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Praxis of Using Digital Platforms in Student Entrepreneurial Activities as a Non-Formal Learning in Higher Education

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Abstract

Becoming an entrepreneur is a way for someone who does have creative ideas and does have the intention to make ends meet. It is hoped that with an embedded entrepreneurial spirit, young people can create jobs for themselves and others. This research is using a qualitative approach by case study design. The case is entrepreneur activity as non-formal learning for higher education students in Universitas Negeri Padang. The results of this research are that entrepreneurial welfare increasing, Indonesia's economy will also be more advanced, and able to catch up. The government is very supportive if the entrepreneurial spirit can be applied to students. It also refers to students who have graduated from college not to concentrate too much on looking for work and start creating jobs. Not only the government, but several also support. The government has conducted training for entrepreneurship interest in youth to introduce to business, then create creative ideas and change the mindset of youth to be able to create a business. In creating a business, of course, several strategies are needed to produce a thriving business. Some of the proposed strategies for a startup consist of determining a business idea, knowing people's needs, and knowing market conditions.

Keywords

digital platform, entrepreneurial activities, higher education, non-formal learning,

1 Introduction

Higher education has three main identities. First, higher education institutions as educational institutions that provide academic and professional education services. The main benchmark is the implementation of educational or teaching principles. The result is students who have academic (explanatory) skills (Brusoni et al., 2014). Tertiary institutions as institutions for the development and dissemination of science, technology, and arts, according to the type of science, technology, and art being pursued. The main yardstick is the implementation of research principles. The result is students with scientific research and development skills (Akareem & Hossain, 2016).

Universities as social institutions with responsibility for improving the quality of life of the community (Loudfoot, 1972). The main benchmark is the implementation of the principle of community service. The result is students who have the ability to participate in building society (praxis). One of them is the ability of students to apply the principles of independence and cooperation in society. The quality of students and college graduates will be seen from the mastery of knowledge (Kazu, Kazu, & Ozdemir, 2005) and scientific insight as well as skills in leadership, communication, tolerance, and even independence (entrepreneurship). Entrepreneurial skills are not only visible from business skills but also include the quality of knowledge, mentality, and attitudes as an entrepreneur Universitas Negeri Padang students and graduates have great potential to become entrepreneurs, not only economically independent but also developing the economic potential of the community which has a positive impact on the country.

Important reasons for students to be active in entrepreneurship at the macro level are (1) as an effort to prepare university students to be ready to face the economic situation at the national, regional, and even international levels, such as the ASEAN Economic Community which has been started since the beginning of the year 2016 ago; and (2) train the attitudes of college students to be innovative and take risks in developing themselves and their communities. The efforts made by Universitas Negeri Padang in encouraging student entrepreneurial interest are through various extracurricular activities mediated through the Student Activity Unit and opportunities for entrepreneurial concept and management competition through the Student Entrepreneurship Program or the Student Creativity Program. The Faculty of Education as a faculty at UNP pays serious attention to entrepreneurship development for its students. This can be seen from the increasing number of faculty of education student participation in the entrepreneurial idea competition arena (Muda & Erlina, 2018). Based on this, it is necessary to design a program that is useful in developing entrepreneurship (Díaz-Iso, Eizaguirre, & García-Olalla, 2019).

Entrepreneurship development in this digitalization era encourages development towards the use of communication technology in entrepreneurship. The rise of online business has accelerated changes in entrepreneurial models. From 2016 to the end of 2019, digital-based business in Indonesia has increased by up to 500 percent. The digital-based business in Indonesia has reached nearly 400 trillion rupiahs. This figure makes Indonesia's digital economic transactions ranked first for the Southeast Asia region with a contribution of 49 percent. In addition, currently, Indonesia in general and West Sumatra Province, in particular, have been faced with a global situation related to the spread of the COVID-19 virus outbreak (Kementerian Kesehatan Republik Indonesia, 2020; Perkasa, 2020). This further strengthens the reasons for the need to migrate entrepreneurial patterns towards digital.

2 Method

Two main activities are carried out in deepening this study, namely initial research and implementing training programs for students. In terms of research implementation, a qualitative approach was used with a case study design. The research was aimed at understanding: (1) entrepreneurial education practices in tertiary institutions; (2) the importance of entrepreneurship in the digitalization era for students; (3) the use of digital marketing in student entrepreneurial activities; and (4) developing digital entrepreneurship for students. The research was conducted on students of Padang State University, Indonesia. Data analysis was performed by data reduction, data display, and documentation study. Data validity was checked by triangulation.

3 Discussion

3.1 Entrepreneurship Education

Entrepreneurship education in college is very important. The implementation of entrepreneurial education in tertiary institutions is related to (1) building entrepreneurial character; (2) creative and innovative mindset; (3) creating added value; (4) take advantage of opportunities and dare to take risks at hand. Entrepreneurial behavior is necessary for all occupations. Therefore, entrepreneurship education needs to be implemented in higher education. Students are able to build an entrepreneurial spirit through innovative and creative ideas, then be able to take advantage of and keep up with current digital technology developments (Pamungkas, 2017). Higher education institutions need to take advantage of the development of knowledge in the digital economy as provisions for students. The principal is that which can be used in society.

Many college graduates find it difficult to compete in the job market for jobs. With entrepreneurship, students can develop their own innovations or ideas into a business. The younger generation, especially students, should be able to take advantage of existing digital technology. The challenge of the industrial era 4.0 (Schwab, 2018) is to become an entrepreneur in the field of knowledge, by becoming an entrepreneur who is caring, independent, creative, and adaptive. The era of the industrial revolution is an era of major changes in all areas of life as a result of modern technology. No exception changes also occur in the field of education.

The importance of entrepreneurship education is given to students by utilizing digital technology because it can form an entrepreneurial character. Armed with entrepreneurship education is expected to reduce unemployment from college graduates. Unemployment still occurs because the orientation of education in tertiary institutions is still dependent on the ability to master science and technology. Whereas ideally, universities should also be oriented towards the entrepreneurial education paradigm.

Changing the previous mindset from being a worker to how to create jobs or become entrepreneurs. In the context of the entrepreneurial education paradigm, education that leads to competence in the entrepreneurial field needs to be consistently provided from the start of entry until students graduate. So that college graduates do not only have character building and employability skills, but also entrepreneurial skills. Therefore, the educational curriculum should be designed to shape graduates to be successful in careers as workers and as business people or entrepreneurs. Thus, there are no unemployed university graduates because those who are absorbed into the job market have the ability to become entrepreneurs.

The characters that will be formed through entrepreneurship education are intelligent and creative, including efforts to increase aspects such as creative, cognitive, collaborative, competence, cohesiveness, and being able to create a digital-preneur generation. Digitalpreneur is a business actor engaged in information and communication technology. Entrepreneur education is needed by students by developing their intelligence in the use of Social Media) to make a business opportunity through an online business. Use their knowledge for positive and beneficial things. By building the character of an entrepreneur that includes creative, cognitive, collaborative, competent, and integrated.

3.2 The importance of Entrepreneurship in the Digitalization Era

The 21st century is known as the knowledge age. At this time, all alternative efforts to meet the needs of life in various contexts are more knowledge-based. Efforts to meet the needs of life include knowledge-based education, knowledge-based economic development, knowledge-based social empowering, and knowledge-based industry development (Yuesti, 2017).

Educational institutions that are expected to produce graduates with academic abilities in the applied scientific field are universities. So, universities must always follow the development of science and technology that is developing rapidly in order to disseminate and update, especially the activities and learning processes that take place in it. The Entrepreneurial Student Program implemented in Higher Education is developed through the Ministry of Research, Technology, and Higher Education. This development is aimed at providing students with knowledge (Walters & Rodriguez, 2017), skills and attitudes or an entrepreneurial spirit (Entrepreneurship) based on science and technology so that they can change the mindset from job seekers to job creators and become strong and successful entrepreneurs in facing global competition. Therefore, the character of entrepreneurship among students must be raised so that the number of educated entrepreneurs from among universities increases, and the number of unemployed decreases.

College graduates and have a bachelor's degree cannot easily find work, even though many students concentrate on becoming a worker or employee, the fact is that many college graduates are still unemployed. So through entrepreneurship, it will direct students to find creative ideas and innovations so that they are able to create new businesses that are no longer focused on looking for work and become workers anymore but can create and open jobs. In 2030, Indonesia experiences a demographic bonus where the number of productive age population is estimated at 60% and 27% of them are young people, where they have the potential to become entrepreneurs. In revolution 4.0, the development of people's lifestyles has led to digitalization.

It is necessary to implement entrepreneurship education for students by utilizing digital technology as an effort to face the 4.0 revolution. What are the underlying reasons, namely first; the position of entrepreneurship in the Indonesian economy in the 21st century in the creative and digital economy. Indonesia experienced several stages of economic development, namely the 18th-century agricultural economy, the 19th-century industrial economy, the 20th-century information economy and the 21st century is now entering the creative and digital economy. Indonesia experienced several stages of economic development, namely the 18th-century agricultural economy, the 19th-century industrial economy, the 20th-century information economy, and the 21st century now entering the creative and digital economy. The creative economy is one of the concepts for economic development in Indonesia. Where Indonesia can develop a model of ideas and talents from the people to be able to innovate and create something. A creative mindset is necessary to keep growing and surviving in the future.

The economic growth that occurred in Indonesia during 2019 was driven by the large number of internet users who transact online (Han, Shen, & Farn, 2016). Business in the digital era is no longer questioning what products are sold, but how to sell and promote them. The business potential in the digital era is very wide, especially for the creative industry. Various electronic trading platforms that continue to grow are a breath of fresh air for entrepreneurs in Indonesia to market their products.

3.3 Utilization of Digital Marketing

The digital world is predicted to become something important, including business activities. Several indicators that can be used today include (1) increasing costs of digital advertising production; (2) increased number of smartphone ownerships (which provide easy access to the internet); (3) improvement of telecommunication infrastructure in order to improve the quality of data access. Digital marketing is a promotional activity and market search through online digital media (Ahmed et al., 2019) by utilizing various social networking tools. The digital world is now not only able to connect people with devices, but also people with other people around the world.

Digital marketing which usually consists of interactive and integrated marketing facilitates interaction between producers, market intermediaries, and potential consumers. On the one hand, digital marketing makes it easy for business people to monitor and provide all the needs and desires of potential consumers, on the other hand, potential consumers can also search for and get product information simply by browsing the virtual world so that it makes the search process easier. Buyers are now increasingly independent in making purchase decisions based on search results. Digital marketing can reach all people wherever they are without any geographical or time restrictions.

As of January 2019, it is known that: (1) there are 48% of internet users in Indonesia who have used the internet to search for products or services; (2) there are 46% of users visiting online shops; (3) 34% of users have made transactions via personal computers; (4) while there are 33% of users transact through gadgets. This means that the potential for online shopping in Indonesia has grown, so it needs to be balanced with massive online marketing (digital marketing) by business actors.

The platforms that are often used in digital marketing are social media or social networks (Churchill & Halverson, 2005). The available social networks sometimes have different characteristics. Some are for friendship such as Facebook, Path, Instagram, and Twitter, some are specifically for finding and building relationships like what LinkedIn offers. There are also more personal media such as e-mail available. Search engines like Google and Yahoo can also be empowered. In addition, business actors can also take advantage of blogs or personal websites.

However, this opportunity does not appear to have been followed by a change in the perspective of the majority of companies and individuals involved in the world of digital marketing (Charlesworth, 2018). Although large, small, and individual companies have started using digital and social media as a means of promoting or getting closer to consumers, unfortunately, the number is still very limited. The use of marketing through digital media (digital marketing) is still not optimal when compared to the drastic growth in the number of internet users. Seeing this, we can conclude that the potential for digital marketing in Indonesia is still very large.

3.4 Digital Entrepreneurship Development

Digital entrepreneurship is a phenomenon that is increasingly developing today (Sahut, Iandoli, & Teulon, 2019). Many digital entrepreneurs are in universities and have a lot of potentials to be developed such as not being considered as competitors, being able to analyze competitive information to find a market niche. The existence of digital entrepreneurship is, of course, a huge potential for government, universities, and industry. The role of the government in making regulations that encourage the formation of 1000 startups every year is of course not solely through regulation. However, the government also needs to become a mediator for higher education and industrial cooperation (Váradiné Szarka, 2016). One-party tertiary institutions have the potential for research and innovation development but lack the resources that support this potential. The industry has financial resources in particular but is weak in developing research and technological innovation. The role of the government as a mediator to find the two sides is a potential for creating digital entrepreneurs.

The process of developing digital entrepreneurship begins with the start-up stage that develops initial ideas to get results from their hard work (Zhao & Collier, 2017). There are three stages in digital business development, namely the idea development stage, then the development of a startup business, and then business management. The essence of digital entrepreneurship is the business founder himself. Therefore

it is important to get a stable team of business founders in starting a business with typical trials (trial-error) in the early stages. Another important thing is networking and social capital for business people.

The development of digital entrepreneurship requires the collaboration of third parties from the government, universities, and industry (Satalkina & Steiner, 2020). The Ministry of Communication and Information launched a policy of the 1000 digital startup movement. The role of the Indonesian government in making regulations is very important to encourage the development of new digital entrepreneurs.

The role of universities is also very large in developing technology, including in terms of industrial renewal. The role of higher education is in entrepreneurship education and research (Mengual-Andrés, 2013). Digital entrepreneurship education requires low costs so it is a hot topic today. Research through university laboratories is a potential development for beginner digital entrepreneurs. The results of the study found that the greater the entrepreneurial knowledge of students in the field of computer science (Beaubouef & McDowell, 2008) at universities in Iran, the greater the intention to do digital entrepreneurship. However, there are weaknesses of tertiary institutions such as in terms of disseminating knowledge due to lack of adequate resources, lack of collaboration between universities and industry in solving industrial technology problems. The role of third parties, namely industry, is no less important in digital business development. Industry develops special departments (van Riel & Lievens, 2004) within their organizations to transfer technology for commercial purposes. However, there are several weaknesses such as the industry is good at improving technology (Runte, 2015), but not good at doing research and developing innovation.

Based on the roles of the three parties and their limitations, it can be seen that the role of digital entrepreneurship development can be carried out in a synergy between the three parties. The most important thing is the role of the government to bring together universities and industry to work together. The industry has the resources needed by higher education institutions but does not fully have the capability and development of research and technology to carry out technological innovations (Diaconu, 2011). On the other hand, higher education institutions have the potential to carry out research and development of technological innovations but lack resources, especially in terms of funding. The government is a mediator who brings together both parties to complement each other's limitations. The role of the mediator will facilitate and accelerate the development of digital entrepreneurs as programmed by the government, especially millennial businessmen who are mostly in universities (Lingelbach et al., 2012).

4 Conclusions

The conclusion of this study is: (1) the rapid development of digital technology also has an impact on the world of marketing. Marketing trends in the world are shifting from conventional to digital mode. This digital marketing strategy is more prospective because it allows potential customers to obtain all kinds of information about products and transactions via the internet; (2) entrepreneurship requires a strategy to raise capital (Lin & Rauschnabel, 2015). This can be done by actively participating in activities such as training, seminars, or participating in competitions or using the various social media platforms available; and (3) owned business capital is required for the sustainability of a planned business for the long term. Through the use of owned resources and digital technology, entrepreneurial activities that are carried out can further develop.

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