

The Urgency of The Entrepreneurial Spirit among Young Generation

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ABSTRACT

This article examines the urgency and importance of entrepreneurship education to overcome unemployment and poverty in Indonesia. One of the population problems in Indonesia is the still high unemployment and poverty rates. Various efforts to reduce unemployment and poverty have also been made by the Indonesian government, but the results have not been significant enough. Therefore, various efforts are needed to develop the entrepreneurial spirit among the Indonesian people. One of the efforts is to promote and organize entrepreneurship education. The development of digital technology has brought significant transformation in the world of entrepreneurship, opening up more inclusive and flexible business opportunities. This article discusses the importance of fostering an entrepreneurial spirit in the digital era, especially among the younger generation who actively use technology. An entrepreneurial spirit that includes the courage to take risks, the ability to innovate, and the readiness to adapt is key to facing modern business challenges.

Keywords: *Entrepreneurship, poverty, the Young Generation*

1. Introduction

The rapid advancement of globalization, digital transformation, and technological innovation has significantly reshaped labor market dynamics worldwide, creating both opportunities and challenges for the younger generation. While digitalization has generated new economic sectors and employment opportunities, it has simultaneously intensified competition in the labor market, making formal employment increasingly limited for university graduates. This phenomenon is particularly evident in developing countries such as Indonesia, where the number of higher education graduates continues to increase each year, while the growth of formal employment remains relatively slow. According to the *World Bank* (2024), countries in the East Asia and Pacific region need to strengthen entrepreneurial ecosystems to stimulate innovation, improve employment creation, and enhance sustainable economic growth. Consequently, entrepreneurship has become one of the most strategic solutions for reducing youth unemployment while encouraging inclusive economic development (World Bank, 2024).

Indonesia continues to face significant employment challenges despite experiencing steady economic growth. The Central Statistics Agency reported that Indonesia still had approximately 7.46 million unemployed individuals in August 2025, with a considerable proportion consisting of diploma and university graduates (Badan Pusat Statistik [BPS], 2025). This condition indicates that higher educational attainment alone is no longer sufficient to guarantee employment opportunities. Instead, graduates are increasingly required to possess adaptive competencies, creativity, innovation, and entrepreneurial capabilities that enable them to create employment rather than merely seeking it. Recognizing these challenges, the Indonesian government has positioned entrepreneurship development as one of its national priorities through the *National Entrepreneurship Development Strategic Plan 2025–2029*, which aims to strengthen entrepreneurial capacity, expand micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs), and improve

national competitiveness (Kementerian Koperasi dan Usaha Kecil dan Menengah Republik Indonesia, 2025).

Entrepreneurship is widely recognized as an important driver of economic growth, innovation, and job creation. Beyond establishing businesses, entrepreneurship represents a mindset characterized by opportunity recognition, creativity, innovation, calculated risk-taking, resilience, and proactive problem-solving. Individuals possessing strong entrepreneurial characteristics tend to identify market opportunities, transform ideas into economic value, and adapt effectively to uncertain environments. Consequently, entrepreneurship contributes not only to individual prosperity but also to broader socioeconomic development through employment generation and increased productivity (Bosma et al., 2016). Previous studies consistently demonstrate that entrepreneurship education positively influences entrepreneurial knowledge, competencies, attitudes, and entrepreneurial intentions among young people (Bae et al., 2014; Fayolle & Gailly, 2015; Nabi et al., 2017; Sánchez, 2013).

The entrepreneurial spirit among young people has become increasingly important in the digital economy, where technological innovation has lowered barriers to business creation through e-commerce platforms, digital marketing, financial technology, and social media. Generation Z, often referred to as digital natives, possesses significant advantages in utilizing digital technologies to establish innovative businesses and expand market reach. The integration of digital platforms into entrepreneurial activities enables young entrepreneurs to access broader consumer markets with relatively low capital investment. Therefore, fostering entrepreneurial competencies from an early age has become a strategic investment for enhancing national competitiveness in the era of Industry 4.0 and Society 5.0 (Radianto et al., 2023; Marta et al., 2024).

Entrepreneurial intention has been extensively studied as the strongest predictor of entrepreneurial behavior. According to the Theory of Planned Behavior, entrepreneurial intention is influenced by attitudes toward entrepreneurship, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control (Krueger et al., 2000). Liñán and Chen (2009) further developed a widely adopted instrument for measuring entrepreneurial intention across different cultural contexts, demonstrating that favorable entrepreneurial attitudes significantly increase the likelihood of business creation. Likewise, entrepreneurial intention is positively influenced by entrepreneurship education, perceived feasibility, self-confidence, and environmental support (Liñán et al., 2011). These findings suggest that cultivating entrepreneurial intention should begin during formal education, particularly among university students who represent future economic actors.

In addition to educational factors, psychological characteristics play a crucial role in developing entrepreneurial spirit. Self-efficacy has consistently been identified as one of the strongest determinants of entrepreneurial intention because individuals who believe in their entrepreneurial capabilities are more likely to initiate business ventures (Zhao et al., 2005). Entrepreneurial self-identity also contributes significantly to entrepreneurial behavior by strengthening individuals' commitment to entrepreneurial careers (Obschonka et al., 2015). Furthermore, personality traits, including openness to experience, conscientiousness, and proactive orientation, are positively associated with entrepreneurial intentions and long-term entrepreneurial performance (Zhao et al., 2010). Recent evidence also indicates that psychological traits mediate the relationship between entrepreneurship education and entrepreneurial goal intentions, suggesting that educational interventions should emphasize not only knowledge acquisition but also psychological empowerment (Ndofirepi, 2020).

Although entrepreneurship education has demonstrated positive impacts on entrepreneurial competencies, translating entrepreneurial intention into actual entrepreneurial behavior remains a major challenge. Research has shown that entrepreneurship education effectively enhances entrepreneurial competencies and motivation (Souitaris et al., 2007; Sánchez, 2013), while long-term educational exposure contributes to persistent entrepreneurial attitudes (Fayolle & Gailly, 2015). Nevertheless, entrepreneurial behavior is also influenced by individual characteristics and environmental conditions, including family support, institutional ecosystems, access to finance, and government policies (Shirokova et al., 2016; Rauch & Hulsink, 2015). Therefore, comprehensive entrepreneurship development requires collaboration among

educational institutions, government agencies, industry, and society to establish an ecosystem that supports sustainable entrepreneurial activities.

The urgency of strengthening entrepreneurial spirit among Indonesia's younger generation is further reinforced by the national vision of Golden Indonesia 2045. Although Indonesia's entrepreneurship ratio has increased to approximately 3.47%, it remains below the minimum threshold generally associated with developed economies and is still lower than several neighboring countries (Kementerian Koperasi dan Usaha Kecil dan Menengah Republik Indonesia, 2025). As highlighted by Asnori (2021), entrepreneurship education is essential for addressing unemployment and poverty by transforming individuals from job seekers into job creators. Similarly, Anas (2021) emphasizes that Indonesia requires a substantially larger entrepreneurial population to stimulate economic growth and improve national prosperity. Without strengthening entrepreneurial capabilities among the younger generation, Indonesia's demographic bonus may become an economic burden rather than a competitive advantage.

Despite the growing body of literature examining entrepreneurship education and entrepreneurial intention, relatively limited attention has been devoted to synthesizing the broader urgency of cultivating entrepreneurial spirit among young people within Indonesia's current socioeconomic and digital transformation context. Most previous studies have focused primarily on entrepreneurial intention or educational outcomes, while fewer studies have comprehensively discussed entrepreneurship as a strategic response to unemployment, demographic transition, digital economic transformation, and national development goals. Therefore, this study seeks to examine the urgency of fostering entrepreneurial spirit among the younger generation by integrating perspectives from entrepreneurship education, entrepreneurial psychology, digital transformation, and national economic development. The findings are expected to contribute both theoretically to entrepreneurship literature and practically to policymakers and educational institutions in designing effective strategies for developing future entrepreneurs capable of supporting sustainable economic growth.

2. Research Methods

This study employed a qualitative research approach using a library research design to examine the urgency of fostering an entrepreneurial spirit among the younger generation in Indonesia. Library research was considered appropriate because the study aimed to synthesize existing theoretical perspectives, empirical findings, and policy documents related to entrepreneurship, youth employment, and entrepreneurship education rather than collecting primary field data. Through this approach, the study provides a comprehensive understanding of the current entrepreneurial landscape and its relevance to national economic development.

The data used in this research were secondary data obtained from various credible sources. These sources included peer-reviewed international journal articles indexed in Scopus, books, government publications, official reports from the Central Statistics Agency (BPS), policy documents issued by the Ministry of Cooperatives and Small and Medium Enterprises of the Republic of Indonesia, reports published by international organizations such as the World Bank, and other relevant academic and institutional publications. To ensure the relevance and credibility of the analysis, priority was given to recent literature published within the last ten years, while seminal studies on entrepreneurial intention and entrepreneurship education were also included to provide a strong theoretical foundation.

Data collection was conducted using the documentation method, which involved systematically identifying, selecting, and organizing literature relevant to the research objectives. The literature search was carried out through reputable academic databases, including Scopus, Google Scholar, ScienceDirect, SpringerLink, and official institutional websites. The selected documents were screened based on their relevance to entrepreneurship, entrepreneurial education, entrepreneurial intention, entrepreneurial mindset, youth employment, and digital entrepreneurship.

The collected data were analyzed using qualitative content analysis. The analysis consisted of four stages. First, data reduction was conducted by selecting, classifying, and organizing relevant information while excluding data that were not directly related to the research objectives. Second, data display was performed by categorizing the findings into major themes,

including entrepreneurship education, entrepreneurial intention, entrepreneurial competencies, psychological factors, digital entrepreneurship, and government policy. Third, data interpretation was undertaken to identify patterns, relationships, and emerging concepts across the literature and to compare findings from different studies. Finally, conclusion drawing and verification were conducted by cross-checking information among multiple sources to ensure consistency, credibility, and validity of the findings.

To enhance the trustworthiness of the study, source triangulation was employed by comparing information obtained from academic literature, government reports, and international institutional publications. This process helped minimize bias and strengthened the reliability of the conclusions. The study also emphasized the use of authoritative and peer-reviewed references to ensure that the synthesized findings accurately reflect current developments in entrepreneurship research.

Qualitative research is particularly suitable for this study because it emphasizes comprehensive interpretation and contextual understanding rather than statistical generalization. As noted by Sugiyono (2018), qualitative research seeks to describe and interpret phenomena through narrative analysis based on textual data. Similarly, Arikunto (2013) explains that qualitative research examines phenomena in their natural context without manipulating existing conditions, allowing researchers to develop a holistic understanding of the issues being investigated. Therefore, this methodological approach enables the present study to comprehensively explore the urgency of strengthening the entrepreneurial spirit among the younger generation as a strategic response to employment challenges and sustainable economic development in Indonesia.

3. Results and Discussions

Results

The Current Condition of Youth Entrepreneurship in Indonesia

The literature review reveals that Indonesia continues to face considerable challenges in employment creation despite maintaining positive economic growth. According to the latest employment report published by the Central Statistics Agency, Indonesia recorded approximately 7.46 million unemployed people in August 2025, with a significant proportion consisting of educated workers, including diploma and university graduates. This situation indicates that higher education alone is insufficient to guarantee employment, emphasizing the importance of developing alternative career pathways through entrepreneurship. At the same time, Indonesia has experienced gradual improvement in its entrepreneurial ecosystem. The national entrepreneurship ratio has increased to approximately 3.47%; however, this figure remains below the level generally associated with developed economies. Consequently, strengthening entrepreneurial capacity among young people has become one of the government's strategic priorities to accelerate economic transformation and improve national competitiveness.

Entrepreneurship as a Strategic Solution to Youth Unemployment

The findings consistently demonstrate that entrepreneurship serves not only as an economic activity but also as an effective strategy for addressing youth unemployment and promoting sustainable development. Entrepreneurship enables young people to become job creators rather than job seekers, thereby contributing to employment generation, income creation, and local economic development. Furthermore, the expansion of digital technology has significantly lowered barriers to entrepreneurship. Digital platforms, electronic commerce, financial technology, and social media provide opportunities for young entrepreneurs to establish businesses with relatively limited capital while reaching wider markets. This transformation has shifted entrepreneurship from conventional business practices toward innovation-driven and technology-based enterprises.

The Role of Entrepreneurship Education

The literature indicates that entrepreneurship education is one of the most influential factors in developing entrepreneurial spirit among young people. Entrepreneurship education contributes not only to knowledge acquisition but also to the development of entrepreneurial

competencies, creativity, opportunity recognition, leadership, innovation, and business problem-solving abilities. In addition, entrepreneurship education positively influences entrepreneurial intention by increasing students' confidence to initiate business ventures. Educational approaches emphasizing experiential learning, project-based activities, mentoring, and digital business simulations appear to produce stronger entrepreneurial outcomes than conventional classroom instruction.

Psychological Factors Supporting Entrepreneurial Spirit

Another important finding concerns the psychological dimensions influencing entrepreneurial behavior. Self-efficacy, entrepreneurial identity, achievement motivation, creativity, resilience, and willingness to take calculated risks consistently emerge as major determinants of entrepreneurial intention. Young individuals who possess higher confidence in their entrepreneurial abilities tend to demonstrate stronger intentions to establish businesses and greater persistence in overcoming business challenges. Therefore, entrepreneurship development should not focus solely on technical business skills but also on strengthening psychological readiness and entrepreneurial mindset.

Digital Transformation and Entrepreneurial Opportunities

Digital transformation has fundamentally changed entrepreneurial opportunities available to younger generations. Generation Z possesses comparative advantages because of their familiarity with digital technologies, online communication, and social media platforms. Consequently, digital entrepreneurship has become one of the most promising sectors for increasing youth participation in business creation. The reviewed literature suggests that integrating entrepreneurship education with digital literacy, innovation capability, and technology adoption can substantially improve entrepreneurial readiness among university students and young graduates.

Discussion

The findings demonstrate that entrepreneurship has become an increasingly important strategy for addressing employment challenges among young people in Indonesia. The growing number of educated unemployed indicates that dependence on formal employment can no longer adequately absorb the expanding workforce. Recent employment statistics published by the Central Statistics Agency show that unemployment remains a significant national challenge, reinforcing the need to develop alternative employment opportunities through entrepreneurship (Badan Pusat Statistik, 2025). This finding is also consistent with the national entrepreneurship development agenda, which positions entrepreneurship as a strategic pillar for improving national competitiveness and accelerating economic transformation (Kementerian Koperasi dan Usaha Kecil dan Menengah Republik Indonesia, 2025).

Entrepreneurship should not be interpreted merely as business ownership but rather as a mindset characterized by creativity, innovation, opportunity recognition, calculated risk-taking, and value creation. This perspective is consistent with the definition introduced through Presidential Instruction No. 4 of 1995, which emphasizes entrepreneurship as a combination of attitudes, behaviors, and abilities to create innovative products, services, and technologies. Likewise, Mulyadi et al. (2010) describe entrepreneurship as a set of values that encourages creativity, innovation, independence, and productivity, while Kristanto argues that entrepreneurial competence consists of transforming innovative ideas into practical economic activities. Therefore, entrepreneurial spirit encompasses three essential dimensions: creativity, innovation, and value creation, which collectively distinguish entrepreneurs from conventional job seekers.

The present findings further confirm that entrepreneurship education represents one of the strongest instruments for cultivating entrepreneurial spirit among young people. Previous meta-analytic evidence demonstrates that entrepreneurship education significantly improves entrepreneurial intention by enhancing entrepreneurial knowledge, attitudes, and competencies (Bae et al., 2014). Similarly, Fayolle and Gailly (2015) reported that entrepreneurship education produces long-term changes in entrepreneurial attitudes that persist beyond formal educational

activities. Nabi et al. (2017) further concluded through a systematic review that entrepreneurship education contributes not only to entrepreneurial intention but also to entrepreneurial competencies and subsequent entrepreneurial behavior. These findings indicate that entrepreneurship education should move beyond theoretical instruction toward experiential and competency-based learning.

The relationship between entrepreneurship education and entrepreneurial intention is also supported by the Theory of Planned Behavior. Krueger et al. (2000) proposed that entrepreneurial intention is determined by individuals' attitudes toward entrepreneurship, perceived behavioral control, and subjective norms. This theoretical framework was further strengthened by Liñán and Chen (2009), who developed a reliable instrument demonstrating that favorable entrepreneurial attitudes significantly increase entrepreneurial intention across different cultural contexts. Furthermore, Liñán et al. (2011) found that entrepreneurship education positively influences entrepreneurial intention by improving individuals' perceptions of entrepreneurial feasibility and desirability. Consequently, strengthening entrepreneurial intention during higher education becomes an essential strategy for increasing the number of future entrepreneurs.

Besides educational factors, psychological characteristics substantially influence entrepreneurial development. The present findings indicate that self-efficacy represents one of the strongest predictors of entrepreneurial behavior. Individuals who possess greater confidence in their entrepreneurial capabilities are more likely to initiate and sustain business activities despite uncertainty. This finding is consistent with Zhao et al. (2005), who demonstrated that self-efficacy mediates the relationship between entrepreneurial characteristics and entrepreneurial intention. Similarly, Marta et al. (2024) emphasized that self-efficacy becomes increasingly important in the digital era because entrepreneurs must continuously adapt to technological changes, market uncertainty, and digital competition. Entrepreneurial self-identity also contributes significantly to entrepreneurial commitment, as individuals who perceive entrepreneurship as part of their personal identity exhibit stronger entrepreneurial persistence (Obschonka et al., 2015). Furthermore, personality characteristics such as openness to experience, conscientiousness, and proactive orientation positively influence entrepreneurial performance and long-term business success (Zhao et al., 2010).

Digital transformation has created unprecedented entrepreneurial opportunities for the younger generation. As digital natives, Generation Z possesses natural advantages in utilizing digital technologies, social media, and online marketplaces to establish innovative businesses. Radianto et al. (2023) argued that young people can transform from passive technology users into digital entrepreneurs through appropriate training and mentoring. Likewise, Syarifah et al. (2022) emphasized that entrepreneurship training integrating digital technology, e-commerce, and social media enhances both entrepreneurial competence and confidence. Setyawan (2020) further highlighted that introducing digital startup concepts through project-based learning encourages students to develop innovative technology-based business ideas. These findings indicate that entrepreneurship development should increasingly integrate digital literacy, innovation capability, and technology adoption into educational curricula.

The findings also demonstrate that entrepreneurial intention alone does not automatically lead to entrepreneurial behavior. Souitaris et al. (2007) found that entrepreneurship programs increase entrepreneurial intention by providing inspiration, practical knowledge, and access to entrepreneurial resources. Sánchez (2013) similarly reported that entrepreneurship education significantly improves entrepreneurial competencies required for business creation. However, Rauch and Hulsink (2015) argued that entrepreneurial behavior depends on the interaction between educational experiences and actual opportunities to implement entrepreneurial ideas. Shirokova et al. (2016) further explained that environmental support—including institutional policies, family encouragement, access to finance, and entrepreneurial ecosystems—moderates the relationship between entrepreneurial intention and entrepreneurial action. Therefore, entrepreneurship policies should not only strengthen education but also develop supportive entrepreneurial ecosystems.

From a broader socioeconomic perspective, strengthening entrepreneurial spirit contributes directly to poverty reduction, employment creation, and sustainable economic development. Bosma et al. (2016) identified entrepreneurship as a major driver of innovation,

productivity, and employment across both developed and developing countries. Similarly, the World Bank (2024) emphasizes that entrepreneurship plays a central role in strengthening economic resilience and inclusive growth in the East Asia and Pacific region. In Indonesia, Asnori (2021) argues that entrepreneurship education constitutes one of the most effective long-term strategies for reducing unemployment and poverty by transforming individuals into independent economic actors. This argument aligns with McClelland's achievement motivation theory, which states that countries require a sufficient proportion of entrepreneurs to achieve sustainable prosperity. Therefore, cultivating entrepreneurial spirit among young people should be viewed not merely as an educational objective but as a national development strategy capable of supporting Indonesia's vision toward Golden Indonesia 2045.

4. Conclusion

Fostering an entrepreneurial spirit in the digital era is not only an option, but a necessity in dealing with economic dynamics and ever-changing technological developments. The digital era has opened up a variety of new business opportunities that are more inclusive, flexible, and innovation-based. However, to be able to make the most of it, it requires an entrepreneurial character that is adaptive, creative, technologically literate, and ready to learn and develop. The process of fostering an entrepreneurial spirit must begin early through education, training, and real experience, and be supported by an environment that encourages creativity and collaboration. Technology is not just a tool, but an integral part of modern business strategy and operations. With a strong entrepreneurial spirit and the ability to use digital technology intelligently, the young generation can become the driving force of the future economy that is more innovative, independent, and sustainable. With entrepreneurship education in educational institutions, the author believes that unemployment and poverty in Indonesia will at least be reduced or suppressed. This is because entrepreneurship education will give birth to many entrepreneurs who are ready to create jobs. The large number of jobs will of course automatically reduce the unemployment and poverty rate in the country.

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