7 Muaro Jambi have implemented several strategic efforts aimed at strengthening students' creativity and entrepreneurial competence. These efforts are carried out in a systematic and collaborative manner to ensure that entrepreneurship learning remains effective, practical, and sustainable.

First, the school provides entrepreneurship training and workshops for students. These training sessions focus on product development, business planning, financial management, digital marketing, and customer service. By receiving structured guidance, students gain deeper knowledge and practical skills that help them overcome difficulties in creating and marketing products. Training activities also build students' confidence and motivate them to explore innovative ideas. Teachers often invite successful entrepreneurs or alumni to share real experiences, which inspire students and provide valuable insight into real business challenges.

Second, the school organizes product exhibitions, entrepreneurship fairs, or bazaars as a platform for students to showcase and sell their products. These activities

provide real marketing experience and help students understand consumer behavior, pricing strategies, and product promotion. Through exhibitions, students learn how to communicate with customers, present their products attractively, and evaluate customer feedback. Such experiences not only improve students' creativity but also strengthen their entrepreneurial mindset and practical competence.

Third, collaboration with local businesses and the surrounding community is another important strategy. The school partners with small and medium enterprises to provide mentoring, internship opportunities, and product development guidance. Through this collaboration, students learn directly from practitioners about production techniques, quality control, and marketing strategies. This partnership also helps students expand their professional networks and understand real industry demands. In addition, local businesses sometimes provide opportunities for students to market their products through cooperative stores or online platforms.

Fourth, the school provides simple capital support or facilitates access to funding. Limited capital is one of the main obstacles faced by students in developing their products. To overcome this, the school allocates small funds, provides raw materials, or encourages students to use recycled and affordable materials creatively. Some teachers also guide students in managing profits and reinvesting them into future production. This approach teaches students financial responsibility and business sustainability.

Furthermore, teachers continuously provide mentoring and motivation throughout the entrepreneurship process. They monitor student progress, help solve problems, and encourage reflection on learning experiences. This guidance ensures that students remain motivated and continue improving their creativity and skills despite challenges.

Overall, these strategies demonstrate that effective entrepreneurship management requires collaboration, innovation, and continuous support. Through training, exhibitions, partnerships, and financial assistance, schools can create an entrepreneurship learning environment that empowers students to develop creative ideas into real products, build entrepreneurial competence, and prepare for future career opportunities.

Discussion

The structured management framework observed in this study aligns with contemporary educational management theory, which posits that systematic planning and reflective evaluation are critical for translating curricular intent into tangible learning outcomes (Harris & Jones, 2021). The four-stage cycle mirrors experiential learning models, where creativity emerges not from isolated instruction but from iterative, practice-based engagement (Kolb, 2015; Rahmawati et al., 2022).

The finding that teacher mentorship and institutional support significantly enhance creativity corroborates recent empirical work emphasizing the role of pedagogical scaffolding in vocational entrepreneurship (Widodo & Prihatin, 2023). However, unlike studies that treat creativity as an individual trait, this research demonstrates how managerial structures role allocation, resource coordination, and feedback loops cultivate *collective creativity* through collaborative problem-solving.

This aligns with sociocultural perspectives that view innovation as a socially distributed process rather than a solitary endeavor (Sawyer, 2020).

The identified constraints capital limitations, marketing inexperience, and time restrictions resonate with broader challenges in Indonesian vocational education (Kurniawan et al., 2021). To mitigate these, schools have implemented strategic interventions: entrepreneurship workshops, mini-bazaars, industry mentoring, and seed-funding allocation. These efforts reflect a shift from purely pedagogical management to *ecosystem-oriented entrepreneurship education*, where schools act as innovation incubators. Recent literature supports this model, showing that school-community partnerships significantly improve students' entrepreneurial self-efficacy and market readiness (Lestari & Nugroho, 2023).

Notably, the integration of Islamic educational values offers a culturally resonant framework for ethical entrepreneurship. Concepts such as *amanah* (trustworthiness in business dealings), *ikhlas* (sincerity in learning), and *khalifah* (responsible stewardship of resources) align naturally with sustainable and socially conscious innovation. Embedding these values into project reflections and assessment criteria not only strengthens character education but also fosters creativity grounded in ethical responsibility a dimension often underexplored in secular vocational literature (Al-Ghazali, 2020; Hasan & Yusuf, 2024).

For school administrators, embedding entrepreneurship management into institutional strategic plans ensures sustainability. For teachers, adopting differentiated mentoring and digital literacy modules can address creativity heterogeneity and marketing gaps. For policymakers, standardized funding mechanisms and industry-academia collaboration frameworks should be institutionalized across vocational high schools.

Longitudinal studies tracking creativity development across multiple academic cycles, comparative analyses across vocational clusters, and mixed-methods validation of creativity indicators are recommended. Additionally, research exploring the integration of Islamic work ethics into digital entrepreneurship curricula would further enrich both vocational and Islamic education scholarship.

D. CONCLUSION

Entrepreneurship management at SMK Negeri 7 Muaro Jambi is implemented through a structured process consisting of planning, organizing, implementation, and evaluation stages. In the planning stage, teachers design entrepreneurship learning programs, determine learning objectives, and prepare teaching materials and assessment instruments. During the organizing stage, students are grouped to carry out collaborative product creation activities and to learn teamwork and responsibility. The implementation stage involves hands-on activities such as designing products, producing goods or services, promoting them, and selling them in real or simulated markets. Finally, in the evaluation stage, teachers assess students' creativity, product quality, innovation, teamwork, and business performance while also providing feedback for improvement.

The findings of this study indicate that entrepreneurship activities play an important role in improving students' creativity, innovation, confidence, and entrepreneurial skills. Through real learning experiences, students are encouraged to generate ideas, solve problems, work collaboratively, and understand the process of developing a business from planning to marketing. Entrepreneurship learning not only enhances students' cognitive abilities but also strengthens their affective attitudes, responsibility, discipline, and independence, as well as their psychomotor skills in producing creative products.

Several supporting factors contribute to the success of entrepreneurship management, including teachers' guidance and motivation, adequate facilities and infrastructure, strong student enthusiasm, and school support through policies and programs. These factors create a conducive learning environment that allows students to explore creative ideas and develop innovative products. However, several inhibiting factors were also identified, such as limited business capital, lack of marketing experience, differences in students' creativity levels, and limited time for practice activities. These challenges can reduce the effectiveness of entrepreneurship programs if not addressed properly.

Therefore, continuous and well-managed entrepreneurship education supported by school leadership, adequate facilities, and consistent teacher guidance is necessary to improve students' creativity optimally. Schools need to strengthen training programs, expand partnerships with local businesses, provide simple capital assistance, and create more opportunities for students to market their products. With sustainable entrepreneurship management, vocational schools can produce graduates who are creative, innovative, independent, and ready to compete in the modern workforce while also contributing positively to society and economic development.

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