

Entrepreneurial Character Education from an Early Age

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ABSTRACT: *This study aims to understand forming students with an entrepreneurial character from an early age. For this reason, this research uses a qualitative type with a case study approach at the elementary school level, namely Islamic Primary School (SDI) Ibnu Rusyd North Lampung, Indonesia. Data were obtained from phenomena and activities at the research locus as primary data using in-depth observation techniques and structured interviews. The secondary data was obtained from institutional documents and some from literature sources such as books and articles with a close relationship with the entrepreneurial character. The analysis technique follows Miles & Huberman with the steps of gathering, presenting, condensing, and drawing conclusions. The results of the discussion explained that there are five entrepreneurial characteristics that SDI Ibnu Rusyd applies, namely independence, creativity, leadership, discipline, and the courage to take risks. Independent means the attitude students possess to overcome various problems by relying on their abilities. Creativity means that students can produce innovative new ideas. Leadership to influence and inspire others. Discipline means being able to act according to direction and responsibility. Dare to take risks is the nature of an entrepreneur. Feel free to try new things or take steps that have consequences. Applying entrepreneurial character right from an early age forms a strong foundation forming an essential basis for the success and innovation of future entrepreneurs.*

Penelitian ini memiliki tujuan untuk memberikan pemahaman tentang membentuk anak didik berkarakter kewirausahaan sejak dini. Untuk itu penelitian ini menggunakan jenis kualitatif dengan pendekatan studi kasus pada jenjang sekolah dasar yakni Sekolah Dasar Islam (SDI) Ibnu Rusyd Lampung Utara. Data diperoleh dari fenomena dan kegiatan di lokus penelitian sebagai data primer dengan menggunakan teknik observasi mendalam dan wawancara terstruktur. Adapun data skunder diperoleh dari dokumen Lembaga dan Sebagian dari sumber literature seperti buku dan artikel yang memiliki kaitan erat dengan karakter kewirausahaan. Teknik analisis mengikuti Miles & Huberman dengan Langkah-langkah pengumpulan, penyajian, pemadatan, dan penarikan kesimpulan. Hasil diskusi menerangkan terdapat lima karakter kewirausahaan yang secara terang diterapkan SDI Ibnu Rusyd yaitu mandiri, kreatif, kepemimpinan, disiplin, dan berani mengambil resiko. Mandiri berarti sikap yang dimiliki anak didik untuk dapat mengatasi berbagai permasalahan dengan mengandalkan kemampuan diri. Kreatif artinya anak didik dapat

menghasilkan ide-ide baru yang inovatif. Kepemimpinan untuk mempengaruhi dan menginspirasi orang lain. Disiplin bermakna mampu melakukan suatu tindakan sesuai arahan dan tanggung jawab. Berani mengambil resiko adalah watak seorang wirausahawan, tidak takut untuk mencoba hal baru atau mengambil langkah yang memiliki konsekuensi. Penerapan karakter kewirausahaan yang dilakukan sejak dini dengan tepat menjadi dasar yang kuat membentuk landasan penting bagi keberhasilan dan inovasi wirausahawan masa mendatang.

Keywords: *Character Building, Entrepreneurship, Islamic Elementary School.*

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I. INTRODUCTION

Education is an essential foundation in forming character and developing the potential of children as the nation's next generation (Suyadi et al., 2022; Yang et al., 2023). In the school environment, the entrepreneurial character is crucial in facing global challenges and competition (Dewi et al., 2015). Entrepreneurial character is a quality that encourages individuals to have a courageous spirit of taking risks, creativity, innovation, and a strong desire to achieve success in various fields. Along with the times and the increasingly complex needs of society, educators need to see the role of schools in shaping entrepreneurial character from an early age (Suyahman, 2017; Wei et al., 2019).

Character education is an essential aspect of every individual's life and for the progress of a nation (Alayo et al., 2019). In an era that continues to develop as it is today, character education is becoming increasingly important to be nurtured from an early age, especially in elementary schools. One form of character education that can be applied in elementary schools is the formation of entrepreneurial character. Entrepreneurial character can be defined as a series of traits, attitudes, and values instilled in individuals through entrepreneurship education. These characteristics include the skills, mental attitude and values necessary to become a successful entrepreneur. Entrepreneurial character involves innovation, creativity, persistence, entrepreneurial spirit, and the ability to see opportunities in every situation (Nugraha et al., 2022).

Islamic Elementary Schools (SDI) have an essential role in shaping entrepreneurial character because, at an early age, their mindset and attitudes towards various aspects of life can still be shaped and instilled more effectively. In this journal article, we will explore the formation of entrepreneurial character in Islamic elementary schools. Elementary schools have a unique position in children's education because apart from providing formal education according to the curriculum set by the government, they also provide learning based on Islamic values. Islam, as a religion that teaches the values of honesty, fairness, hard work, and social responsibility, provides a strong foundation for building a strong entrepreneurial character. Integrating religious teachings and entrepreneurship education is hoped that students will become citizens with integrity, be independent, and have an entrepreneurial spirit (Miranda et al., 2021).

Entrepreneurship character education in Islamic elementary schools can help improve the quality of innovative and quality human resources. Entrepreneurial character

building can help students develop essential life skills, such as working with a team, speaking in public, collecting, analyzing, and using data, using social media for promotion and advocacy, and dealing with complex real problems that have no answers. Specific and uses curiosity and creativity to find innovative approaches to complex problems (Tsauri, 2015). Entrepreneurial character building can also help students develop skills that can be used in adulthood, such as working with teams, using the internet and social media for marketing, and developing an entrepreneurial mindset.

Entrepreneurial character building in Islamic elementary schools can also help students develop critical entrepreneurial traits, such as creativity, innovation and collaboration. Leading universities and businesses highly value these traits. Entrepreneurial character building can also help students understand the importance of perseverance and resilience in pursuing their interests and ideas, even in difficult situations. By forming an entrepreneurial character, students can acquire skills and traits to help them succeed in a changing world (Indy, 2019; Mayangsari, 2018).

Entrepreneurship education today often only focuses on improving intellectual aspects, which impacts the development of students' character with work orientation. However, entrepreneurship education should better prepare students to face changes in the constantly evolving environment, including changes in the business and economic world. Therefore, it is essential to provide entrepreneurship education early, considering that the future will face more severe challenges, especially in business, economics and finance (Kisfalvi, 2020). Entrepreneurship is a vital profession or job option and has proven effective in overcoming various problems, especially in reducing unemployment and poverty rates (Klapper & Fayolle, 2023).

Entrepreneurship education from an early age has a vital role in developing quality human resources with creative and innovative abilities and other social skills. Entrepreneurship education needs to be implemented from an early age at all levels and types of education, including in elementary schools, so Indonesian people have individuals ready to face future economic challenges by bringing the nature of hard work and innovation that has been instilled in students. The teacher's role in shaping life skills that focus on creativity and independence is vital. Therefore, educators need to prepare students early on with knowledge about business and entrepreneurship, which can be integrated into various subjects using various learning approaches and methods (Hogenstijn & Cuypers, 2023).

Educators are responsible for shaping children's personalities so that they are ready to face life's challenges, especially in the economic and financial aspects, through entrepreneurship. Although there has been much academic research on entrepreneurship, specific research exploring entrepreneurship education at the elementary, junior high and senior high school levels still needs to be completed. Therefore, it is necessary to conduct further research to understand the role of entrepreneurship education at this level of education (Sholihannisa et al., 2023).

Several studies exist on entrepreneurship education in schools (Hadikusuma, 2019), entrepreneurship Education (Hasan, 2020), building an entrepreneurial spirit (Mashud, 2016), implementing entrepreneurship (Pramesti & Kusuma, 2020), and other studies. However, the lack of studies on entrepreneurship among primary school students, especially in Islamic schools, has attracted attention worldwide, especially in developing countries. Entrepreneurship education at the elementary school level is critical because it becomes the initial basis before continuing to a higher level of

education. Nonetheless, childhood and youth are considered the most appropriate periods for instilling the entrepreneurial spirit, forming positive attitudes towards entrepreneurship, and acquiring basic knowledge about the topic.

Based on these facts, the researchers wished to research at the Ibnu Rushd Islamic Elementary School in North Lampung. This study aims to observe how entrepreneurship education is implemented in SDI Ibnu Rusyd and what character is developed through this entrepreneurship education. The results of this study are expected to be a valuable implementation for entrepreneurship education at SDI Ibnu Rusyd and as a reference for further research related to increasing the success of entrepreneurship education in the future.

II. METHOD

This study was carried out using a qualitative approach, and a descriptive method was used to provide a detailed explanation of the findings. A qualitative approach provides a broader and more complete explanation (Moleong, 2013). The descriptive method used in this study was carried out to provide and show things related to the objects in more depth (Ikhwan, 2021). Data collection techniques in this study were carried out through observation and interviews. The indicators in observation and interviews are understanding and instilling entrepreneurial character, development of entrepreneurship learning, and the mechanism for implementing entrepreneurial character. Observations were made with more specific observations related to entrepreneurship-based life skills education at SDI Ibnu Rusyd. Interviews with as many as four informants who have status as teaching staff or teachers and school principals. Data analysis refers to the Miles & Huberman Data Collection, Data Display, Data Condensation, and Conclusion Drawing/Verifying techniques (Miles et al., 2014).

III. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The Importance of Early Entrepreneurial Character Education

Entrepreneurial character education prepares students to face life's challenges early on. It is essential in shaping students' life skills, enabling them to develop a strong foundation for their future. Entrepreneurship education is a valuable alternative that can be incorporated into the school curriculum. National character is closely related to human resources and significantly impacts a country's development. Character education begins informally in everyday family life and continues formally and informally in schools, both in the formal education system and through non-formal channels.

Developing entrepreneurial character in students is becoming increasingly important in today's rapidly changing world. By instilling entrepreneurial values and skills in students early, they are better equipped to adapt to challenges, take calculated risks, and foster innovation and creativity. Entrepreneurial character education empowers students to become proactive problem solvers and encourages them to think critically and independently.

Including entrepreneurship education in the school, curriculum can enhance students' academic knowledge and equip them with practical skills that can be applied in real life.

Through interactive and experiential learning, students can develop teamwork, communication, and leadership skills critical to entrepreneurship.

Character education is a comprehensive process that aims to instil positive traits and values in students. This involves disseminating information, raising awareness and preparedness, and engaging in activities that encourage good behaviour toward God, oneself, others, and the environment, to create individuals who positively contribute to society (Mursidin et al., 2018). To teach character effectively in schools, the involvement of all parties involved is significant. This includes designing appropriate training programs, integrating character education into the curriculum, adopting effective teaching and evaluation methods, and building strong relationships between students, teachers, school administrators, and the board. In addition, extracurricular activities and frameworks to support character development, supported by appropriate funding and collaborative efforts from all members of society, contribute to creating a school environment that supports character education.

To implement character education effectively, it is essential for all stakeholders, such as teachers, school administrators, parents, and society as a whole, to work collaboratively (Ikhwan et al., 2021). This collaboration involves planning a comprehensive training program to equip teachers with the knowledge and skills to teach character education effectively. In addition, integrating character education into various subjects and extracurricular activities ensures that messages about the importance of ethical behaviour and good character are received consistently by students.

Entrepreneurship education includes content, methodology and training methods to foster motivation, skills and practical experience in understanding entrepreneurial values (Hikmah, 2020). This type of education provides the knowledge and skills necessary for individuals to implement, manage and engage in entrepreneurial ventures. Entrepreneurship education at the basic education level also involves the development of various academic and social skills, often referred to as soft skills. These skills include critical and creative thinking, effective communication, assertiveness, and problem-solving skills. Entrepreneurship curriculum for primary schools may also include the values of innovation, independence, creating added value, taking considered risks, and recognizing opportunities (Motta & Galina, 2023).

Within the primary school environment, entrepreneurship education plays a vital role in shaping children's minds and providing a foundation for their future endeavours. Introducing entrepreneurial concepts and skills encourages students to think creatively and seek solutions to challenges they may face (Badawi et al., 2023). Critical thinking skills assist students in evaluating situations, while creative thinking encourages them to develop innovative ideas and solutions. Communicating effectively is essential in conveying ideas and collaborating with others, while assertiveness helps students express themselves confidently. Problem-solving abilities equip students with the skills to solve various problems with a logical approach.

Moreover, the values of innovation and independence instilled through entrepreneurship education empower students to become proactive and creative individuals. They learn to explore new ideas and approaches that can create added value in various aspects of their lives. In addition, entrepreneurship education also teaches students about taking calculated risks so that they have a healthy attitude towards challenges and opportunities. By encouraging students to see opportunities in various situations, entrepreneurship education helps cultivate a mindset of adaptability and resilience.

The integration of entrepreneurship education into the primary school curriculum provides a solid understanding of the entrepreneurial mindset and practical skills needed to achieve their future goals. Early exposure to entrepreneurship forms a strong foundation for student's personal and professional development, inspiring an entrepreneurial spirit that positively impacts their lives and the surrounding community.

Entrepreneurial Character Education at Ibnu Rusyd Islamic Elementary School

Based on research finding data, internalized entrepreneurial character is Independent, Creative, Leadership, disciplined, and daring to take risks.

1. Independence

Independence refers to attitudes and behaviours characterised by the individual's ability to assume responsibility without excessive reliance on others for support or direction. Being independent entails autonomy and self-sufficiency in decision-making and action-taking. Individuals with this trait have a strong sense of self-direction and confidence in their abilities. They are capable of setting and pursuing goals with determination, even in the absence of constant supervision or assistance.

Independence is an admirable trait in both personal and professional contexts. Independent individuals can maintain a healthy level of independence in personal relationships without becoming excessively dependent on others for validation or emotional support. This enables them to have satisfying relationships with others in which they contribute and receive support without losing their sense of self.

Independence development is a crucial aspect of personal development and education. Encouragement of independence in young children helps them develop self-assurance and resiliency, enabling them to confront challenges and make decisions as they mature. Promoting independent thinking and problem-solving skills in an educational context enables students to become critical thinkers and active learners, preparing them for future success.

2. Creative

Creativity entails developing new methods or outcomes by reimagining an extant product or service. Creativity is a valuable and transformative attribute that propels innovation and development in various domains. Creative individuals can think outside the box and generate innovative ideas and solutions to revolutionise existing products or services. This inventiveness frequently results in new artistic inventions, processes, or expressions.

Creativity is in high demand across many industries in today's fast-paced society. It enables individuals and organisations to remain ahead of the competition through continuous improvement and the ability to adapt to shifting demands. Conventional norms do not bind individuals with creativity; instead, they explore uncharted territory and experiment with unorthodox methods to develop original and practical solutions.

In business, creativity is essential for developing new products or services that satisfy the requirements and desires of consumers. Entrepreneurs and organisations cultivating a creative culture encourage employees to generate ideas, experiment, and take calculated risks. This environment fosters the development of products and services that stand out on the market and resonate with consumers.

Additionally, creative individuals are frequently inquisitive and willing to investigate numerous fields and disciplines. They draw inspiration from various sources, combining concepts from various fields to create something original. This cross-disciplinary approach fosters a rich tapestry of ideas and permits the convergence of multiple points of view.

3. *Leadership*

Leadership refers to the attitudes and actions of individuals who continue to take suggestions and criticism, maintain harmonious relationships, collaborate with others, and guide them towards common objectives.

Leadership is a multifaceted characteristic essential in many facets of life, including professional settings, community engagement, and personal relationships. A leader who is receptive to feedback and suggestions fosters an environment of open communication and trust. A leader who respects the opinions of others can collect multiple perspectives and make decisions that are in the best interest of the entire team or group.

In addition, a sociable leader develops positive relationships with coworkers, subordinates, and superiors. Developing solid interpersonal connections fosters friendship and mutual regard, contributing to a harmonious and supportive work or social environment. These approachable leaders foster an environment where individuals can express their concerns, exchange ideas, and seek guidance.

Leadership abilities are essential in a variety of contexts. Strong leadership in the business world can inspire employees, foster a positive work culture, and promote organisational success. Effective leadership in community contexts fosters cooperation, encourages collective problem-solving, and facilitates progress towards shared objectives. Moreover, leadership in personal relationships promotes mutual support, nurtures robust relationships, and enhances the overall quality of interactions.

4. *Discipline*

Discipline is essential to the functioning of individuals and society as a whole. This necessitates self-control and an orderly demeanour in a variety of circumstances. Disciplined individuals consistently adhere to principles, standards, and guidelines regardless of the circumstances.

Discipline is essential for personal development in accomplishing objectives and fostering personal growth. It involves establishing distinct objectives, formulating structured plans, and adhering to consistent routines to complete tasks effectively. Discipline enables individuals to remain focused and determined regardless of obstacles or distractions.

Discipline is essential in an academic setting for encouraging study habits and practical study. Disciplined students can effectively manage their time, prioritise their studies, and remain committed to their academic pursuits. This diligence contributes to enhanced academic performance and a deeper comprehension of the material.

The importance of discipline in maintaining social order and upholding the rule of law cannot be overstated. Compliance with laws and regulations is crucial for the

well-being of all members of society. A disciplined society fosters equity, respect for the rights of others, and overall social stability.

Additionally, discipline in interpersonal relationships fosters trust and regard between individuals. This requires attentiveness, self-control, and effective communication, even during disagreements. Discipline in communication and interaction strengthens bonds and enhances the quality of the relationship as a whole.

5. *Dare to take risks*

Risk-taking is a fundamental attribute that enables individuals to leave their comfort zone and pursue endeavours that may entail uncertainty and possible failure. It involves being open to new opportunities and accepting the possibility of failure, recognising that growth and success frequently involve calculated risks.

This characteristic motivates individuals with a spirit of adventure and an inherent desire to investigate uncharted territory. They are fearless in challenging accepted norms and are willing to test their limits. Taking risks also demonstrates a willingness to learn from experience, regardless of the outcome.

Taking risks can result in tremendous personal and professional development in many aspects of life. Individuals willing to take risks are more likely to establish innovative businesses and initiate creative initiatives, for instance, in the context of entrepreneurship (Hakim et al., 2019). This entrepreneurial mentality fosters an innovative culture and propels economic development.

Those willing to take risks typically have more significant career opportunities for advancement and recognition. They are willing to embrace new challenges and grasp growth opportunities, even if it means venturing into unfamiliar territory. They can distinguish themselves by acquiring valuable skills and experiences due to their courageous career decisions.

Risk-taking is necessary for development and advancement, but it is essential to emphasise the concept of calculated risk. Taking risks requires thoroughly evaluating potential outcomes and balancing benefits against drawbacks. This cautious approach enables individuals to make well-informed decisions while minimising the possibility of adverse outcomes.

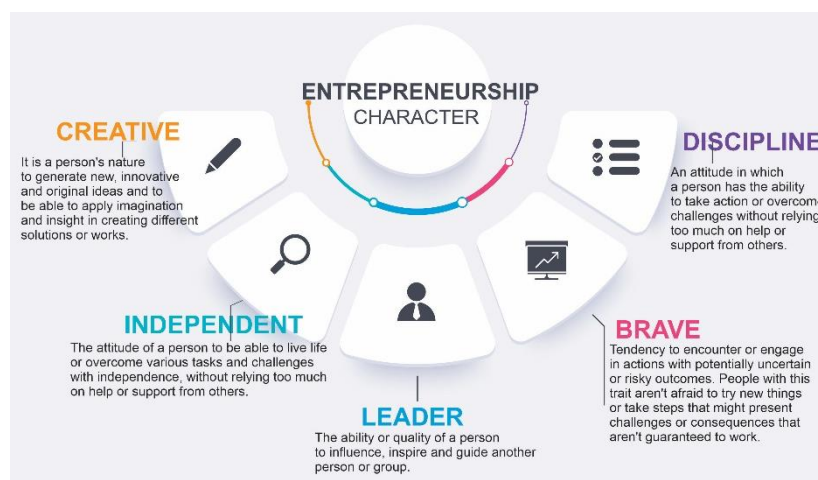


Figure 1. *Entrepreneurial Character*

Cultivating entrepreneurial values and character at SDI Ibnu Rusyd includes prioritizing imaginative thoughts and actions as a practical learning approach. However, today's entrepreneurship education emphasizes the left brain's cognitive aspects, ignoring the right brain's critical role. Previous research studies have highlighted the importance of using the right and left brains in a balanced way for effective entrepreneurship learning. The brain's right hemisphere is associated with desire, intuition and spatial abilities, which are essential for nurturing imagination.

Cultivating an imaginative spirit in developing entrepreneurial character requires innovation that encourages identifying and implementing opportunities to add value to various aspects of life (Achmad & Iwantoro, 2021). Teachers can cultivate students' imaginative abilities by assigning assignments that involve assembling imaginative ideas from raw materials or objects in their environment, turning them into various art forms that can be applied in everyday life. Students are allowed to create their work while the teacher guides the process. Recognizing and appreciating students' best ideas further motivates and enhances their imaginative potential (Ehrlin et al., 2016).

Students are exposed to a more holistic and comprehensive learning experience by integrating imaginative exercises into entrepreneurship education. They learn to think creatively, explore uncharted territory and find new solutions to real-world challenges. An imaginative approach empowers students to see obstacles as opportunities and stimulates them to become proactive problem solvers (Machali et al., 2021).

In conclusion, cultivating an imaginative spirit in entrepreneurship education at SDI Ibnu Rusyd is very important for developing future entrepreneurs who are broad-minded and innovative. Integrating right-brain thinking alongside traditional left-brain cognitive approaches enriches students' learning experiences and empowers them to unleash their creative potential. By embracing imagination as a vital component in building entrepreneurial character, students are better equipped to face challenges, think outside the box, and thrive in the dynamic world of entrepreneurship (Sørensen & Davidsen, 2017).

IV. CONCLUSION

Entrepreneurship education provides content, techniques, and training that inspires, enhances skills, and provides experiences to internalize entrepreneurial values. This type of education is essential at the primary school level, as it relates to a wide range of academic and social skills. The key entrepreneurial traits discussed here (Independence, Creativity, Leadership, Discipline and Courage to take risks) form an essential foundation for entrepreneurial success and innovation. Combined, these five characteristics complement and reinforce one another, contributing to creating a prosperous, inventive and long-lasting business. In today's evolving and competitive business landscape, cultivating and implementing these qualities is critical to achieving success and maintaining relevance.

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