

Entrepreneurial Learning Management in Improving the Quality of Graduates

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ABSTRACT

The challenges posed by globalization and the high unemployment rate in Indonesia, particularly in West Java, necessitate that vocational high school (SMK) graduates are not only prepared to enter the workforce but also equipped with an entrepreneurial mindset. Consequently, the effective management of entrepreneurship learning is imperative to enhance the quality of graduates. This research is anchored in George R. Terry's management theory, which encompasses the functions of planning, organizing, actuating, and controlling, alongside educational quality theories that emphasize the necessity of competitive, creative, and independent educational outcomes. This study employs a qualitative approach utilizing a case study design at SMK Negeri 1 Cibadak Sukabumi. Data collection techniques included participatory observation, in-depth interviews, and document analysis. The data were analyzed through data reduction, data display, and interactive conclusion drawing. The findings indicate that entrepreneurial learning management at SMK Negeri 1 Cibadak involves: strategic planning of an entrepreneurship-based vision, mission, and programs; organizing through a work structure conducive to innovation; implementing project-based learning and practical business applications; and conducting continuous evaluations of student competencies. Identified obstacles include resource limitations and resistance to change, which are progressively mitigated through teacher competency training and the reinforcement of an entrepreneurial culture. When effectively planned, organized, implemented, and evaluated, entrepreneurship learning management significantly improves the quality of SMK graduates, rendering them both job-ready and entrepreneurial. Strategies focusing on strengthening human resource competencies and fostering collaborations with the business and industrial sectors are critical to successful implementation.

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Introduction

The development of high-quality human resources is a primary agenda in the national development vision, specifically articulated in the 2035 Indonesian Education Vision. High-quality human resources are measured not solely by technical proficiency but also by the capacity for lifelong learning, mastery of global competencies, and adherence to foundational national values (Hadis & Nurhayati, 2014). In the context of education, particularly within Vocational High Schools (Sekolah Menengah Kejuruan/SMK), institutions play a highly strategic role. SMKs are explicitly mandated to prepare graduates who are not only job-ready but also highly adaptable to contemporary socioeconomic changes and imbued with a robust entrepreneurial spirit (Sudira, 2012).

However, the persistently high open unemployment rate in Indonesia presents a severe macroeconomic challenge. Data from the Central Statistics Agency frequently highlights that SMK graduates contribute disproportionately to the open unemployment rate compared to other educational levels. Despite the proliferation of vocational institutions, the overall quality of the Indonesian workforce is frequently deemed inadequate in both specialized technical skills and essential soft skills, such as communication, collaboration, and creativity (Wibowo et al., 2018). This deficiency has subsequently diminished the global competitiveness of the national workforce, indicating that current vocational learning paradigms have not fully aligned with the real-world demands of the Business and Industrial World (Dunia Usaha dan Dunia Industri/DUDI). Addressing this critical mismatch between graduate competencies and labor market demands is paramount for elevating the holistic quality of vocational education.

To resolve these systemic issues, educational institutions require comprehensive, quality-oriented managerial strategies. A pivotal approach is the systematic management of entrepreneurship education. This approach transcends the mere instruction of technical business administration; it focuses on instilling entrepreneurial character, resilience, and mindsets in students from an early pedagogical stage (Fayolle & Gailly, 2015; Permadi et al., 2024). Such a holistic strategy is anticipated to produce graduates who are technically competent, creative, innovative, and willing to take calculated risks—attributes essential for navigating volatile labor market dynamics and capitalizing on future business opportunities.

The conceptual framework of entrepreneurial learning management in this study is grounded in George R. Terry's classical management theory, which delineates four primary functions: planning, organizing, actuating (implementing), and controlling (evaluating) (Terry, 1953). These functions provide a robust structural blueprint for sustainably managing entrepreneurship-based learning processes. Furthermore, this management paradigm is supported by educational quality approaches that prioritize the development of student independence, creativity, and empowerment as the principal outcomes of vocational education (Sallis, 2014).

SMK Negeri 1 Cibadak Sukabumi was purposefully selected as the research site because it demonstrates an exceptional commitment to cultivating an entrepreneurial culture within its academic ecosystem. The institution has consistently integrated entrepreneurship education into its core curriculum and extracurricular frameworks. Nevertheless, the implementation of entrepreneurship learning management at SMK Negeri 1 Cibadak encounters significant hurdles, including human resource constraints, infrastructural deficits, institutional resistance to pedagogical change, and a lack of relevant managerial training for educators (Mulyasa, 2011).

While existing literature extensively explores entrepreneurship education and vocational management, several critical research gaps persist. First, a majority of studies concentrate on the pedagogical aspects of entrepreneurship teaching or isolated student outcomes, failing to deeply examine the holistic managerial practices that integrate planning, organization, implementation, and evaluation at the institutional level (Lackéus, 2015). Second, research connecting the specific roles of school principals in entrepreneurship learning management is scarce, despite leadership being a defining factor in programmatic success. Finally, few studies comprehensively link managerial processes with tangible

graduate quality outcomes, particularly regarding graduates' ability to adapt to industrial dynamics.

Therefore, this study aims to bridge these gaps by utilizing a qualitative case study approach to explore how entrepreneurial learning management is systematically executed at SMK Negeri 1 Cibadak Sukabumi. By focusing on the entire learning management continuum, this study seeks to provide a comprehensive overview and practical recommendations for advancing entrepreneurship education at the vocational high school level (Yin, 2018).

Method

This study employs a qualitative approach with an intrinsic case study design to acquire an in-depth, contextual understanding of entrepreneurship learning management at SMK Negeri 1 Cibadak Sukabumi. A qualitative approach is deemed most appropriate as it enables the researchers to investigate phenomena naturalistically and holistically from the perspectives of direct field actors, capturing the nuances of administrative and pedagogical practices (Yin, 2018).

The research site was selected purposively due to its demonstrated regional reputation for fostering an entrepreneurial culture. Research subjects included key stakeholders: the school principal, vice principals, the head of the Teaching Factory (TeFa), entrepreneurship teachers, actively engaged students, and affiliated business/industry partners. Primary data collection techniques involved prolonged participatory observation, in-depth semi-structured interviews, and rigorous document analysis. Observations were conducted to document students' learning activities and business simulations. Document analysis supplemented these primary sources by examining official institutional records, including the Operational Curriculum (KOSP), vision and mission statements, budget plans (RKAS), and evaluation rubrics.

Data analysis followed the interactive model proposed by Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña (2014), encompassing continuous data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing/verification. To ensure data validity and reliability, the study employed both source and methodological triangulation. Member checking was conducted to confirm preliminary findings with informants, ensuring interpretive accuracy and reinforcing the academic rigor of the study.

Results and Discussion

Results

1. Strategic Planning of Entrepreneurship Learning

Planning serves as the foundational pillar determining the trajectory and ultimate success of entrepreneurship learning management at SMK Negeri 1 Cibadak. The research reveals that the planning process at this institution is highly systematic, participatory, and strictly aligned with the macroeconomic demands of the surrounding region. The principal, acting as the chief visionary, forms a specialized curriculum development consortium at the beginning of the academic year. This consortium comprises vice principals, heads of vocational programs, specialized entrepreneurship teachers, and, critically, representatives from the local Business and Industrial World (DUDI). The inclusion of external industry stakeholders in the planning phase ensures that the institution's programmatic goals are not formulated in an academic vacuum but are directly tethered to real-world market requirements, an essential tenet of the national "Link and Match" policy (Wibowo et al., 2018).

The cornerstone of the planning phase is a rigorous needs analysis utilizing the SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) matrix. Document analysis of the school's strategic plan indicates that the leadership team meticulously evaluates internal capacities. For instance, they identified the high dedication of veteran teaching staff as a significant strength, while noting a critical weakness in the teachers' lack of contemporary digital marketing skills. Externally, the school identified a booming local agribusiness and eco-tourism sector in Sukabumi as a prime opportunity, while recognizing rapid technological disruption as a looming threat. Based on this granular data, the planning committee formulated a specialized

Operational Curriculum (KOSP) that integrates entrepreneurship not merely as an isolated subject, but as a cross-curricular ethos.

A prominent feature of this planning stage is the formulation of the School Budget Plan (Rencana Kegiatan dan Anggaran Sekolah/RKAS) specifically earmarked for entrepreneurial development. Unlike traditional vocational models that prioritize theoretical textbooks, SMK Negeri 1 Cibadak allocates substantial funding toward the procurement of raw materials for student start-ups, the maintenance of production laboratories, and the facilitation of guest lectures from successful local entrepreneurs. The planning documents also detail the creation of a business incubator program designed to nurture student-led enterprises from ideation to market launch.

Furthermore, the planning phase involves comprehensive socialization efforts aimed at fostering psychological safety and enthusiasm among the staff. The principal conducts open forums to communicate the findings of the needs analysis transparently, framing the entrepreneurship initiative as a collective endeavor to elevate the institution's standard of teaching. By emphasizing that the learning process will utilize diverse, engaging methods rather than passive lectures, the planning phase successfully mitigates initial resistance from staff who may feel overwhelmed by curriculum changes. Ultimately, this meticulous, participatory, and data-driven planning phase lays a robust and resilient foundation for sustainable professional and student development, transforming theoretical concepts into a highly contextualized, actionable roadmap (Terry, 1953; Sallis, 2014).

2. Organization of Learning Management and Infrastructure

Organization represents the critical transitional stage that bridges strategic planning with programmatic execution. At SMK Negeri 1 Cibadak, the organization of entrepreneurship learning transcends standard administrative charting; it involves the complex architectural structuring of human resources, physical infrastructure, and external partnerships. The principal has established a definitive organizational structure that assigns specific, actionable roles to various school units, ensuring total accountability (Terry, 1953).

Central to this organizational triumph is the establishment and management of the Teaching Factory (TeFa) and the Special Job Fair/Career Center (Bursa Kerja Khusus/BKK). The TeFa operates as an internal corporate entity within the school. It is organized not as a traditional classroom, but as an active production line where goods and services are created by students under industry-standard conditions. The organization of the TeFa requires meticulous scheduling; the school timetable is restructured using a block-release system. Instead of attending 45-minute isolated classes, students spend entire weeks assigned to the TeFa, fully immersing themselves in the production, marketing, and financial management of actual products. This organizational structure forcefully breaks down the silos between academic theory and vocational practice.

Human resource management is the most complex facet of this organizational structure. The institution prioritizes deploying teachers who possess specialized entrepreneurial competencies or prior business experience. However, recognizing the numerical limitations of such specialized staff, the school organizes cross-disciplinary teaching clusters. For example, a vocational agriculture teacher is paired with a mathematics teacher and a language teacher. Together, they guide a student enterprise: the agriculture teacher oversees crop production, the math teacher guides the financial profit/loss statements, and the language teacher assists in crafting persuasive marketing copy and business pitches. This collaborative organization maximizes existing staff capacities and demonstrates to students the interconnected nature of real-world business operations.

Physical infrastructure is equally well-organized. The school has converted traditional laboratories into "Student Business Incubators" and "Co-working Spaces." These areas are equipped with internet access, presentation boards, and prototype manufacturing tools. The management of these facilities is strictly governed by Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) mirroring corporate environments, teaching students workplace discipline. Despite these structured efforts, interviews revealed persistent organizational obstacles, primarily related

to bureaucratic rigidity. Teachers occasionally reported that accessing operational funds for rapid prototyping was hindered by complex administrative red tape. Furthermore, internal communication between the vocational departments and the core academic departments sometimes fractured, leading to scheduling conflicts. These findings underscore the necessity for continuous capacity building within the management team to ensure organizational agility and to streamline communication protocols across all educational departments (Mulyasa, 2011).

3. Actuating and Implementing Entrepreneurship Education

The actuating or implementation phase (*pelaksanaan*) is where the strategic plans and organizational structures are brought to life within the academic ecosystem of SMK Negeri 1 Cibadak. The implementation of entrepreneurship education here is not confined to reading textbooks about business management; it is a highly immersive, experiential process dominated by Project-Based Learning (PjBL). This pedagogical shift fundamentally alters the classroom dynamic, transitioning from teacher-centered instruction to student-centered facilitation (Fayolle & Gailly, 2015).

In practice, the implementation requires students to form corporate teams, identify a market problem in the local Sukabumi community, and develop a viable product or service to solve it. For instance, observational data highlighted a group of students in the agribusiness program who recognized a surplus of local cassava. Rather than simply learning agricultural theory, they implemented an entrepreneurial project to process the cassava into modified, gluten-free flour, subsequently designing packaging and marketing the product through local e-commerce platforms. During this process, teachers act as mentors and "angel investors" who guide the students through the business cycle: ideation, market research, prototyping, financial forecasting, and final sales. The classroom atmosphere during these implementation phases is dynamic, kinetic, and highly collaborative, mirroring the realities of a modern startup environment.

The school principal exercises proactive, participatory leadership during this phase, functioning not merely as an administrative decision-maker but as a critical motivator. The principal's direct, visible involvement in overseeing extracurricular entrepreneurial activities—such as attending student product launches and mediating industry partnerships—fosters an institutional climate highly conducive to innovation. This leadership style significantly boosts the morale of both students and teachers, demonstrating that the school's commitment to entrepreneurship is a lived reality, not just a written policy (Mulyasa, 2011).

To bridge the gap between classroom simulations and genuine market pressures, the school heavily implements a "Guest Teacher" (*Guru Tamu*) program. Practitioners, CEO's of local SMEs, and alumni who have successfully launched businesses are routinely brought into the school to co-teach modules. This implementation strategy provides students with unvarnished insights into the risks, failures, and resilience required in actual entrepreneurship. Furthermore, the mandatory Industrial Internship program (*Praktik Kerja Lapangan/PKL*) is specifically designed to place students in entrepreneurial ventures rather than large, bureaucratic corporations, allowing them to shadow business owners directly.

Despite these robust implementation strategies, the continuous professional development of teachers remains a prominent challenge. The transition to project-based facilitation is pedagogically demanding. Several educators reported struggling with the ambiguity of guiding student businesses, as the outcomes are unpredictable compared to standardized testing. The anxiety associated with this paradigm shift occasionally causes teachers to revert to traditional didactic methods. Addressing this requires the school to foster a culture where teacher experimentation—and occasional failure—is viewed as a necessary component of pedagogical growth, directly mirroring the entrepreneurial mindset they are attempting to instill in their students.

4. Evaluating Learning Management and Addressing Constraints

Evaluation (controlling) is the critical feedback mechanism that determines the sustainability and efficacy of the entrepreneurship program. At SMK Negeri 1 Cibadak, the evaluation of entrepreneurial learning has undergone a radical transformation, moving away from standardized, multiple-choice testing toward authentic, competency-based assessments. The principal, in collaboration with the evaluation committee and industry partners, conducts routine, multi-dimensional assessments to measure holistic graduate quality (Terry, 1953).

The primary method of student evaluation is the "Business Pitch" and portfolio assessment. At the end of the semester, student enterprises must present their business models, financial records, and marketing strategies to a panel of judges, which often includes local bank representatives and industry leaders. Students are evaluated on their critical thinking, problem-solving agility, communication skills, and the financial viability of their products. This authentic assessment forces students to defend their cognitive and practical choices under pressure, accurately simulating the realities of seeking investment and entering the workforce (Lack  us, 2015).

Furthermore, the school utilizes comprehensive Tracer Studies to evaluate long-term programmatic success. These studies track alumni to determine whether they have secured employment, continued to higher education, or successfully launched their own enterprises (the BMW metric: *Bekerja, Melanjutkan, Wirausaha*). Preliminary data from these studies indicate a gradual but significant increase in the percentage of graduates initiating small-to-medium enterprises, validating the efficacy of the school's managerial approach.

However, the evaluation phase also exposes significant systemic constraints and challenges. The most profound obstacle is cultural resistance. Transitioning students' mindsets from the traditional paradigm of "job seekers" to "job creators" requires immense psychological rewiring. Many students, and their parents, still view vocational education merely as a fast track to factory employment, viewing entrepreneurship as too risky. This cultural inertia occasionally suppresses student engagement in high-risk, highly creative projects.

Additionally, evaluating the affective domains of entrepreneurship—such as resilience, ethical judgment, and risk tolerance—proves exceptionally difficult for teachers accustomed to binary grading systems. The lack of standardized, easily quantifiable metrics for these soft skills often results in subjective grading inconsistencies. Institutional constraints also persist; despite the innovative KOSP, national educational policies and standardized examinations still heavily prioritize theoretical knowledge, forcing the school to perform a delicate balancing act between fostering genuine entrepreneurial skills and fulfilling bureaucratic academic requirements (Wibowo et al., 2018).

To mitigate these constraints, the school management utilizes evaluation not as a punitive tool, but as a mechanism for organizational learning. When evaluation data reveals a pedagogical or structural deficit, the management team rapidly adjusts the subsequent semester's planning phase. This continuous, cyclical application of the evaluation data ensures that the entrepreneurial learning management system remains adaptive, resilient, and relentlessly focused on elevating the holistic quality of its graduates..

Discussion

The findings of this comprehensive case study unequivocally demonstrate that the enhancement of graduate quality in vocational high schools cannot be achieved through isolated pedagogical interventions; it necessitates a holistic, system-wide application of entrepreneurial learning management. The practices observed at SMK Negeri 1 Cibadak intricately mirror the foundational management theories posited by Terry (1953), which assert that organizational objectives are met through the seamless execution of planning, organizing, actuating, and controlling. By systematically applying this framework to entrepreneurship education, the institution successfully bridges the chronic gap between vocational educational outputs and the dynamic demands of the globalized labor market.

A critical point of synthesis in this study is the paramount importance of the planning and organizing phases in establishing a functional entrepreneurial ecosystem. The data reveals that when planning is executed in isolation by school administrators, the resulting curriculum often suffers from irrelevance. However, SMK Negeri 1 Cibadak's adherence to the "Link and Match" policy—by actively incorporating the Business and Industrial World (DUDI) into the SWOT analysis and syllabus design—ensures that the educational inputs are directly calibrated to macroeconomic realities (Wibowo et al., 2018). Furthermore, the structural organization of the Teaching Factory (TeFa) serves as a paradigm shift in vocational education. By organizing the physical and temporal space of the school to mirror corporate production lines, the school effectively erases the boundary between "learning" and "working." This organizational strategy corroborates the assertions of Sudira (2012), who argues that vocational competencies can only be authentically forged in environments that replicate the psychological and technical pressures of the actual workplace.

The implementation (actuating) phase highlights the transformative power of Project-Based Learning (PjBL) combined with participatory leadership. The shift from teacher-centered didacticism to student-centered experiential learning is the crucible wherein entrepreneurial character is forged. As Fayolle and Gailly (2015) emphasize, entrepreneurship cannot merely be taught; it must be experienced. When students at SMK Negeri 1 Cibadak are forced to navigate market research, product prototyping, and financial losses, they are developing critical cognitive agility and emotional resilience. Crucially, the success of this implementation relies heavily on the school principal acting as a transformational leader. Mulyasa (2011) notes that institutional culture is dictated from the top; the principal's visible endorsement of innovation and risk-taking provides the psychological safety necessary for teachers to experiment with complex, open-ended pedagogical models without fear of administrative reprimand.

However, the evaluation phase and the analysis of institutional constraints expose systemic friction points inherent in Indonesian vocational education. While the school's utilization of authentic assessments—such as business pitches evaluated by external industry judges—represents a massive leap forward, the overarching national educational bureaucracy remains rigidly focused on standardized, quantitative testing. This creates a duality where schools must prepare students for entrepreneurial ambiguity while simultaneously drilling them for standardized national exams. This tension underscores a broader policy implication: if the Ministry of Education genuinely seeks to boost national entrepreneurship, evaluation metrics at the national level must evolve to recognize and reward affective competencies like resilience, innovation, and practical problem-solving (Lackéus, 2015).

Furthermore, the study highlights the profound challenge of human capital development within the teaching staff. The expectation that traditional educators can seamlessly transition into business mentors and facilitators is largely unrealistic without massive, sustained professional development. The anxiety and occasional regression to traditional teaching methods observed among some staff members at SMK Negeri 1 Cibadak indicate that teacher capacity-building must be the primary focus of organizational investment. Schools must organize continuous peer-mentoring, industry externships for teachers, and collaborative teaching clusters to alleviate the burden on individual educators (Sallis, 2014).

Ultimately, the impact of effective entrepreneurial learning management on graduate quality is profound. Graduate quality, in this context, is not defined merely by the attainment of a diploma, but by the internalization of an entrepreneurial mindset—the ability to identify opportunities, mobilize resources, and create value in any context. Whether the graduates of SMK Negeri 1 Cibadak choose to enter the corporate workforce, continue to higher education, or launch their own startups, the managerial framework applied by the school ensures they possess the critical thinking, adaptability, and resilience required to thrive. This study posits that robust educational management is the definitive catalyst that transforms vocational schools from mere producers of entry-level laborers into dynamic incubators of future innovators and economic drivers.

Conclusion

This study concludes that entrepreneurial learning management at SMK Negeri 1 Cibadak Sukabumi is systematically and effectively executed through the integrated functions of planning, organizing, actuating, and controlling. Participatory, data-driven planning that incorporates industry stakeholders provides a highly relevant, adaptive curriculum. Strategic organization, particularly through the deployment of the Teaching Factory (TeFa) model and cross-disciplinary teaching teams, creates a structural environment conducive to practical business application. The implementation phase thrives on immersive Project-Based Learning and is significantly bolstered by the principal's participatory leadership and external industry mentorship.

While the school has pioneered authentic, portfolio-based evaluation systems, it continues to navigate systemic constraints, including rigid national bureaucratic demands, resource limitations, and the crucial need for ongoing teacher professional development. By actively mitigating cultural resistance and reinforcing an entrepreneurial ethos, this structured managerial approach significantly elevates the holistic quality of graduates, rendering them highly competitive, resilient, and capable of both securing employment and initiating enterprise.

This research is inherently limited by its intrinsic single-case study design; therefore, the generalizability of the specific managerial tactics to institutions with vastly different socioeconomic contexts must be approached with caution. Furthermore, reliance on qualitative self-reporting introduces potential subjective biases. Future research should employ longitudinal, mixed-methods designs spanning multiple vocational institutions across diverse provinces to statistically quantify the long-term macroeconomic impacts of entrepreneurial learning management on alumni success and regional economic development.

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