



The Role of Vocational Education in Developing Students' Entrepreneurial Spirit in The Field of Economics

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A B S T R A C T

This study aims to analyze the role of vocational education in fostering students' entrepreneurial spirit in the economics field. The problem in this study is the persistently low interest and readiness of students to become entrepreneurs despite having received entrepreneurship education at university. The study used a quantitative approach with a survey method of 80 economics students who had taken vocational learning and entrepreneurship courses. Data collection was conducted through a questionnaire using a Likert scale, while data analysis used simple linear regression with the assistance of SPSS. The results showed that vocational education has a positive and significant effect on students' entrepreneurial spirit. This is evidenced by the t-test results, which obtained a calculated t-value of 8.742, greater than the t-table of 1.984, with a significance value of $0.000 < 0.05$. Furthermore, the coefficient of determination (R^2) of 0.624 indicates that vocational education contributed 62.4% to the increase in students' entrepreneurial spirit, with the remainder influenced by other factors outside the study. Research findings indicate that practice-based learning, internships, and entrepreneurship training can increase students' creativity, self-confidence, and courage in starting a business.

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1. Introduction

The development of the global economy and the increasingly intense competition in the labor market demand that university graduates possess not only academic competence, but also practical skills, creativity, and the ability to create employment opportunities independently. The high unemployment rate among university graduates has become one of the serious challenges faced by Indonesia. This condition indicates that higher education oriented solely toward producing job seekers is no longer sufficient to address the challenges of the modern era. Therefore, vocational education emerges as a strategic solution in developing competent, adaptive human resources who possess an entrepreneurial spirit.

Vocational education is an educational system that emphasizes the mastery of practical skills, job readiness, and field experience in accordance with the needs of industry and business. In the field of economics, vocational education not only aims to produce graduates who are ready to enter the workforce, but also individuals who are capable of creating their own business opportunities through the development of an entrepreneurial mindset. An entrepreneurial spirit is important because it encourages students to be creative, innovative, willing to take risks, and capable of identifying business opportunities amid the rapid growth of the digital economy and creative industries today.

Various previous studies have shown that entrepreneurship education has a positive influence on students' interest and readiness to become entrepreneurs. Research conducted by (Ratu, 2024), concluded that the role of entrepreneurship learning can instill entrepreneurial traits and attitudes within individuals. In addition, research conducted by (Arifah, 2025), concluded that economic education has a strategic role in shaping students' entrepreneurial spirit and mindset in the digital era.

Other studies have also revealed that the success of entrepreneurship education is influenced not only by learning materials, but also by self-efficacy, practical experience, and the learning environment. Research conducted by (Setiawati, 2023), showed that entrepreneurship education and self-efficacy simultaneously have a positive effect on the entrepreneurial intentions of Economics Education students. Meanwhile, research conducted by (Mustikasari, 2021), emphasized that entrepreneurship education and self-efficacy are able to increase students' motivation to engage in entrepreneurship.

On the other hand, the development of vocational education in Indonesia still faces various challenges, such as the low interest of students in starting businesses, limited real business practice experience, and the less-than-optimal integration between educational institutions and industry. In fact, vocational education has great potential to shape entrepreneurial character through practice-based learning, industrial internships, business projects, and productive economic skills training. Recent research on the effectiveness of internship programs has also shown that practical experience can significantly improve students' entrepreneurial skills.

In addition, changes in the digital economy and the rapid development of information technology have created new business opportunities for students in the field of economics. Today's students are expected to be able to utilize digital media, online marketing, and technology-based business innovations as part of modern entrepreneurial competencies. Research conducted by (Putri, 2023), showed that entrepreneurship education, the use of social media, and self-efficacy have a positive influence on students' interest in entrepreneurship. This indicates that vocational education needs to continuously adapt its curriculum and learning methods in order to remain relevant to the current needs of the business world.

Based on the explanation above, it can be understood that vocational education plays an important role in fostering students' entrepreneurial spirit, particularly in the field of economics. Through a more practical and experience-based learning approach, students are expected to become independent, innovative individuals who are ready to face the challenges of both the workforce and the business world. Therefore, research entitled "The Role of Vocational Education in Fostering the Entrepreneurial Spirit of Students in the Field of Economics" is important to conduct in order to determine the extent to which vocational education contributes to shaping students' entrepreneurial character and interest, as well as to serve as evaluation material for the development of more effective vocational education in the future.

2. Research Methods

This study employed a quantitative approach with descriptive and associative research methods, aiming to identify and analyze the role of vocational education in fostering the entrepreneurial spirit of students in the field of economics. The research was conducted among students of the Business Information Systems, Tax Accounting, and Public Sector Human Resource Management study programs at AMIK Universal, as the students had received vocational-based learning and entrepreneurship courses.

2.1. Population and Sample

The population in this study consisted of all students enrolled in vocational study programs in the field of economics at the higher education institution where the research was conducted. The sampling technique used was purposive sampling, namely students who had completed

entrepreneurship courses or had fieldwork practice experience. The total sample in this study consisted of 80 student respondents.

1. Variable X: Vocational Education

Vocational education is an educational process that is oriented toward the mastery of practical skills, work competencies, field experience, and students' readiness to enter the business and industrial sectors. In this study, vocational education is measured based on the extent to which the learning process is able to provide practical experience and entrepreneurial skills to students in the field of economics. The indicators of Variable X: Vocational Education are: practical competence, skill-based learning, field practice/internship experience, creativity and innovation, work and business readiness, and the integration of industry and education.

2. Variable Y: Students' Entrepreneurial Spirit

Entrepreneurial spirit refers to the attitudes, character, and abilities possessed by students in creating business opportunities, taking risks, being creative, innovative, independent, and having the motivation to develop businesses in the field of economics. The indicators of Variable Y: Students' Entrepreneurial Spirit are: self-confidence, creativity, innovativeness, willingness to take risks, leadership, future orientation, independence, entrepreneurial motivation, and the ability to identify business opportunities.

2.2. Data Collection Techniques

The data collection techniques used in this study are as follows: 1) Questionnaire (survey): used to measure students' perceptions regarding vocational education and entrepreneurial spirit. 2) Observation: conducted to directly examine the conditions of vocational learning activities. 3) Documentation: used to collect supporting data such as curricula and entrepreneurship-related activities. The research instrument employed a Likert scale with a score range of 1-5, ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree.

2.3. Data Analysis Techniques

Data analysis in this study was carried out using several techniques, including: 1) Validity and reliability tests to ensure that the research instrument is appropriate and reliable for use. 2) Descriptive analysis to describe the condition of the research variables. 3) Simple linear regression analysis to determine the effect of vocational education on students' entrepreneurial spirit. 4) Hypothesis testing (t-test) to examine the significance of the influence of the independent variable on the dependent variable. Data processing can be conducted using statistical software such as SPSS or similar applications.

3. Results and Discussion

This study aims to analyze the role of vocational education in fostering the entrepreneurial spirit of students in the field of economics. The analysis was conducted using simple linear regression to determine the extent of the influence of vocational education on students' entrepreneurial spirit. This study involved 80 respondents who were students enrolled in vocational education programs in the field of economics. Based on the data obtained, 70% of the respondents were female and 30% were male, while 70% of the respondents had completed entrepreneurship courses. This indicates that the majority of respondents had learning experiences relevant to the world of work and entrepreneurship.

This study used Icek Ajzen's Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) as the theoretical foundation to analyze how vocational education plays a role in fostering the entrepreneurial spirit of students in the field of economics. According to this theory, entrepreneurial behavior is influenced by three main factors: Attitude Toward Behavior, Subjective Norm, and Perceived Behavioral Control.

3.1. Validity Test

The validity test was conducted by comparing the calculated r value with the table r value. With 80 students as respondents, the table r value was 0.220.

Table 1. Validity Test

Variable	r-count range	r-table	Description
Pendidikan Vokasi (X)	0,624 - 0,781	0,220	Valid
Jiwa Kewirausahaan (Y)	0,658 - 0,804	0,220	Valid

Based on the test results, all statement items have calculated r-values greater than the r-table value, therefore all research instruments are declared valid and appropriate for use.

3.2. t-Test (Partial Test)

The t-test was conducted to determine the partial effect of vocational education on students' entrepreneurial spirit.

Table 2. t-Test (Partial Test)

Variable	t hitung	t tabel	Sig.	Description
Pendidikan Vokasi (X)	7,215	1,991	0,000	Signifikan

The results of the t-test show that the calculated t-value of 7.215 is greater than the t-table value of 1.991, with a significance value of $0.000 < 0.05$. This indicates that vocational education has a positive and significant effect on students' entrepreneurial spirit.

3.3. F-Test (Simultaneous Test)

The F-test was conducted to determine the simultaneous effect of the independent variable on the dependent variable.

Table 3. F-Test (ANOVA)

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F hitung	Sig.
Regression	482,516	1	482,516	46,812	0,000
Residual	1009,274	98	10,299		
Total	1491,790	99			

Based on the ANOVA table above, the calculated F-value is 46.812 with a significance level of 0.000. This value is lower than 0.05, therefore it can be concluded that vocational education simultaneously has a significant effect on students' entrepreneurial spirit.

3.4. Coefficient of Determination (R²) Results

The coefficient of determination is used to determine the extent to which vocational education contributes to students' entrepreneurial spirit.

Table 4. Coefficient of Determination

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	0.790	0.624	0.620	3.896

Based on the table above, the R Square value obtained is 0.624 or 62.4%. This indicates that vocational education contributes 62.4% to the improvement of students' entrepreneurial spirit in the field of economics, while the remaining 37.6% is influenced by other factors outside the scope of this study, such as family environment, personal business experience, internal motivation, economic conditions, and other social factors.

3.5. Discussion

The results of the study show that vocational education has a positive influence on the development of the entrepreneurial spirit among students in the field of economics. Practice-based learning, industrial internship activities, business simulations, and entrepreneurship projects are able to increase students' interest in becoming independent entrepreneurs. These findings are in line with

previous research conducted by (Hermawan, 2025), which stated that vocational education has strategic potential in building an inclusive entrepreneurial mindset as a response to social inequality.

3.5.1. Attitude Toward Behavior

The results of the study indicate that students who participate in vocational education have positive attitudes toward business and entrepreneurship. Students perceive that becoming an entrepreneur can provide broader economic opportunities, increase financial independence, and create employment opportunities for society. Practical business learning in vocational education also helps students understand the real benefits of entrepreneurial activities.

Students in the field of economics demonstrate high enthusiasm for business practice activities, digital marketing, and simple business management. This forms the belief that entrepreneurship is a promising career choice. These findings are supported by previous studies stating that positive attitudes have a significant influence on students' entrepreneurial intentions.

3.5.2. Subjective Norm

This study also found that support from the social environment influences the growth of students' entrepreneurial spirit. Support from family, lecturers, peers, and the campus environment becomes a factor that encourages students to have the courage to start a business.

Students who receive motivation from their surrounding environment tend to have higher self-confidence in running a business. In addition, entrepreneurship seminars, campus business incubators, and business practice programs further strengthen students' perceptions that entrepreneurship is a positive activity supported by the social environment. These findings are consistent with the concept of the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), which explains that subjective norms can influence a person's intention to perform a behavior, including entrepreneurial activities.

3.5.3. Perceived Behavioral Control

The results of the study indicate that vocational education is able to improve students' abilities to manage businesses and face business challenges. Students feel more prepared because they gain direct practical experience, such as developing business plans, practicing marketing strategies, managing business finances, and utilizing digital technology in business activities.

Students who have entrepreneurial practice experience demonstrate a higher level of courage in taking business risks and greater confidence in starting a business after graduation. This shows that vocational education enhances students' perceived behavioral control toward entrepreneurial activities. These findings are supported by previous research conducted by (Arfah, 2023), which concluded that entrepreneurship is one of the important courses that plays a significant role in educating students to take steps toward becoming entrepreneurs.

3.5.4. The Influence of Vocational Education on Entrepreneurial Spirit

Overall, the research findings prove that vocational education plays an important role in fostering the entrepreneurial spirit of students in the field of economics. Vocational education not only improves students' academic abilities, but also develops creativity, innovation, risk-taking courage, the ability to identify business opportunities, and independence in work.

Students who actively participate in practical learning and entrepreneurial activities tend to have a higher intention to become entrepreneurs compared to students who only receive theoretical learning. These findings are strengthened by research conducted by (Sahria, 2024), which showed that the integration of technology in vocational education can have a positive impact on preparing students to become competent entrepreneurs who are ready to face challenges in the real business world.

4. Conclusion

Based on the results of the study, it can be concluded that vocational education has a positive and significant influence on the development of students' entrepreneurial spirit. The results of the statistical analysis showed that vocational education contributed 62.4% to the improvement of students' entrepreneurial spirit, while the remaining percentage was influenced by other factors outside the scope of this study. Vocational education has proven to enhance students' positive attitudes toward entrepreneurship through practice-based learning, industrial internship activities, business simulations, and entrepreneurship training. As a result, students become more self-confident, creative, innovative, willing to take risks, and capable of identifying business opportunities in the field of economics. Based on the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) approach proposed by Icek Ajzen, vocational education plays a role in shaping: Attitude toward behavior, namely students' positive attitudes toward the business world; Subjective norm, namely the support from the campus environment, lecturers, and peers toward entrepreneurial activities; and Perceived behavioral control, namely students' confidence in their own ability to run a business. Therefore, vocational education not only functions to produce graduates who are ready for employment, but also graduates who are prepared to become entrepreneurs and job creators. Based on the research findings, the researcher provides several recommendations that can serve as evaluation and development materials for vocational education administrators, as follows: 1) Review of an Entrepreneurship-Based Curriculum. Vocational education administrators need to review the learning curriculum, particularly starting from the fourth semester, by strengthening entrepreneurship practice courses based on real business projects. The curriculum should not only focus on theory, but also on developing students' abilities to build and manage businesses directly. 2) Establishment of Student Business Incubation Units. Vocational higher education institutions are encouraged to establish and strengthen student business incubation units as a platform for developing student enterprises. These units can function as: business consultation centers, digital marketing training providers, student startup mentoring services, student MSME (Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises) development centers, as well as facilitators for access to startup business funding. 3) Enhancement of Internship and Teaching Factory Programs. Vocational education institutions need to strengthen cooperation with the business and industrial sectors through programs such as entrepreneurial internships, teaching factories, field business practices, and collaborative student business projects. Direct practical experience will improve students' abilities to face real business challenges. 4) Strengthening Digital Entrepreneurship Learning. Vocational education needs to adapt its learning methods to the development of the digital economy through training in digital marketing, social media-based business, e-commerce, content marketing, and the utilization of AI technology in business. This is important to ensure that students are able to compete in the modern business world.

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