

Building the Independence of Islamic Religious Education Students Through Edupreneurship

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ABSTRACT

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The concept of edupreneurship has emerged as a dynamic and transformative power in the field of education. The edupreneurs, with entrepreneurship mindset and spirit of education, are in a unique position to bridge the gap between traditional academics and rapidly growing global demands. This article tries to answer the problem of how edupreneurship strategies develop the independence of students of Islamic Religious Education Program of UIN Sunan Ampel Surabaya. Student independence indicates by the ability of financial management, strong mentality, intelligence, and problem-solving skill. This is answered by case study research with qualitative approach using data collection through observation, interview, documentation, and focused group discussion involving academic community of Islamic Religious Education Program of UIN Sunan Ampel Surabaya and sources from practitioners and scholars. The collected data are analyzed through the Miles & Huberman interactive analysis model with a data collection scheme, data condensation, data display, and conclusion. The results of the study indicate that there are a number of edupreneurship strategies to build the independence of Islamic Education students of UIN Sunan Ampel Surabaya, including establishing an incubation center, opening access to resources, organizing guidance, holding events or programs related to edupreneurship and business competitions, recognizing edupreneur students academically, and involving alumni of edupreneurs to inspire students. Students state that the campus needs to do at least three things; providing a place for students to practice edupreneurship, assigning study programs to include edupreneurship as one of the courses and learning outcomes, and providing training, seminars, workshops and guidance related to edupreneurship.

Keywords: *Edupreneurship; Islamic Religious Education; Student Independence.*

ABSTRAK

Konsep edupreneurship muncul sebagai kekuatan dinamis dan transformatif dalam bidang pendidikan. Para edupreneur, dengan pola pikir kewirausahaan dan semangat pendidikan, berada dalam posisi unik untuk menjembatani kesenjangan antara akademisi tradisional dan tuntutan global yang berkembang pesat. Artikel ini mencoba menjawab permasalahan bagaimana strategi edupreneurship mengembangkan kemandirian mahasiswa Program Pendidikan

Agama Islam UIN Sunan Ampel Surabaya. Kemandirian siswa ditunjukkan dengan kemampuan pengelolaan keuangan, mental yang kuat, kecerdasan, dan kemampuan memecahkan masalah. Hal ini dijawab dengan penelitian studi kasus dengan pendekatan kualitatif dengan menggunakan pengumpulan data melalui observasi, wawancara, dokumentasi, dan diskusi kelompok terfokus yang melibatkan civitas akademika Program Pendidikan Agama Islam UIN Sunan Ampel Surabaya dan narasumber dari praktisi dan ulama. Data yang terkumpul dianalisis melalui model analisis interaktif Miles & Huberman dengan skema pengumpulan data, kondensasi data, penyajian data, dan penarikan kesimpulan. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa terdapat beberapa strategi edupreneurship untuk membangun kemandirian mahasiswa Pendidikan Islam UIN Sunan Ampel Surabaya, antara lain mendirikan pusat inkubasi, membuka akses sumber daya, mengadakan bimbingan, mengadakan acara atau program yang berkaitan dengan edupreneurship dan kompetisi bisnis, pengenalan mahasiswa edupreneur secara akademis, dan melibatkan alumni edupreneur untuk menginspirasi mahasiswa. Mahasiswa menyatakan bahwa kampus perlu melakukan setidaknya tiga hal; menyediakan wadah bagi mahasiswa untuk melakukan praktik edupreneurship, menugaskan program studi untuk memasukkan edupreneurship sebagai salah satu mata kuliah dan capaian pembelajaran, serta memberikan pelatihan, seminar, workshop dan bimbingan terkait edupreneurship.

Kata-kata Kunci: Edupreneurship; Pendidikan Agama Islam; Kemandirian Mahasiswa.

1. INTRODUCTION

Islamic Religious Education has important roles in building students' character and independence (Taufik, 2020). Islamic Religious Education Students are hoped to have in-depth understanding on Islamic values and ability to implement them in daily life. Moreover, students are also supposed to have edupreneurship skills that can help them improve themselves and to face future challenges.

So far, we have to admit that due to the global era and the advanced information technology, students of Islamic Religious Education are expected to have ability to adapt with the rapid changes in the job world (Noor, 2019). They also need to have entrepreneurship skill (edupreneurship) so that they can create new opportunities and innovations in the field of Islamic religious education. Edupreneurship refers to attitudes, knowledge, and skills that enable someone to become successful entrepreneur in the field of education who is really independent. This is certainly in line with the law number 20 of 2003, regarding National Education System, stating that "National Education has the function to develop skills and build nation's character and dignified nation's civilization in order to improve the nation's intelligence, aiming to develop the potential of students to become human beings who believe in and are devoted to God Almighty, have noble morals, are healthy, knowledgeable, capable, creative, independent, and become democratic and responsible citizens".

Unfortunately, the Islamic Religious Education study program at UIN Sunan Ampel Surabaya has not had an entrepreneurship course, let alone edupreneurship. In

fact, students need to understand the opportunities for edupreneurship that are quite open in the field of Islamic education from an early age. Moreover, Islamic education, nowadays, is being trusted by the community as the gaining religious awareness. This opportunity must be taken by Islamic Religious Education students of UIN Sunan Ampel Surabaya, not only for profit but also to spread the moderate Islamic teachings which is *rahmatan lil alamin*, as expected by the Indonesian Ministry of Religion. Therefore, students need to understand their great potential in developing an Islamic education system based on edupreneurship.

Therefore, this study aims to identify and analyze effective edupreneurship strategies in building the independence of Islamic Religious Education students at UIN Sunan Ampel Surabaya. By exploring relevant strategies, this study is expected to provide new insights and practical recommendations for educational institutions, lecturers, and students in developing edupreneurship skills that certainly involve individual or group initiatives in creating and implementing innovative ideas to improve the quality of Islamic education to overcome challenges, and achieve broader educational goals. Through a combination of entrepreneurial approaches and Islamic values, edupreneurship brings about an important transformation in Islamic education with a focus on independence, creativity and problem solving. (Riyanto, 2019).

The importance of developing edupreneurship among students can be seen from the research results of Wiriadi Sutrisno and Suwiryo Cokro which show that in fact, partially edupreneurship has a positive effect on increasing the competitiveness of STIE PBM Jakarta graduates (Sutrisno & Cokro, 2018). This needs to be followed up and also applied in Islamic education environments. Another study was by Nurjaya., et al. (2022), who found significant differences between students who have edupreneurship skills and those who do not. Those who do not have edupreneurship skills do not have creative thinking skills and their response to problems is low.

In line with the two studies above, Dedi Prestiadi., et al. (2021) found that students' understanding of entrepreneurship is still low. 28% of students understand, 44% of them are hesitant, and 28% do not understand the concept of entrepreneurship in education. Whereas, interest in participating in training and entrepreneurship activities is quite high, reaching 90.6%. This study concludes that increasing knowledge about entrepreneurship is directly proportional to students' motivation to develop themselves through entrepreneurial activities. Research by Baaijens, L., et al. (2022) also highlights the urgency for universities to take part in the business ecosystem by continuing to play a major role in innovation and knowledge development.

However, the above reserches has not revealed the concrete strategies need to be applied by educational institution to take the opportunity to develop the quality of the students through education of educational entrepreneurship. Moreover, the previous researches do not directly talk about opportunities needed to be taken by the academic

community of Islamic Religious Education program. Here, this study finds its significance. It must be acknowledged that currently there is a lack of attention to the development of edupreneurship skills among students of Islamic Religious Education study programs. Some students still rely on formal education and are not yet skilled in developing themselves independently and lack understanding of how to apply Islamic concepts in the context of business and innovation.

This research also has important relevance in the development of Islamic religious education in general. By strengthening student independence through edupreneurship, it is hoped that Islamic Religious Education students will be well prepared to face the world of work, implement Islamic values in various fields, and create positive changes in society through innovation and entrepreneurship. Studying entrepreneurship is beneficial for students (and anyone in general) because it teaches them to develop unique skills and think out of the box (Miço & Cungu, 2023; Kamberidou, 2020). In addition, entrepreneurship means creating opportunities, instilling self-confidence, ensuring social justice, and stimulating economic growth, not only for families but also for society and the country (Dana et al., 2018; Urbano & Aparicio, 2016). Entrepreneurship also gives someone a perspective that risk is something natural, which we must go through and manage (Amit et al., 2022; Bell, 2015).

Among the forms of entrepreneurship that can be carried out in the Islamic Religious Education study program is edupreneurship, which is a combination of the words education and entrepreneurship. So, edupreneurship means the process or effort to place entrepreneurial concepts and attitudes in the world of education (Thayyibi & Subiyantoro, 2022) which teaches someone to create something that is worth selling and then use it for themselves or their community (Muthmainnah et al., 2022). An edupreneur will try to find solutions to a number of problems in education in innovative and creative ways. An edupreneur may gain financial benefits, but what is certain is that he will build the future of the nation with his independence.

This is possible because being an entrepreneur requires a mentality with a number of positive characters, such as discipline, persistence, optimism, honesty, perseverance, appreciation, and innovation (Thayyibi & Subiyantoro, 2022). So, edupreneurship is not just about how to make money, because that can be called the commercialization of education (Combatting, 2021). Commercialization of education occurs when educational activities are driven to generate maximum profit by exploiting authority and opportunities while marginalizing certain groups. Meanwhile, edupreneurship leads to fostering creative thinking patterns to create products/ideas in the field of education and make them economically valuable (Mărușțelu, 2023; Aldogan Eklund, 2022).

Students are considered need guidance and direction to develop the edupreneurship mentality (Beyhan & Kiessling, 2022; Kariv, D., 2019). So far, it must be admitted that religious education is quite behind when compared to science in the creativity of its teaching delivery (Fadil et al., 2023; Priatmoko, 2018; Bashori, 2017). This is what we need to encourage so that students are able to produce religious-based educational products that have economic value for their welfare.

2. METHOD

The research uses case study with qualitative approach, as explained by Lichtman, (2023). This case study, as stated by Nasri (2023), aims to describe the condition of students, especially their knowledge about entrepreneurship in the field of religious education to develop independence. The focus of the research is the strategy of edupreneurship applied to improve independence of Islamic Religious Education students of UIN Sunan Ampel Surabaya. Data and evidences were collected through various techniques: observation, in-depth interview, and study of both printed and digital documentation.

The data collection was done by directly observing the implementation of edupreneurship in Islamic Religious Education program of UIN Sunan Ampel Surabaya. The observation aims to study edupreneurship development condition in the field. In-depth interview was done with the head of study program, students, and edupreneurship practitioner, like the director of Muslim Smart. Besides, researchers also held focused group discussion and distributed questionnaire through Google Forms joined by 60 Islamic Religious Education students. The documentation study was focused on the analysis of the most recent curriculum of Islamic Religious Education of UIN Sunan Ampel Surabaya, which is based on KKNI Curriculum (Indonesia National Qualification Framework)

The data obtained were then analyzed descriptive-qualitatively by using interactive analysis model explained by Miles & Huberman. This model includes the stages of data collection, data condensation, data presentation, and conclusion qualitative data analysis was done simultaneously during the process of data collection. Data from interview and documentation were then connected with the relevant theoretic data to provide more meaningful discussion. The process of this research is described in the flowchart of figure 1.

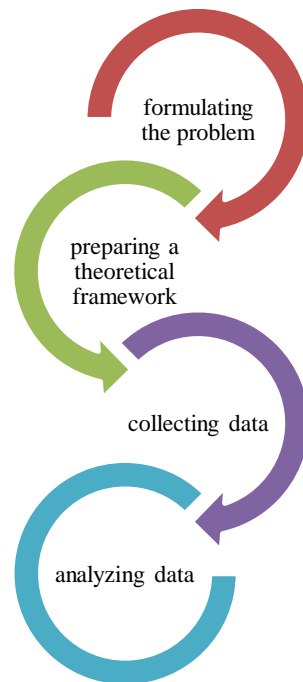


Figure 1. Research Process Chart flow

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Based on the result of the interview with the head of Islamic Religious Education Study Program, it is found that the study program has not had edupreneurship course. At this time, the study program offer a total 157 credits consisting of 139 compulsory credits and 18 optional credits. There is a technical problem to add edupreneurship course as the number of credit has reached the limit. However, redesigning the next curriculum to add edupreneurship course is still possible. Islamic Religious Education Study Program right now using the curriculum designed in 2021.

The Head of the Islamic Religious Education Study Program at UIN Sunan Ampel Surabaya stated that if there is a curriculum redesign in the future, He will consider making edupreneurship an independent course, but it will be an additional or optional course, not a compulsory course This statement responds to the urgency of edupreneurship education for prospective Islamic Religious Education teachers. The results of FGD, interviews, and surveys using G-form show that out of 60 students participating, 96.7% are interested in learning more about edupreneurship. The survey also shows that 95% of students experienced an increase in understanding related to edupreneurship, while 3% did not experience any increase, and the rest admitted that they were the same.

The majority of students agree that the Study Program includes edupreneurship as a course. 81.7% of Islamic Religious Education students feel that it is important to have a special edupreneurship course. In addition, 75% of 60 students believe that edupreneurship is important to be one of the learning outcomes in the Islamic Religious

Education Study Program at UIN Sunan Ampel Surabaya. Students also think that the campus needs to provide facilities for edupreneurship activities. 46.7% of students admit that the campus has not developed edupreneurship, 35% do not know, and 18.3% say that the campus has developed edupreneurship. Therefore, efforts need to be made to develop the spirit of edupreneurship and its strategies.

a. Development of Edupreneurship Spirit

In recent years, a new generation of students known as edupreneurs has emerged. Edupreneurship combines the concepts of education and entrepreneurship to become a growing movement among students who want to revolutionize the world of education and inspire others to do the same (Setyanti dan Sudarsih, 2022). These edupreneurs not only receive education, but also try to create positive changes in the learning process. Edupreneurship also develops various soft skills such as leadership, communication, critical thinking, problem solving, and adaptability, which are needed in the professional world, making edupreneur students more prepared for success (Nurjaya et al., 2022).

According to Fikriyah (2023), students who want to develop an edupreneurship spirit need to master several skills. First, they must be able to manage finances, which is an important requirement for starting any business, including educational businesses (Khattak & Shah, 2020). Efficient financial management is needed throughout the business journey, even when the business is about to be sold. In simple terms, financial management in business is the process of paying and receiving money (Petty et al., 2015). More pragmatically, financial management is a business function that deals with the investment of financial resources to achieve success and profit of the investment (Pu et al., 2021).

Fikriyah does not recommend students to start the business by loan. Capital from loan is recommended only when the business has run well so that the profit and loss calculation can be clear. This opinion is in line with Farooq, et al. (2022) who finds that capital cost in small scale with low interest is not quite helping small business to be successful. There are external factors other than capital that need to be considered for the success of the business

Second, students need to own strong mentality. Strong mentality is a base for every successful business. An edupreneur must be resilient and able to see setbacks as new opportunities (Carroll & Brown, 2022; Brown et al., 2022). Obstacles are inevitable, but rising from failure is always necessary. This is in line with the concept of Qur'anic edupreneur which emphasizes work ethic, seizing opportunities, and monetization capabilities Fatah, et al. (2023).

Third, entrepreneurs must be resourceful because they need to adapt every time they build something new. Resourceful people are able to adapt and learn many things to maintain business opportunities (Van Scheers, 2016). Fourth, entrepreneurs must be

skilled in solving problems. Long-term success in entrepreneurship requires good problem-solving skills. An entrepreneur must take the time to identify and fix problems, and involve the team in this problem-solving process (Olukemi & Gbenga, 2016). An entrepreneur in education must write down every possible answer, analyze its effectiveness, consider all possibilities, choose the best, and create measurable targets (Sarooghi et al., 2019).

b. Edupreneurship Development Strategies for Students

The results of in-depth interviews with 10 students show that there are three main strategies for developing edupreneurship skills: training such as seminars, workshops, and mentoring related to edupreneurship; incorporating edupreneurship into the curriculum; and providing a business incubation center for edupreneurship activities. This finding is in line with research by Kuat and Santosa (2020) which finds that adequate facilities and infrastructure and support from educational institutions greatly support edupreneurship.

The edupreneurial strategy of students is important because it offers innovative solutions, increases accessibility, and makes a real contribution to students' personal development. Therefore, the authorities must listen to students' aspirations, especially since 76.7% of them are interested in becoming edupreneurs, while 21.7% do not know, and the rest are not interested. Research by Dedi Prestiadi., et al. (2021) shows that after treatment, students' knowledge and motivation about entrepreneurship is increasing.

According to Hadiyansyah, the modern education landscape has evolved, with students now looking for more than just classroom learning. They want to be active contributors to society and the economy, which often leads to edupreneurial initiatives such as developing educational applications, launching mentoring programs, or establishing social enterprises in the education sector.

Supporting edupreneurship on campus has many benefits, such as fostering creativity and innovation by encouraging students to think critically, identify problems, and develop innovative solutions. In addition, edupreneurial initiatives provide students with valuable real-world experience, allowing them to apply theoretical knowledge to practical scenarios. This is in line with Sutrisno & Cokro, (2018) which states the need for a breakthrough in edupreneurship-based education models because the current curriculum and training are not sufficient to equip graduates to compete in the job market. Edupreneurship also supports multidisciplinary collaboration to develop entrepreneurship culture that emphasizes on risk taking, resilience, and opportunity chasing (Olaniran & Perumal, 2021)

Universities have great potential to develop edupreneurial ecosystems (Beyhan & Kiessling, 2022; Elnadi & Gheith, 2021) because campuses are the miniature of communities. According to Hadiyansyah, campuses can provide physical space for students to work on their initiatives, ensure access to essential resources such as

funding, technology, software, and research databases, connect students with experienced mentors and industry experts, organize activities to expand networks, integrate edupreneurship into the curriculum through credit conversion, and involve successful alumni to inspire students (Dardiri et al., 2018).

Edupreneurship offers a promising path to transform education and shape a brighter future for teacher training student (Lăcătuș & Stăiculescu, 2016). Edupreneurship provides an opportunity for prospective teachers to develop various soft skills needed to solve problems, which have so far needed to be improved (Fadli, 2020). Through a relentless pursuit of educational excellence, collaborative efforts, and a dedication to lifelong learning, an edupreneur can revolutionize the way teachers teach, learn and grow in the future. Embedding edupreneurship in college will not only empower individuals to reach their full potential, but will also lead to the collective improvement of society as a whole.

4. CONCLUSION

The results of the study show that the Islamic Religious Education study program currently does not have a specific course on entrepreneurship. However, a student survey found that 96.7% of them wanted to learn more about edupreneurship. This shows that students are interested and understand edupreneurship quite well. The points conveyed in the discussion indicate that edupreneurship needs to be immediately included in the Islamic Religious Education curriculum. Students need formal education and business skills that will help them grow and face future challenges. Students can use edupreneurship to learn skills such as managing money, being strong-minded, creative, and being able to solve problems. Suggested plans to encourage edupreneurship include training, workshops, coaching, and establishing a business incubator on campus. Support from the school is essential to ensure that children get the right facilities and resources. Through edupreneurship, students can become more independent. With this way, they are expected to be better prepared to face the real world of work and be able to find new ways to teach Islamic subjects. In addition, the results of this study provide useful suggestions for schools, teachers, and students who want to improve their edupreneurship skills. Future researchers can conduct research by comparing successful edupreneurial efforts of all levels, considering their unique challenges and opportunities, investigating the integration of edupreneurial mindsets in educational institutions, and how educators and policymakers can embrace edupreneurial thinking to innovate teaching methods, curriculum development, and institutional management.

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