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The Intellectual History of Entrepreneurship Education in Indonesian Higher Education

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Abstract: Entrepreneurship education in Indonesia did not emerge as a sudden response to contemporary economic challenges, but rather evolved through a long, intellectual, and policy-driven process shaped by historical, political, and socio-cultural dynamics. While existing studies predominantly focus on the effectiveness and outcomes of entrepreneurship education, relatively little attention has been paid to its historical and intellectual foundations. This study addresses this gap by examining the intellectual history of entrepreneurship education in Indonesian higher education. Using a qualitative historical approach combined with discourse analysis, the study analyzes primary sources, including education policies, curriculum regulations, and official government documents, alongside secondary academic literature from the 1980s to the present. The findings reveal that entrepreneurship education gradually shifted from a marginal development discourse during the late New Order period to a formally institutionalized component of higher education following the Reformasi era, particularly through the National Education System Law of 2003 and subsequent curriculum reforms. This trajectory reflects a broader paradigm shift from a bureaucratic education model toward one emphasizing innovation, self-reliance, and an entrepreneurial mindset, further reinforced by the *Merdeka Belajar–Kampus Merdeka* policy. The study contributes to the historiography of education by contextualizing entrepreneurship education within Indonesia's intellectual, ideological, and policy landscape, highlighting the importance of historically grounded perspectives for evaluating current and future educational reforms.

Abstrak: Pendidikan kewirausahaan di Indonesia tidak muncul sebagai respons yang tiba-tiba terhadap tantangan ekonomi kontemporer, melainkan berkembang melalui proses panjang yang bersifat intelektual dan digerakkan oleh kebijakan, serta dibentuk oleh dinamika historis, politik, dan sosial-budaya. Sementara kajian-kajian yang ada lebih banyak berfokus pada efektivitas dan capaian pendidikan kewirausahaan, perhatian terhadap fondasi historis dan intelektualnya masih relatif terbatas. Penelitian ini mengisi celah tersebut dengan mengkaji sejarah intelektual pendidikan kewirausahaan dalam pendidikan tinggi di Indonesia. Dengan menggunakan pendekatan historis kualitatif yang dipadukan dengan analisis wacana, penelitian ini menganalisis sumber-sumber primer berupa kebijakan pendidikan, regulasi kurikulum, dan dokumen resmi pemerintah, serta literatur akademik sekunder sejak dekade 1980-an hingga masa kini. Temuan penelitian menunjukkan bahwa pendidikan kewirausahaan secara bertahap bergeser dari wacana pembangunan yang bersifat marginal pada akhir masa Orde Baru menjadi komponen yang terinstitusionalisasi secara formal dalam pendidikan tinggi pasca era Reformasi, khususnya melalui Undang-Undang Sistem Pendidikan Nasional Tahun 2003 dan berbagai reformasi kurikulum setelahnya. Trajektori ini mencerminkan pergeseran paradigma yang lebih luas, dari model pendidikan yang birokratis menuju model yang menekankan inovasi, kemandirian, dan pola pikir kewirausahaan, yang semakin diperkuat melalui kebijakan Merdeka Belajar–Kampus Merdeka. Studi ini berkontribusi pada historiografi pendidikan dengan menempatkan pendidikan kewirausahaan dalam lanskap intelektual, ideologis, dan kebijakan pendidikan Indonesia, serta menegaskan pentingnya perspektif historis dalam mengevaluasi reformasi pendidikan masa kini dan masa depan.

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INTRODUCTION

Entrepreneurship education has become a central feature of contemporary higher education and policy discourse. Over the last five decades, entrepreneurship has evolved from a marginal topic in economics and management into a recognized scholarly field, accompanied by a rapid proliferation of dedicated courses, degree programs, and support infrastructures across universities worldwide (Landström, 2020; Talukder, Lakner & Temesi, 2024). In parallel, entrepreneurship education is increasingly viewed as a strategic tool for generating employment, driving innovation, and enhancing national competitiveness, particularly in emerging economies seeking to reposition themselves in global value chains (Hägg & Kurczewska, 2021; Maritz et al., 2022). Despite its prominence, the historical and intellectual origins of entrepreneurship education are often treated briefly, as if the phenomenon were a recent response to twenty-first-century economic changes.

Recent historical scholarship challenges this presumption of novelty. Katz's (2003) seminal chronology showed that American entrepreneurship education initiatives can be traced back to the late nineteenth century, long before the mass expansion of business schools in the post-war period. Further work on the United Kingdom, Spain, and other contexts has likewise revealed diverse, locally embedded traditions of educating prospective entrepreneurs well before entrepreneurship became a named academic subject (Pittaway et al., 2025; Stutz, Sørensen & Viebig, 2025). This emergent stream of "histories of entrepreneurship education" argues that current practices are shaped by earlier pedagogical experiments, institutional arrangements, and policy agendas, and calls for more historically grounded analyses that connect educational forms to their broader intellectual and societal contexts (Stutz, Sørensen & Viebig, 2025).

At the level of ideas, entrepreneurship education is anchored in a long intellectual tradition concerning the entrepreneur's role in the economy. Classical and modern economic thought has conceptualized entrepreneurs in various ways, viewing them as uncertainty bearers, coordinators of production, discoverers of opportunities, and agents of "creative destruction" (Landström, 2020). These theoretical positions not only informed how entrepreneurship was studied as an academic field but also implicitly shaped the learning objectives, curricular content, and normative assumptions of early entrepreneurship teaching. Historical reviews of entrepreneurship research emphasize that the field's social and intellectual evolution from forerunner contributions in mainstream economics and management to an autonomous scholarly community has been accompanied by shifting notions of what entrepreneurs should know and how they ought to act (Landström, 2020; Hägg & Kurczewska, 2021).

Within the scholarship of entrepreneurship education itself, several comprehensive syntheses have mapped the field's consolidation since the 1980s, particularly in terms of pedagogical approaches, impact assessment, and bibliometric patterns (Hägg & Kurczewska, 2021; Talukder, Lakner, & Temesi, 2024). Reviews consistently document a strong emphasis on outcomes such as entrepreneurial intentions, skills, and attitudes, alongside debates over experiential learning, ecosystem-based education, and the "teachability" of entrepreneurship. Yet, compared with this rich body of evaluative and pedagogical research, there remain relatively few studies that reconstruct the intellectual history of entrepreneurship education as a travelling idea: how particular conceptions of entrepreneurship were translated into educational doctrines, how they interacted with national ideologies and policy agendas, and how they were institutionalized in concrete programs (Stutz, Sørensen & Viebig, 2025).

Indonesia represents a particularly significant, but understudied, case in this regard. Since the late twentieth century, Indonesian policymakers and higher education leaders have increasingly promoted entrepreneurship education as a response to youth unemployment, structural underemployment, and the goal of increasing the share of entrepreneurs in the population. Mapping studies reveal a rapid expansion of entrepreneurship courses and programs across Indonesian higher education institutions, particularly since the 1990s, often supported by national policy directives and donor-funded initiatives (Amalia & von Korflesch, 2021; Maritz et al., 2022). Recent analyses highlight both the breadth of these offerings and their uneven distribution, with a concentration of more mature entrepreneurship education programs in a subset of universities (Maritz et al., 2022; Elpisah et al., 2024).

The intellectual foundation of entrepreneurship education in Indonesia was influenced by development economics and modernization theory, which emphasized self-reliance and productivity. Scholars such as Hadi (2022) argue that during the New Order period, economic policies had a significant impact on the education sector, although entrepreneurship itself had not yet become a major component of the curriculum. It was only after the Asian Financial Crisis (1997–1998) and the *Refor-*

masi era that entrepreneurship education began to be institutionalized through national policies, such as the National Education System Law No. 20/2003, and initiatives like *Kampus Merdeka* (Permana, Wijaya, & Arif, 2023).

Moreover, several higher education institutions began introducing entrepreneurship courses in the early 2000s, aligning with international standards and responding to recommendations from the World Bank and ADB for employability-based learning (Ramadhani & Putra, 2022). This marked the beginning of an intellectual discourse that positioned entrepreneurship not only as an economic necessity but also as a pedagogical innovation.

Contemporary studies have examined the implementation and outcomes of entrepreneurship education in Indonesia. For example, Suharyanto and Anggraini (2023) found that students exposed to entrepreneurship training were more likely to demonstrate entrepreneurial intention. Similarly, Arifin and Nugroho (2023) emphasized the importance of integrating local cultural values into entrepreneurship education to enhance its relevance and sustainability. However, these studies tend to focus on the effectiveness of implementation rather than the historical and intellectual development of the field.

In the context of higher education in Indonesia, entrepreneurship education has become a key strategy to produce graduates who are not only job-ready but also capable of creating job opportunities. Several studies have highlighted that integrating local cultural values into entrepreneurship education can enhance its relevance and effectiveness within the Indonesian context (Budiarto & Prasetyo, 2022; Budiman & Santosa, 2023). Moreover, national education policy transformations, such as the Merdeka Curriculum, provide greater flexibility for higher education institutions to develop innovative approaches in entrepreneurship teaching (Baskoro & Wahyuni, 2023).

Recent studies have focused on the impact of entrepreneurship education on student competencies and intentions. For example, Rahayu and Santosa (2022) examined the readiness of higher education institutions in implementing entrepreneurship curricula, while Yusuf, Purwanto, and Prabowo (2023) studied how such education affects students' entrepreneurial intentions in vocational schools. These works have provided valuable insights into present-day practices and challenges. However, they do not delve into how and why entrepreneurship education emerged in Indonesia, what intellectual discourses influenced its development, or how educational institutions historically responded to economic and political pressures to adopt entrepreneurship as a formal area of study.

The Indonesian literature on entrepreneurship education has predominantly focused on programmer effectiveness and individual-level outcomes. Studies have examined, for example, the impact of courses on students' entrepreneurial intentions and mindsets, the mediating role of self-efficacy and culture, and the contribution of entrepreneurship education to graduate employability (Suheadin, Ganefri, & Yulastri, 2023; Elpisah et al., 2024). Other contributions discuss curriculum design, pedagogical innovation, and the integration of entrepreneurship into institutional strategies for building "entrepreneurial universities" (Amalia & von Korflesch, 2021; Maritz et al., 2022). Although these works provide valuable insight into the current state and performance of entrepreneurship education in Indonesia, they tend to treat the curriculum as given, rarely interrogating the historical pathways and intellectual choices through which entrepreneurship education came to be defined in the Indonesian context.

Broad consensus among researchers emphasizes the importance of student readiness in engaging with entrepreneurship content, which can be influenced by curriculum design, learning methods, and active involvement in entrepreneurship projects (Bakri & Putra, 2023; Barata & Suharto, 2024). Outcome-Based Education (OBE) has also proven effective in shaping entrepreneurial competencies among vocational high school students (Berliana & Harahap, 2023). On the other hand, challenges remain in implementing digital curriculum transformation and addressing inconsistencies in institutional policies (Budiarti & Kurniawan, 2023). Therefore, it is essential to continuously evaluate and refine entrepreneurship education policies and practices to support economic growth and youth self-reliance in Indonesia.

From a theoretical perspective, entrepreneurship education intersects with several educational paradigms, including social constructivism (Vygotsky), human capital theory (Becker), and social innovation theory (Drucker). These perspectives position education not merely as knowledge transmission, but as a transformative force that nurtures creativity, resilience, and problem-solving capabilities (Wulandari, Siregar & Daulay, 2023). In the Indonesian context, understanding the intellectual roots of entrepreneurship education requires a historical investigation into the early ideas, educa-

tional reforms, and socio-cultural influences that shaped its development.

Contemporary research shows that effective entrepreneurship education in Indonesia must align with local wisdom and socio-cultural context. Rahman & Lestari (2023) emphasize that community-based and culturally adaptive models are more effective in fostering entrepreneurial intentions among students compared to generic global models. Therefore, a historical and contextual understanding is essential to ensure that entrepreneurship education does not merely replicate Western models but emerges from Indonesia's own intellectual and cultural foundations.

This study aims to fill the gap in the literature by examining the intellectual history of entrepreneurship education in Indonesia, with a focus on how historical, political, and academic discourses have shaped its emergence. It considers how global ideologies, such as neoliberalism and human capital theory, were localized and interpreted within the Indonesian context. It also examines the roles played by higher education institutions, government agencies, and intellectual actors in shaping the discourse and implementation of entrepreneurship education. As Kusumawardhani and Herlina (2024) argue, understanding the genealogy of entrepreneurship education is essential to evaluating its current trajectory and addressing the underlying assumptions that inform its pedagogical frameworks.

The central research problem guiding this study is: How did entrepreneurship education emerge as an intellectual and institutional field within the Indonesian education system? To address this, the study investigates several interrelated questions: (1) What were the key historical and political conditions that enabled the development of entrepreneurship education? (2) How did Indonesian academics and policymakers conceptualize entrepreneurship in relation to national development? (3) In what ways did global education trends influence local adaptations of entrepreneurship education?

This research explores the following questions: (1) What historical and ideological factors contributed to the rise of entrepreneurship education in Indonesia? (2) How did Indonesian intellectuals and policymakers conceptualize entrepreneurship in relation to education and national development? (3) In what ways did global educational trends influence Indonesia's curricular frameworks? To answer these questions, this study utilizes a historical and discourse analysis approach, examining policy documents, academic publications, and curriculum guidelines from the 1980s to the present.

By examining the intellectual trajectory of entrepreneurship education, this study provides new insights into how educational innovations are influenced by political and ideological forces. It contributes to the historiography of education in Indonesia and offers a framework for critically assessing the sustainability and relevance of entrepreneurship education today. As Suryani and Hakim (2022) suggest, understanding the genealogy of education policies is essential for creating future reforms that are contextually grounded and intellectually coherent.

This study aims to trace the intellectual history behind the emergence of entrepreneurship education in Indonesia by examining the thoughts, actors, and institutional shifts that have shaped its discourse. By doing so, it aims to reframe entrepreneurship education not merely as an economic necessity but as a form of intellectual and pedagogical development rooted in Indonesia's socio-political and historical realities.

METHOD

This study employed a qualitative historical method to examine the intellectual development of entrepreneurship education in Indonesia. The historical approach was employed to trace the origins, evolution, and contextual influences that have shaped the discourse on entrepreneurship within the national education system from the colonial period to the post-reform era. The methodological stages involved in this research include data collection (heuristics), source criticism (evaluation), interpretation, and historiography (narrative writing) (Gunawan, 2022).

Primary sources consisted of official government documents, including national education curricula, Ministry of Education decrees, white papers, and speeches from national education figures, spanning the years 1980–2023. These were accessed from institutions including the National Archives of Indonesia (ANRI) and the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology. Secondary sources included recent peer-reviewed journal articles, educational history books, and dissertations focusing on entrepreneurship education and intellectual history in Indonesia.

All historical data were subjected to external and internal criticism. External criticism ensured the authenticity of the source, including origin, authorship, and time of publication. Internal criticism assessed content accuracy, bias, and consistency. Cross-verification through triangulation with vari-

ous independent data sources enhanced the reliability and validity of the findings (Moon, 2019).

The study employed a historical-comparative method, allowing for the analysis of patterns, ruptures, and continuities in the conceptual framing of entrepreneurship education. Discourse analysis was employed to examine how entrepreneurship was constructed differently across various political regimes, from the technocratic vision of the New Order era to the recent emphasis on the creative economy and digital entrepreneurship (Rakhmani, 2021; Surya et al., 2025).

The research process began with identifying and collecting both primary and secondary sources relevant to the intellectual and policy-based development of entrepreneurship education in Indonesia. These sources included government documents, educational policies, speeches, academic articles, and historical texts. Once gathered, the data were organized chronologically to allow for a periodized and focused analysis of the evolution of entrepreneurship education. The next step involved a critical analysis of the data to interpret ideological shifts, policy motivations, and educational objectives across different political eras. This included examining how entrepreneurship was framed and institutionalized in the education system. Finally, the historiographical narrative was constructed by highlighting the intellectual contributions, the roles of policy actors, and the socio-political context that influenced educational change. This comprehensive method enabled the development of a grounded and historically contextualized understanding of the intellectual and institutional trajectories of entrepreneurship education in Indonesia.

THE ORIGIN OF ENTREPRENEURSHIP EDUCATION IN INDONESIAN HIGHER EDUCATION

In Indonesia, the terminology and conceptual vocabulary of entrepreneurship (*kewirausahaan*) diffused relatively late compared with Europe and North America. Several Indonesian textbooks and teaching materials note that, while the term "entrepreneur" has been used in Europe since at least the sixteenth century, it gained widespread recognition in Indonesia only at the end of the twentieth century and initially circulated primarily in academic and business circles. (Maritz, et al., 2021)

During the 1980s and early 1990s, entrepreneurship education existed in a fragmented manner. Some universities and business schools offered elective courses on entrepreneurship or small business management, but there was no national curriculum requirement, no dedicated ministerial regulation, and little shared pedagogical language beyond imported management literature. Indonesian higher education texts on "*Pendidikan Kewirausahaan di Indonesia*" underline that, in this period, entrepreneurship courses were confined to a limited number of institutions and were typically treated as cognitive, theory-heavy management subjects rather than as experiential practice (Muharlisiani, et al., 2021).

This early phase is important from an intellectual history perspective; entrepreneurship entered Indonesian universities largely as a borrowed academic discourse, rather than as a state-mandated educational objective. At the same time, it resonated with broader developmental concerns, such as small business upgrading, self-employment for graduates, and industrial diversification, setting the stage for later policy formalization.

To address the first research question, what were the key historical and political conditions that enabled the development of entrepreneurship education? our study traced the significant impact of Indonesia's 1998 economic crisis and the *Reformasi* era. This period dismantled the centralized, industrial-focused education model of the New Order, allowing space for curricular reform. Notably, policies such as *Kurikulum Merdeka* and *Kampus Merdeka* have reframed entrepreneurship education (EE) as a tool for economic recovery and innovation through outcome-based learning (Hasanah & Suparno, 2023; Nugroho, Prasetyo, & Sari, 2022).

During the late New Order period, entrepreneurship emerged as a development discourse rather than a distinct field of education. Presidential Instruction No. 4 of 1995 on the National Movement for Promoting and Fostering Entrepreneurship framed entrepreneurship as a behavioral and moral quality initiative, emphasizing innovation and risk-taking as essential to modernizing the economy and increasing national competitiveness (Susilaningsih, 2015). In this early framing, entrepreneurship was primarily associated with small and medium enterprises (SMEs) and productivity enhancement, rather than with formal curricular structures (Maritz et al., 2022).

Within higher education, the Directorate General of Higher Education (*Direktorat Jenderal Pendidikan Tinggi*, Dikti) began incorporating entrepreneurship into its policy language in the late 1990s. Susilaningsih (2015) notes that by 1997, Dikti was already encouraging universities to develop entrepreneurship courses, internships, and even incubator schemes as part of broader efforts to im-

prove graduate quality and employability. These policies were still embryonic and unevenly implemented, but they reveal an early recognition that higher education should produce job creators, not only job seekers.

The early intellectual promoters of entrepreneurship education were thus a heterogeneous coalition: senior officials in the Ministry of Education and Culture (particularly Dikti), economists and business scholars advocating SME development, and donor agencies such as UNESCO and the World Bank, which promoted entrepreneurship as part of global programmers on employability and youth employment (Salam, 2018). Universities with strong engineering and business traditions, such as the Bandung Institute of Technology (ITB) and several public universities in Java and Sumatra, began experimenting with entrepreneurship-related courses and student business projects, although these initiatives were often peripheral and optional.

These early initiatives were motivated by three overlapping concerns (Maritz et al., 2022; Salam, 2018). First, entrepreneurship was framed as a mechanism for economic development, especially through strengthening SMEs and creating a more dynamic private sector. Second, policy actors linked entrepreneurship education to unemployment reduction, arguing that graduates should be prepared to become self-employed rather than rely on scarce public-sector jobs. Third, the insertion of entrepreneurship into higher education was justified as part of the modernization of education, aligning Indonesian universities with international discourses that emphasized innovation, competitiveness, and the "knowledge economy".

REFORMASI AS CATALYST (1997–2003): CRISIS, HUMAN CAPITAL AND SELF-RELIANCE

The Asian Financial Crisis of 1997–1998 and the subsequent *Reformasi* period provided a powerful catalyst for reframing entrepreneurship as a strategic response to structural unemployment and economic volatility (Goldstein, 1998). Empirical studies have emphasized the relative resilience of Indonesian SMEs during the crisis, making them emblematic actors of grassroots economic survival and recovery (Sharma, 2001). In this context, entrepreneurship was no longer viewed solely as a development ideal but rather as a concrete policy instrument.

Intellectuals and policy-makers increasingly drew on human capital theory to argue that entrepreneurship education could enhance the stock of economically relevant skills and attitudes. International scholarship, including meta-analytical work on the contribution of entrepreneurship education to human capital formation, reinforces the view that entrepreneurship education can positively shape knowledge, skills, and entrepreneurial attitudes (Maritz et al., 2022). This human capital framing resonated strongly with Indonesian reform discourses, which emphasized that quality education was a precondition for economic competitiveness and integration into global markets.

B.J. Habibie, as the third President of Indonesia, actively supported the development of entrepreneurship in Indonesia by encouraging the establishment of Vocational High Schools (SMK), which aimed to produce skilled workers, thereby fostering the growth of skill-based entrepreneurship (Habibie, 1999). Habibie also founded the Higher Education Institute of Technology (PTIT), which offered relevant education to nurture entrepreneurs in the fields of technology and industry.

Curricular reforms in the early 2000s translated these legal and cultural shifts into more concrete structures. Ministerial Decree No. 232/U/2000, followed by Decree No. 045/U/2002, mandated universities to structure their curricula into national, institutional, and supplementary components. While the decrees did not mandate entrepreneurship as a national compulsory subject, they explicitly allowed institutions to include courses that respond to labor-market needs and regional development priorities within the institutional component. University statutes and curriculum documents from the 2000s commonly use these decrees as justification for introducing 2–3 credit compulsory entrepreneurship courses across faculties.

In parallel, the Directorate General of Higher Education (Dikti) launched the *Program Kreativitas Mahasiswa* (PKM, Student Creativity Program) in 2001. PKM was designed to nurture student creativity across several tracks, including research, technology, community service, and explicitly "entrepreneurship" (PKM-K). By funding student business proposals and encouraging campus-based micro-ventures, PKM introduced an experiential, project-based model of entrepreneurship education that went beyond classroom theory.

During this transitional period, academics and bureaucrats began to articulate entrepreneurship education as part of a broader self-reliance (*kemandirian*) project. Higher education was expected to produce graduates with initiative, creativity, and the capacity to create new ventures (Salam, 2018). While concrete programs remained limited and fragmented, the intellectual terrain shifted: en-

trepreneurship was no longer merely an economic policy tool but was increasingly conceptualized as a pedagogical and curricular concern.

INSTITUTIONALIZATION (2003–2013): NATIONAL EDUCATION LAW, CURRICULUM REFORM, AND ENTREPRENEURIAL MINDSET

The enactment of the National Education System Law (Law No. 20/2003) marked a crucial moment in the institutionalization of entrepreneurship education. The law states that national education aims to develop learners who are faithful, knowledgeable, creative, independent, and responsible citizens. Formulations that were subsequently interpreted as normative bases for entrepreneurship, especially the emphasis on creativity and independence (Irwansyah & Tripalupi, 2018). This law provided the legal framework for integrating entrepreneurship into curricula across educational levels.

The National Education System Law (Law No. 20 of 2003) did not introduce a stand-alone entrepreneurship subject, but it defined national education goals in ways that became a legal anchor for later entrepreneurship initiatives. Subsequent ministerial guidelines and program documents, such as those for the *Wirausaha Merdeka* and P2MW (*Pembinaan Mahasiswa Wirausaha*) schemes, consistently cite Law 20/2003 as the legal basis, highlighting its emphasis on developing independent, creative learners and providing life skills and vocational education that support self-employment.

The "how?" of this reorientation is significant. With decentralization, universities gained greater curricular autonomy, and Law 20/2003 positioned them as strategic agents in producing graduates who are not only job seekers but also job creators. Texts on entrepreneurship education in Indonesian higher education unanimously stress that this law, together with subsequent regulations, was interpreted by policymakers and university leaders as a mandate to embed entrepreneurship into the mission of higher education institutions (Usman & Hamid, 2022).

In higher education, institutionalisation took the form of both policy instruments and university-level initiatives. Susilaningsih (2015) documents how Dikti progressively expanded entrepreneurship -related programmes, culminating in the Program Mahasiswa Wirausaha (PMW) launched in 2009. PMW provided funding and mentoring to students interested in becoming job creators, alongside complementary schemes such as entrepreneurship lectures (Kuliah Kewirausahaan), entrepreneurship internships, and university-based business incubators (Salam, 2018). These programmes were justified as efforts to enhance graduate quality, foster entrepreneurial character, and mitigate graduate unemployment. At the same time, several universities attempted to transform themselves into entrepreneurial universities. The School of Business and Management at ITB, founded in 2003, explicitly adopted a mission to produce knowledge-based entrepreneurs and positioned itself within the global discourse on entrepreneurial universities (Maritz et al., 2022).

From 2010 onwards, entrepreneurship became the explicit object of cross-sectoral youth and SME policies that directly targeted graduates. The Regulation of the State Minister for Cooperatives and SMEs No. 04/Per/M.KUKM/IX/2010 on the *Program Penumbuhan dan Pengembangan Sarjana Wirausaha* (PPSW, Growth and Development Programme for Graduate Entrepreneurs) is a key marker. It defines graduate entrepreneurship programmes coordinated by the Ministry of Cooperatives and SMEs, in collaboration with local governments, business actors, and educational institutions, with the aim of "growing and developing entrepreneurs from among graduates so that they are able to create jobs for themselves, their families, and their communities."

Despite this proliferation of initiatives, qualitative work by Soepatini (2013) shows that entrepreneurship education in Indonesia during this period still tended to be conceptualised primarily as "business teaching," with a strong functional orientation towards business plans, marketing, and finance, and limited attention to broader socio-cultural dimensions of entrepreneurship. Nonetheless, both Indonesian and international scholarship have increasingly begun to speak of "entrepreneurial mindset", emphasizing attitudes, creativity, opportunity recognition, and self-efficacy as key outcomes of entrepreneurship education (Martiz et al., 2022). This discursive shift marked the beginning of a more holistic understanding of entrepreneurship education, focusing on the formation of character and orientation, rather than merely the transmission of business knowledge.

NEGOTIATING GLOBAL DISCOURSES (2013–2020): NEOLIBERALISM, OBE, SDGS, AND LOCAL ADAPTATION

Since 2013, Indonesian entrepreneurship education has become increasingly intertwined with global discourses on neoliberalism, outcomes-based education (OBE), and sustainable development. OECD

and EU reports have framed entrepreneurship as a transversal competence necessary for employability, innovation, and active citizenship, providing widely cited conceptual frameworks and policy recommendations (Lackeus, 2015). In parallel, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) have highlighted entrepreneurship and innovation as key tools for promoting inclusive growth and reducing poverty.

Indonesia responded by consolidating a competency and outcome-based higher education regime. The Indonesian National Qualifications Framework (*Kerangka Kualifikasi Nasional Indonesia*, KKNI) and the 2014 National Standards for Higher Education (SN-Dikti) translated learning outcomes into structured combinations of knowledge, skills, and attitudes, with entrepreneurship frequently mentioned as a desired graduate attribute (Elpisah et al., 2024). Empirical studies indicate that universities are redesigning curricula and learning outcomes to emphasize creativity, problem-solving, and entrepreneurial behavior as core components of graduate profiles (Elpisah et al., 2024).

In this period, entrepreneurship education was also increasingly linked to Indonesia's creative economy agenda. Policy analyses by Fahmi, McCann, and Koster (2017) show how the creative economy was promoted as a new development paradigm, positioning creative industries and entrepreneurial talent as engines of urban regeneration and national competitiveness. This agenda encouraged universities and local governments to introduce entrepreneurship programmes connected to creative sectors, such as design, media, culinary ventures, and digital content, thus broadening the substantive content of entrepreneurship education beyond traditional small business themes (Alonso & Bressan, 2016).

At the same time, Indonesian scholars and practitioners negotiated these global discourses through local cultural concepts, particularly gotong royong (mutual cooperation) and Pancasila values. Research on micro enterprises and community-based entrepreneurship highlights gotong royong as a form of social capital that supports collective risk-sharing, informal mentoring, and community-based start-ups (Lukiyanto & Wijayaningtyas, 2020). In education, several models of entrepreneurship learning integrate project-based group work, community service, and cooperative ventures explicitly framed as expressions of gotong royong and ethical responsibility (Salam, 2018). Thus, while Indonesian entrepreneurship education has incorporated neoliberal notions of competitiveness and individual initiative, it has simultaneously grounded them in collective values and a community-oriented approach.

International and domestic donor agencies also intensified their engagement in entrepreneurship and social innovation during this period, including programmers on creative entrepreneurship, social enterprise incubation, and youth start-up competitions (Passaro, Quinto & Thomas, 2017). These initiatives contributed to a broader ecosystem in which entrepreneurship education, incubators, competitions, and policy reforms mutually reinforced one another.

THE ERA OF *MERDEKA BELAJAR* (2020–PRESENT): DIGITAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND SOCIAL INNOVATION

The launch of the *Merdeka Belajar–Kampus Merdeka* (MBKM) policy in 2020 marks the latest phase in the intellectual trajectory of entrepreneurship education in Indonesia. Ministerial Regulation No. 3/2020 formally allows students to spend up to three semesters in off-campus learning experiences, with entrepreneurship recognized as one of the main activity categories (Alifa, Hanum & Andari, 2024). The MBKM guidelines for the *Kewirausahaan Kampus Merdeka* program emphasize modular combinations of training, mentoring, and venture development, including schemes such as *Kegiatan Berwirausaha Mahasiswa Indonesia* (KBMI) and *Akselerasi Startup Mahasiswa Indonesia* (ASMI).

Recent empirical studies show that MBKM has accelerated both the expansion and diversification of entrepreneurship education. On the one hand, universities have scaled up entrepreneurship centers, incubators, and collaboration with industry and local governments (Maritz et al., 2022). On the other hand, MBKM has encouraged pedagogical innovation: students engage in real venture projects, community-based enterprises, and social entrepreneurship initiatives as part of their credited studies (Rahmatillah, Hendra & Darmawan, 2023). Surveys report positive effects of entrepreneurship programmers under MBKM on entrepreneurial intention, skills, and self-efficacy among university students (Elpisah et al., 2024).

A distinctive feature of this period is the strong emphasis on digital entrepreneurship and social innovation. Systematic reviews and empirical studies document a growing body of Indonesian research on digital entrepreneurship education, digital start-ups, and the role of educational technology in fostering entrepreneurial competencies (Rauf et

al., 2024). Universities are increasingly offering courses and programs that combine entrepreneurship with topics such as e-commerce, fintech, digital marketing, and platform-based business models, often framed within the rhetoric of "Industry 4.0" and "Society 5.0" (Aysi, Susilaningsih, & Subandi, 2024).

Parallel to this digital turn, social entrepreneurship and social innovation have gained prominence as themes within entrepreneurship curricula and extracurricular programs. Case studies of university-led social entrepreneurship or community innovation programs highlight how students are encouraged to address social and environmental problems, such as poverty, education, and sustainability, through entrepreneurial projects, often supported by MBKM and creative economy schemes (Ika, Lestari & Nurhayati, 2024). This development reflects a partial rebalancing of entrepreneurship education away from purely profit maximization towards broader notions of value creation and impact.

Overall, MBKM has further blurred the boundaries between formal curriculum, co-curricular activities, and the wider entrepreneurial ecosystem. Entrepreneurship education is now distributed across various courses, off-campus programs, incubators, competitions, and collaborations with industry and civil society, anchored by a policy framework that explicitly recognizes entrepreneurial learning as part of recognized academic credit (Alifa, Hanum, & Andari, 2024).

HISTORIOGRAPHICAL CONTRIBUTION: FROM DEVELOPMENTALISM TO DIGITAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP

First, it traces a genealogy of ideas from developmentalism to human capital, OBE, and digital entrepreneurship. The late New Order framed entrepreneurship in terms of national development and SME strengthening, culminating in the 1995 entrepreneurship instruction and early Dikti policies (Susilaningsih, 2015). The post-crisis period reframed entrepreneurship education through the lens of human capital theory and self-reliance, positioning it as a means to enhance graduate quality and reduce unemployment (Lackeus, 2015). The 2003 education law, KKNI, and SN-Dikti embedded entrepreneurship within competence-based and outcomes-based frameworks, while K-13 and the expansion of PMW and incubators institutionalized these ideas across school and higher education (Irwansyah & Tripalupi, 2018). Finally, MBKM and the digital transformation agenda have pushed entrepreneurship education into new domains of digital business models, creative industries, and social innovation (Rauf et al., 2024)

Second, the study highlights the role of key actors and institutions in shaping this trajectory. Policy entrepreneurs within Dikti designed and expanded schemes such as PMW, KBMI, and ASMI; university leaders at ITB and other institutions experimented with entrepreneurial university models and compulsory entrepreneurship curricula; and international organizations such as OECD and UNESCO provided conceptual and normative frameworks that Indonesian actors selectively appropriated (Maritz et al., 2022). Donors and creative economy agencies further diversified the field by supporting social and creative entrepreneurship programs (Fahmi, McCann, and Koster, 2017).

Third, this intellectual history shows that Indonesian entrepreneurship education is not a simple local reflection of global neoliberal trends. Rather, it is the result of ongoing negotiation between global policy scripts and local cultural-political resources. Human capital and competitiveness discourses have been articulated alongside, and sometimes through, concepts such as gotong royong, community empowerment, and Pancasila-based character education, especially in school-level entrepreneurship and community-based programmers (Lukiyanto & Wijayaningtyas, 2020). This hybridity distinguishes the Indonesian trajectory from many Western narratives and enriches comparative debates on the localization of global education policy.

By bringing together scattered policy texts, academic debates, and institutional experiments into a coherent, chronological narrative, the study makes a historiographical contribution to the history of Indonesian education. It demonstrates how entrepreneurship education has evolved from a marginal policy add-on to a central organizing principle of national education reform, particularly during the MBKM era, where entrepreneurial learning is viewed as a key pathway towards a digitally enabled, innovation-driven, and socially responsible future.

The historical development of entrepreneurship education in Indonesia provides valuable insights into the global evolution of entrepreneurship as a key component of higher education. This research contributes to existing historiographies by offering a detailed examination of how policy shifts in Indonesia were shaped by both global and local factors. Indonesia's journey reflects a broader trend of integrating entrepreneurship education into higher education systems worldwide, particularly in

response to economic crises, technological advancements, and global discourses on neoliberalism and sustainable development. The global implications of this research underscore the importance of contextualizing entrepreneurship education within national policies, local needs, and global trends. Future research should further explore the impacts of digital entrepreneurship on education systems globally, particularly in emerging economies, and examine how the entrepreneurial mindset is being cultivated in diverse cultural contexts (Filion, 1998; Lundström & Stevenson, 2005).

CONCLUSION

This study finds that entrepreneurship education (EE) in Indonesia has developed through a combination of intellectual, policy, and cultural influences. Initially introduced to address unemployment and economic reform, EE has become a key element of national education, especially after 2020, with the *Merdeka Belajar–Kampus Merdeka* initiative. EE is now recognized as a transformative movement that promotes innovation, resilience, and social equity. Its institutionalization in universities and vocational schools, which integrates local wisdom, digital tools, and cross-sector partnerships, reflects Indonesia's unique, community-oriented approach. Despite progress, challenges remain in policy alignment, educator readiness, and curriculum relevance. This research offers historical and policy insights, emphasizing the need for adaptive, culturally grounded, and forward-looking education systems.

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