



The Entrepreneur Program in Early Childhood Education Institutions: A Case Study of Market Day

Eriqa Pratiwi¹, Muhammad Abdul Latif², Yesi Ardana Fatihatus Sholihah³

^{1,2,3} Department Early Childhood Education Teacher Education, Trunojoyo University of Madura, Indonesia

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ABSTRACT

Entrepreneurship is one of the effective strategies to reduce unemployment rates in Indonesia. This presents a significant challenge for the country's economic development. This study aims to explore early entrepreneurship innovation as a foundation for children to face increasingly competitive market conditions. The research method used is qualitative with a case study approach. Data collection was carried out through observation, interviews, and documentation. Data sources include literature, scholarly articles, and information from the principal and teachers of TK Muslimat NU Darunnajah Kamal. The data analysis uses the model developed by Miles and Huberman. The results of the study show that the entrepreneurship program at TK Muslimat NU Darunnajah Kamal, Bangkalan, is in the form of a market day activity. The market day activity is held once a year at TK Muslimat NU Darunnajah. During this activity, the children play roles as both sellers and buyers. This activity is designed to train children to have an entrepreneurial spirit from an early age, such as learning to take risks and think critically. By instilling an entrepreneurial mindset, it is hoped that children will be more prepared to face future challenges. Therefore, this research makes a significant contribution as one of the ways to prepare the future generation to face a competitive world. Through entrepreneurship education, children not only learn about business but also values such as teamwork, creativity, and perseverance, which are essential for building their character. Thus, early childhood entrepreneurship innovation can be one of the solutions to address unemployment issues in Indonesia in the future.

INTRODUCTION

One of the developmental activities that can be implemented in Early Childhood Education (ECE) institutions is entrepreneurship, which is expected to stimulate children to compete in today's global era (Maolida et al., 2022; Ndeot, 2019; Safitri & Erni Munastiwi, 2023; Supandi et al., 2023; Wardhani et al., 2023). As stated by Laila, entrepreneurship education can address the current issues facing the nation. It enables the nation to become more creative, courageous, and capable of tackling employment challenges, ensuring the welfare of its people (Rohmah, 2017). According to data from the Central Bureau of Statistics, as of August 2024, the Open Unemployment Rate was recorded at 4.91 percent. This highlights the importance of fostering an entrepreneurial spirit from an early age. In fact, the role model of Muslims, Prophet Muhammad SAW, began shepherding at the age of six

and ventured into trade at the age of 12, emphasizing the significance of instilling entrepreneurial values early in life.

Muslimat NU Darunnajah Kindergarten is an educational institution that offers various flagship programs, one of which is the entrepreneurship program. This program is part of a larger initiative under the Muslimat NU Foundation, committed to developing children's potential from an early age—not only in academics but also in life skills. The program aims to equip children with basic entrepreneurial skills that will be beneficial for their future.

One of the key factors behind the establishment of this entrepreneurship program is the supportive environment surrounding Muslimat NU Darunnajah Kindergarten, which strongly fosters an entrepreneurial culture. Most parents of the children attending this kindergarten are traders who run their own businesses, whether in markets, kiosks, or small shops in the area. The daily life around the school is filled with buying and selling activities, indirectly introducing children to the world of business and commerce.

In the area surrounding Muslimat NU Darunnajah Kindergarten, various facilities support an entrepreneurial atmosphere, including supermarkets, traditional markets, and shop houses selling a wide range of goods, from food to beverages. These facilities provide children with opportunities to observe firsthand how their parents run their businesses and how they interact with buyers and sellers. Through observation and their parents' involvement in daily business activities, children are indirectly introduced to the concepts of buying and selling, money, and transactions that occur in everyday life.

Given this economically active environment, children at Muslimat NU Darunnajah Kindergarten have an excellent opportunity to understand the world of entrepreneurship from an early age. The entrepreneurship program at this kindergarten is designed to teach children the importance of creativity, hard work, and wise decision-making skills. The program not only aims to nurture future entrepreneurs but also provides children with opportunities to practice communication skills, teamwork, discipline, and responsibility. Thus, the entrepreneurship program at Muslimat NU Darunnajah Kindergarten is highly relevant and beneficial, considering the many supporting environmental factors and the need to prepare a smart and independent future generation.

As evidenced by previous research, entrepreneurship programs in early childhood education have been widely implemented in early childhood learning (Nadlifah et al., 2023, 2023; Rukmana et al., 2023; Utama, 2020; Yusuf et al., 2021), included in children's textbooks (Çam, 2023), and integrated with local wisdom (Lestari et al., 2023; Rosidah & Surya Aprilyanti, 2023; Umayah & Huliyah, 2021). Earlier studies primarily focused on learning methods, teaching materials, and local wisdom.

In contrast, this study takes a different approach, concentrating on the entrepreneurship program in the form of Market Day at Muslimat NU Darunnajah Kindergarten in Kamal. Therefore, it is essential to conduct a more in-depth analysis of how Market Day is implemented within the entrepreneurship program at Muslimat NU Darunnajah Kindergarten in Kamal.

METHODS

This study employs a qualitative method with a case study approach, aiming to investigate and understand events or phenomena that have occurred through the collection of diverse information (Louis et al., 2018). The subjects of this research include teachers, parents or guardians, and students at Muslimat NU Darunnajah Kindergarten in Kamal. Data collection techniques consist of observation, interviews, and documentation. Observations were conducted to study various entrepreneurial activities taking place at Muslimat NU Darunnajah Kindergarten, while interviews were used to gain deeper insights into the entrepreneurship activities at the kindergarten. Data analysis in this study was carried out through the processes of data condensation, data presentation, and conclusion drawing (Sugiyono, 2017).

RESULT

1. Entrepreneurship Program at Muslimat NU Darunnajah Kindergarten, Kamal

Entrepreneurship activities in Early Childhood Education (ECE) institutions play a significant role in nurturing children's interests and talents in the business world from an early age. These activities aim to train children in various entrepreneurial skills and equip them with a sense of responsibility that arises during the entrepreneurial process. Fundamentally, these activities go beyond merely introducing the business world; they also focus on developing multiple aspects of a child's growth, such as social, emotional, and mental skills. Hence, entrepreneurship activities in ECE are highly beneficial for supporting holistic child development.

One of the primary benefits of entrepreneurship activities is fostering children's mental resilience and self-confidence. Through these activities, children are given the opportunity to face challenges in the business world, albeit in a simplified form. They learn to deal with small failures or obstacles, which indirectly shape a strong mental attitude. Additionally, these activities teach children to be more confident, especially when they successfully run a small-scale business. This self-confidence will be valuable in their future lives, both socially and academically.

Moreover, entrepreneurship activities significantly enhance children's social skills. While engaging in entrepreneurial tasks, children not only work individually but also interact with peers, teachers, and parents. These social interactions train them to communicate more effectively, share ideas, and collaborate to achieve shared goals. The ability to communicate and cooperate is essential for children's social life in the future. Additionally, these activities help develop children's emotional skills. They learn to manage their emotions, whether feeling happy after a successful sale or disappointed when results do not meet their expectations.

The entrepreneurship activities implemented in ECE institutions, as practiced at Muslimat NU Darunnajah Kindergarten, involve a series of interconnected tasks. One of the commonly conducted activities is a cooking class, followed by a market day or bazaar. The cooking class allows children to learn how to cook or prepare food items to be sold. This process involves not only the children but also their parents, creating quality bonding moments. Parents and children collaborate to discuss the types of food to sell, plan, and

prepare the necessary ingredients. This teamwork teaches children to value collaboration and the importance of each family member's contribution in accomplishing a task.

After the cooking class, children participate in a market day activity where they sell the food they have prepared. Although the children may not fully grasp the concept of profit or loss in business, this activity provides them with hands-on experience in buying and selling and interacting with others in a business context. It not only gives them basic entrepreneurial knowledge but also fosters motivation to keep striving and learning more about the business world.

2. Implementation of Market Day Activities at Muslimat NU Darunnajah Kindergarten, Kamal

Entrepreneurship activities at Muslimat NU Darunnajah Kindergarten, Kamal, are widely acknowledged by most respondents as essential in early childhood education institutions. According to them, the Market Day activity helps uncover children's entrepreneurial potential from an early age. The implementation of Market Day at Muslimat NU Darunnajah Kindergarten is conducted routinely every year. The activity involves buying and selling food, allowing children to participate directly in the trading process. This activity takes place once a year, either during the first or second semester.

For the implementation of this activity, the tools and materials used primarily come from each child's home, as the activity is purely a trading practice among the children. However, the school provides several supporting facilities, such as bottles for selling, tables, and decorations to ensure the event runs smoothly.

The costs incurred for this activity are adjusted to the needs of each child, with funding provided by the parents. Meanwhile, the expenses required by the school to support the implementation of the activity are aligned with the budget set by the school, which varies each year depending on the needs of the event.

Regarding the timing of the Market Day activity, according to Ms. M, it is best carried out in conjunction with a specific theme or relevant event. This approach integrates entrepreneurial learning with an educational and enjoyable atmosphere, making Market Day both meaningful and fun for the children.

DISCUSSION

The research on the implementation of the entrepreneurship program at the Muslimat NU Darunnajah Kamal Kindergarten shows that entrepreneurship activities can make a positive contribution to the development of children, both in terms of social, emotional, and mental skills. This program provides children with the opportunity to engage directly in activities involving business skills in a fun and age-appropriate way. One key finding of this study is that entrepreneurial activities in early childhood education can enhance children's mental resilience and self-confidence (Purwaningsih & Al Muin, 2021). Through activities like cooking classes and market day, children are trained to face challenges and learn from their experiences in running a business. Although these activities are still small in scale and simple, their positive impact is significant in honing their ability to cope with failure, plan, and strive to achieve goals. This demonstrates that providing practical experiences in the business world from an early age can shape a more resilient and self-confident mindset in children.

Market day, which is one form of entrepreneurship activity at the Muslimat NU Darunnajah Kamal Kindergarten, gives children the opportunity to learn directly about the buying and selling process. Although children do not fully understand economic concepts such as profit or loss, this experience teaches them to interact in a business context, communicate with customers, and appreciate the results of their work. This activity also fosters a sense of responsibility and encourages them to keep improving the products they offer. This aligns with research findings that suggest market day activities can encourage children to be responsible, solve problems, and communicate (Ismayyah et al., 2022; Rukmana et al., 2023; Suhendro, 2022; Utama, 2020; Wariati & Sukiman, 2021; Yusuf et al., 2021).

Furthermore, this activity not only involves the children but also the parents. The collaboration between children and parents in preparing the products to be sold supports the entrepreneurship activities. This cooperation provides an important lesson on the contribution of each family member in planning and executing an activity. This is in line with child development theories that emphasize the importance of social support in a child's learning process (Rani Puspa Juwita, 2022). However, there are several challenges that need to be considered in the implementation of this entrepreneurship activity. One of the main challenges is the limited understanding of children about deeper economic concepts, such as profit or loss. Therefore, while they gain hands-on experience, their understanding of crucial aspects of entrepreneurship remains limited. As a result, this program should be accompanied by more in-depth teaching about the more complex aspects of entrepreneurship, tailored to the children's age and development.

In addition, although the market day activity at the Muslimat NU Darunnajah Kamal Kindergarten is held annually, limiting it to just once a year may not be enough to create a deeper impact in building children's entrepreneurial interest and skills. Therefore, it is important to consider expanding this entrepreneurial activity by involving children in more frequent or varied activities, such as basic skill training or visits to local businesses to enrich their experiences.

CONCLUSION

This study found that the Muslimat NU Darunnajah Kamal Kindergarten in Bangkalan implements an entrepreneurship program that collaborates the results of cooking classes with market day. The market day activity at this institution is held once a year, featuring various food items made by the children with their parents. Therefore, the findings of this study provide a recommendation to deepen the study of other entrepreneurship programs in early childhood education.

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