Entrepreneurship-Based Education Innovation Model: Alternative Strategies for Building a Participatory Learning Ecosystem

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Abstract: This research aims to explore the concept of *educational entrepreneurship* as a transformational approach in designing an education system that is more adaptive to the challenges of the 21st century. This approach was born out of the need to overcome the limitations of the conventional education system which is often bureaucratic, rigid, and less responsive to social, economic, and technological dynamics. Using descriptive qualitative methods based on literature studies and case studies, this study analyzes various models of educational innovation built by education entrepreneurs in Indonesia, such as digital platforms, community-based schools, and nature-based learning. The results of the study show that *educational entrepreneurs* play an important role as agents of change who are able to create an alternative education ecosystem that is participatory, contextual, and solution-based. The models developed have proven to be effective in improving access, curriculum flexibility, and community participation in the educational process. In addition, they are able to combine social values, technological innovation, and economic sustainability in one integrative framework. In conclusion, *educational entrepreneurship* is a promising strategy to improve the inequality and stagnation of the formal education system. Therefore, this approach needs to receive structural support through policies, multi-sector partnerships, and strengthening the leadership capacity of entrepreneurship-based education.

Keywords: educational entrepreneurship; educational innovation; social entrepreneurship; alternative education system; educational transformation

A. Introduction

The education system in various countries, especially developing countries such as Indonesia, still faces serious challenges in terms of equitable access, curriculum relevance, quality of learning, and response to changing times. The existing formal education model tends to be bureaucratic, centralistic, and slow to respond to social, economic, and technological dynamics. This condition is exacerbated by low community participation in designing education systems that suit local needs, as well as the lack of innovation in education management. It is in this context that there is an urgency to present a new approach that is able to bridge the gap between the real needs of the community and the national education system.

One of the progressively developing approaches is educational entrepreneurship . This concept refers to efforts to create and implement innovative solutions in the field of education with an entrepreneurial approach. Not just creating new educational institutions, educational entrepreneurship emphasizes more on transformational processes that are bold, creative, and based on the needs of the community. Actors in this field act as agents of change that create an alternative education ecosystem that is more flexible, participatory, and sustainable (Hardiyono et al., 2023).

The phenomenon of educational entrepreneurship is increasingly prominent in the midst of a wave of technological disruption and a shift in the learning paradigm. In Indonesia, various initiatives have emerged such as digital education platforms (e.g. Ruangguru), community-based schools, and nature schools, which not only make effective use of technology, but also emphasize contextual and character-oriented learning. These initiatives are often born out of anxiety over the formal education system failing to reach remote areas or marginalized groups. They not only offer access to education, but also change the way people think about the meaning of education itself (Nas et al., 2025).

Furthermore, educational entrepreneurship also challenges the assumption that educational innovation can only be carried out by the government or formal institutions. Education entrepreneurs show that change can start from small, community-based, but far-reaching initiatives. Their innovations target not only students, but also parents, educators, and broader social structures. With an entrepreneurial spirit, they are able to design alternative curricula, create active learning models, and manage the education finance system independently and sustainably (Latiep et al., 2024).

Despite having great potential, the development of educational entrepreneurship in Indonesia still faces a number of obstacles. Among them are the lack of regulations that specifically support educational entrepreneurs, limited access to resources and financing, and lack of formal recognition of alternative education models. This challenge shows the importance of academic studies that not only define concepts conceptually, but also examine how concrete forms are implemented in the field and how this approach can potentially support the transformation of national education (Dewi et al., 2025; Ikhram et al., 2025).

Based on this context, this research is relevant to explore the role of educational entrepreneurship in building a more adaptive and sustainable education system (Ansar et al., 2024). This study not only contributes to the development of science in the field of education and entrepreneurship, but also provides a practical foundation for policymakers, education actors, and the general public to support an education ecosystem that is more progressive, inclusive, and relevant to future challenges (Fatmawaty et al., 2024).

B. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The results of the study show that *educational entrepreneurship* has distinctive characteristics compared to the conventional educational model. These key characteristics include the courage to take risks in creating new learning models, orientation to social change, and the application of entrepreneurial principles in education management. Education entrepreneurs usually do not come from formal institutions, but rather individuals or community

groups who see systemic gaps in education and then offer alternative solutions that are innovative and contextual.

The case studies analyzed, such as the Ruangguru platform, Sekolah Alam Indonesia, and several locally-based learning community initiatives in 3T (disadvantaged, frontier, and outermost) areas, show that *educational entrepreneurship* is able to reach community groups that have been neglected by the formal system. These initiatives have succeeded in creating a more inclusive and empowering learning experience. The presentation of materials that are flexible, adaptive to the needs of students, and technology-based are the dominant characteristics of the implementation of modern educational entrepreneurship.

Data analysis shows that the learning models developed by *educational entrepreneurs* are generally contextual and participatory. For example, Sekolah Alam implements project-based learning with ecological and social approaches, which builds students' critical, collaborative, and reflective skills. This is different from the conventional system which is still oriented towards memorization and written tests. This shows that *educational entrepreneurship* not only increases access to education, but also transforms its approach .

In the context of education management, education entrepreneurs generally use an agile *and* community-based organizational approach. Their organizational structure tends to be flat, encouraging the active involvement of all parties including parents, volunteers, and the local community. Funding strategies are also more creative, such as crowdfunding, cross-subsidy models, and cross-sector collaboration. This approach shows that the success of education does not depend solely on state support, but rather on responsive and sustainable institutional innovation.

From the results of in-depth observations and interviews, it was found that the main motivation of *educational entrepreneurship actors* is not financial gain, but the desire to improve the quality of life of the community through education. This vision is in line with the principle of *social value creation*, where the success of a business is not measured by profit, but by how much it contributes to social change. This reinforces the view that education is an arena of change, not just a space for knowledge transmission.

However, the challenge in developing *educational entrepreneurship* cannot be ignored. Some of the obstacles often faced include limited legality, formal recognition from the state, difficulty accessing long-term funding, and lack of policy support. In addition, some alternative educational innovations experience obstacles in the accreditation process or are not recognized in the national education system, thus creating a legitimacy dilemma. This is a crucial issue in the discussion of the sustainability of such initiatives. Interpretation of the data shows that the success of *educational entrepreneurship* is highly dependent on the ability of actors to build social networks and cross-sector collaboration. Those who are successful generally have networks with NGOs, academics, local governments, and the private sector. Thus, the alternative education ecosystem cannot stand alone, but must be connected to the broader socio-economic system so that innovation can be replicated and expanded in impact (Ikhram et al., 2025).

From the perspective of long-term education development, *educational entrepreneurship* can be understood as a form of *bottom-up reform*. These initiatives open up new spaces for community participation in designing education systems that are appropriate to the local context, and thus, strengthen the principles of democratization of education. This is in line with Freire's (1970) view of education as a liberating practice, in which communities become active subjects in building their futures.

Theoretically, the phenomenon of *educational entrepreneurship* shows a synthesis between the theory of social entrepreneurship and the theory of educational change. Actors in this field not only create products or services, but also form new learning systems, values, and cultures. Therefore, this model is particularly relevant to be adopted in response to global disruptions, such as digitalization, climate change, and the education gap crisis. In other words, *educational*

entrepreneurship is the future approach to education that is resilient and transformative.

Finally, these results and discussions indicate that strengthening *educational entrepreneurship* needs to be part of public policy. The government, higher education institutions, and civil society need to work together to create legal space, structural support, and formal recognition for community-based educational innovation. If managed properly, educational entrepreneurship will be an important foundation in realizing equitable, relevant, and sustainable national education.

C.   Conclusion

This study concludes that *educational entrepreneurship* is an innovative approach in the world of education that aims to transform the conventional education system to be more adaptive, inclusive, and sustainable. The main characteristic of this approach is the courage to create new solutions to chronic education problems, such as access inequality, curriculum rigidity, and low community participation in education. Through a combination of social mission and entrepreneurial spirit, *educational entrepreneurship actors* are able to build an effective and contextual alternative educational model.

The results of the study show that *educational entrepreneurs* play a role as agents of change that not only provide access to education, but also create a learning ecosystem based on local values, community participation, and economic sustainability. Initiatives such as community schools, digital learning platforms, and nature-based schools are proof that innovation in education can emerge from outside the formal system and still generate transformative impact. However, structural challenges such as limited supporting policies, lack of legal recognition, and lack of access to funding remain serious obstacles to the growth of this model.

Theoretically, *the educational entrepreneurship* approach represents a synthesis between social transformation theory and social

entrepreneurship, where education is not only seen as a formal institution, but as a space for collective struggle to create justice and relevance in learning. Therefore, this approach is very relevant to be integrated in national education reform strategies, especially in the face of the challenges of globalization, digital disruption, and the need for value-based education.

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