

Cultivating Students' Entrepreneurial Readiness: A Systematic Study of the Role of Interest and Field Work Practice

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ABSTRACT

Objective: The purpose of this study is to examine the relationship between entrepreneurial interest that arises in students and their readiness to become entrepreneurs through a systematic review of the literature. The analysis of the literature review aims to solve problems related to students' readiness to become entrepreneurs and their perceptions of student skills in productive subjects. **Literature Study:** A literature review analysis revealed the importance of entrepreneurial interest, independent learning, and productive skills as key factors in shaping vocational high school students' entrepreneurial readiness. These three factors support each other in developing students' abilities, motivation, and courage to start independent businesses. **Findings:** There is a relationship between fieldwork experience and entrepreneurial interests developed during school, leading to the creation of a generation of entrepreneurs. Students' readiness for entrepreneurship and their perceptions of productive skills are influenced by each individual's interest and independence in entrepreneurship. **Novelty:** Entrepreneurship is an alternative solution and effort to increase employment opportunities today. Readiness for entrepreneurship is influenced by entrepreneurial interest, personal independence, productive skills such as literacy, technical skills, interpersonal skills, and problem-solving, as well as the implementation of fieldwork practices in education. Fieldwork practices, an effective learning strategy, can encourage students to solve real-world challenges collaboratively, creatively, and responsibly.

INTRODUCTION

The era of industrial development and technological adaptation encourages individuals to improve their soft skills to compete and adapt to their surroundings (Mabkhot et al., 2021; Zhang et al., 2024). Adaptation is necessary in various fields such as education, economics, social, and environmental sciences to create competent individuals. Therefore, leadership, communication, and creativity are important soft skills that will support individuals in adapting to this era of adoption (Bouckaert et al., 2021). One example is in the economic and educational fields to create entrepreneurs without relying on industrial absorption (Ahmad et al., 2023). Increasingly open competition in the world of work makes employment increasingly stringent and selective. Entrepreneurship is a primary alternative to reduce competition and as an effort to increase employment opportunities (Adam et al., 2025; Busch et al., 2024). This is supported by the fact that the limited number of job opportunities is disproportionate to the large number of graduates from various levels of education.

The Ministry of Home Affairs records that the population of Indonesia as of December 30 2021 reached 273,879,750 people with the majority of unemployed people in Indonesia coming from the Vocational High School (SMK) graduate group (BPS, 2021; Yoana et al., 2024). The Open Unemployment Rate (TPT) according to vocational and high school education completed reached 20.21%, which is relatively high as of August 2021 with the number of unemployed nationally in 2021 being 9.1 million people (BPS,

2021; Mu'awwanah & Illah, 2022). The areas with the highest impact are large cities, especially in the provinces of East Java, Central Java and West Java. The imbalance between the number of graduates and the unemployment rate creates greater competition for job opportunities (Shi, 2024).

The serious problems of unemployment and job competition in Indonesia are focused on vocational high school graduates who find it difficult to find work. Knowing that the age of a person's skill development begins at 14-30 years old, equivalent to teenagers in vocational high school until they graduate from college (Sears, 2017; Setyawan et al., 2024). The problem of vocational high school graduates who find it difficult to find work is partly due to graduates relying solely on absorption from industry, so unemployment cannot be resolved and will increase in the following years. The high unemployment rate at the vocational high school level shows that there are still many things that need to be considered in the world of education in Indonesia (Agussalim et al., 2024; Putra, 2023). Graduates are expected to be better prepared to face the world of work after school, where the world of work is not only limited to the industrial world but can also take the form of entrepreneurship that they can build with the skills they have acquired in school.

Entrepreneurship is the activity of someone who strives to create a business or enterprise independently. An entrepreneur typically creates added value through innovation and creativity, and is able to identify market opportunities (Santoso et al., 2021). Furthermore, entrepreneurship encompasses the ability to gather resources and take appropriate action to achieve profit (Hughes et al., 2022; Juliana et al., 2021). However, entrepreneurial activity requires a serious level of preparation, especially in facing the profits and losses of business. The level of entrepreneurial readiness of vocational high school students can generally be seen from their waiting period for employment and their ability to work independently according to their field of expertise and the demands of the business world.

To foster entrepreneurial interest, vocational schools should provide students with extensive training and understanding that entrepreneurship is a valuable option at a time when job opportunities are scarce and competition for entry into the workforce is intensifying. This understanding underscores the importance of recognizing that the school environment is a critical and evolving environment (Lintangesukmanjaya et al., 2024; Mabkhot et al., 2021). With this understanding, implementing entrepreneurship programs in schools can transform students' mindsets, thereby increasing their interest in entrepreneurship (Salmony & Kanbach, 2022). Developing entrepreneurial interest cannot be achieved without education and training that can stimulate an individual's entrepreneurial spirit (Kim & Park, 2023; Santoso et al., 2021). Therefore, this shift in mindset about entrepreneurship needs to be fostered through both formal and non-formal education.

Based on the description, two factors have been identified that are related to graduates' entrepreneurial readiness: fieldwork practice and entrepreneurial interest developed during school education. Entrepreneurial interest is a crucial factor in motivating individuals to be better prepared to start and run a business. A strong interest in entrepreneurship leads to greater motivation to learn and develop productive skills, enabling them to face challenges (Canco, 2022; Vazard, 2024). Entrepreneurial interest

contributes to an individual's increased readiness to start and manage a business independently. In response, there is currently little research on the correlation between entrepreneurial interest and the importance of entrepreneurial readiness. Analytical studies are needed to determine the factors that influence young people, especially students, to become entrepreneurs.

The purpose of this study is to review the relationship between entrepreneurial interest that arises in students and their entrepreneurial readiness through a systematic review of the study literature. The analysis of the literature review is aimed at solving problems related to student readiness for entrepreneurship and student skill perceptions in productive subjects. This study can provide useful information and motivational input regarding the relationship between graduates' entrepreneurial readiness and fieldwork practice to develop maximum entrepreneurial interest. This can be an innovative study in developing entrepreneurship studies in school education.

RESEARCH METHOD

The systematic observation process in the literature study was carried out using a strategy for searching for relevant literature data in accordance with the research objectives. The study review analysis method in this study was carried out qualitatively, producing accurate data (Lintangesukmanjaya et al., 2025; Prahani et al., 2022). The results of the literature study analysis can be obtained and evaluated in accordance with scientific developments in accordance with the research objectives. The results were arranged with a narrative framework according to the important points in the discussion. Coding or context mapping was used to identify the relationship between entrepreneurial interest and entrepreneurial readiness, this aims to increase methodological credibility (Assem et al., 2023). The literature was synthesized through search results in international journals and other international literature sources. The results obtained four important points in the literature study are, entrepreneurship, entrepreneurial interest, student learning independence, productive skills are described as follows.

Entrepreneurship

The definition of entrepreneurship according to Sukardi (2018), entrepreneurship is a combination of the words "wira" which means brave and effort (Wuisang et al., 2012). So, entrepreneurship means someone who is brave or mighty in business. Furthermore, according to (Zimmerer, 1996) an entrepreneur is someone who creates a new business in the face of risk and uncertainty for the purpose of achieving profit and growth by identifying opportunities and designing important resources to write them on these opportunities (Cheng et al., 2025). An entrepreneur is someone who pays a certain price for a certain product, to then sell it at an uncertain price, while making decisions about efforts to achieve and utilize resources, and accepting risks.

Building entrepreneurship means building or creating something new. The life of an entrepreneur is largely determined by the market because it is where entrepreneurs and the public meet and interact to introduce and sell goods and services, and to meet the needs of the buying public (Canco, 2022). Entrepreneurship studies a person's values,

abilities, and behaviors in creativity and innovation. Therefore, the object of entrepreneurship study is a person's values and abilities manifested in behavior (Prince et al., 2021). Creativity and innovation are essential for every entrepreneur, as every business development process, from the initial stages to the decline, requires creative and innovative thinking regarding the products produced. The goal is for a business to continue generating profits and compete by following market (consumer) tastes for business development, especially in the small and medium enterprise sector.

Interest in Entrepreneurship

Interest is a persistent tendency within an individual to feel attracted to a particular field and feel happy to be involved in it. Individuals who are interested in something will encourage them to carry out certain activities without coercion. This feeling of interest and pleasure can make someone start to enjoy something they are facing or doing (Dewaele & Peter, 2024). According to Kartono (1992), interest is the moments of the soul's tendency that is intensively directed towards an object that is considered the most effective (feelings, emotions) in which there are strong effective elements (emotions), interest is also related to personality (Vazard, 2024).

Entrepreneurial interest is a person's inner inclination to create a business, then organize, manage, assume risks, and develop the business they create. In other words, entrepreneurial interest is the desire, interest, and willingness to work hard or have a strong will to be independent or strive to meet one's needs without fear of potential risks, and always learn from failures (Canco, 2022; Isma et al., 2023). Entrepreneurial interest is not only an internal desire but also requires a forward-looking view of the potential for establishing a business. The following are aspects of entrepreneurial interest according to several experts:

Table 1. Aspects of entrepreneurial interest according to experts (Hunaidah et al., 2024; Ulansari et al., 2024)

Hurlock's (2002) Aspects of Entrepreneurial Interest	Aspects of Entrepreneurial Interest Pintrich & Schunk (1996)	Drucker's (2003) Aspects of Entrepreneurial Interest
Cognitive aspect, an aspect based on concepts developed regarding areas related to interest.	General attitude towards activity Specific awareness to like activities	Able to sense business opportunities Have self-confidence and be able to have a positive attitude towards yourself and your environment
The affective aspect, the emotional weight of the concept that builds the cognitive aspect of interest is expressed in attitudes towards activities that are caused by interest.	Feeling happy with activities There is intrinsic interest in the content of the activity Participate in activities	Behaving as a leader means directing Have the initiative to be creative and innovative Able to work hard and have a broad perspective Dare to take risks Respond to suggestions and criticism

Student Learning Independence

Independence is conformity to the moral principles of the reference group, an independent individual is an individual who dares to make decisions based on an understanding of all the consequences of his actions. Independence or autonomy is the ability to control and regulate one's own thoughts, feelings and actions freely and to try alone to overcome feelings of shame and doubt (West et al., 2025). Learning independence is one of the factors that determine student success in learning, so this independent attitude is important for anyone who wants to achieve success in their life.

In the learning process, each student is always guided to become an independent learner. To become independent, an individual must learn, thus achieving learning independence. As independence develops, it emerges as a result of the learning process and experience (Karataş et al., 2024; Wibowo et al., 2025). An individual is said to be independent if they possess the following five characteristics: 1.) Self-confidence, believing in one's own abilities and judgment in carrying out tasks and choosing an effective approach; 2.) Able to work alone, making every effort independently to produce something that can be proud of due to one's sincerity and expertise; 3.) Mastering the skills and expertise that are appropriate to the job, having skills that are in accordance with the potential that is highly expected in the work environment; 4.) Respecting time, the ability to organize daily schedules that prioritize useful activities efficiently; 5.) Responsibility, everything that must be carried out or done by someone in carrying out something that has become their choice.

As a result of the learning process, achieving an independent character is influenced by many factors, especially four factors other than internal factors (Endogenous) that influence children's independence (Ma'arif et al., 2023); 1.) Genes or heredity of parents. Children's independent nature is inherited directly from their parents' independent nature; 2.) Parenting patterns. The way parents raise or educate their children will influence the development of their teenagers' independence; 3.) School education system. The school education system is the educational system in schools where children are educated in a formal environment (Ben Gurion & Nasir, 2024). Educational processes in schools that fail to foster democratization of education and tend to emphasize indoctrination without argumentation will hinder the development of student independence. Conversely, educational processes in schools that emphasize the importance of respect for children and the development of positive competencies will facilitate the development of independent learning (Serpil, 2025); 4.) Life systems in society. A social life system that emphasizes a safe social environment, values the expression of adolescent potential in the form of various activities, and does not apply hierarchies will stimulate and encourage the development of children's independence.

Productive Skills

Skills come from the word "skilled," meaning competent, capable, and dexterous. Skills require training, and the basic abilities each person possesses can help produce something more valuable more quickly. Skills are divided into four categories (Sudirtha et al., 2021; Suminar et al., 2021): 1.) Basic Literacy Skills: Basic skills that everyone must have, such as reading, writing, arithmetic and listening; 2.) Technical Skills: Technical

skills acquired through learning in technical fields such as operating computers and other digital tools; 3.) Interpersonal Skills: Each person's skills in communicating with each other, such as listening to someone, giving opinions and working as a team; 4.) Problem Solving: A person's skill in solving problems using logic or feelings.

Skills are the application of knowledge so that a person's skill level is related to the level of knowledge that is influenced by (Scheel et al., 2022; Suminaret al., 2021); 1.) Level of Education The higher a person's education. The higher a person's education, the greater their knowledge. Consequently, they will be more likely to accept and absorb new things; 2.) Increasing Age, as a person ages, physical and psychological changes occur. The older a person gets, the more mature and grown-up they become in their thinking and work; 3.) Basic Experience, experience can serve as a foundation for becoming better than before and as a source of knowledge for attaining truth. A person's experiences will influence their maturity in thinking and doing something.

Meanwhile, the factors that can directly influence skills are; 1.) Motivation, motivation awakens the desire within a person to perform various actions. This motivation is what drives a person to act according to the procedures that have been taught; 2.) Experience, experience strengthens a person's ability to perform an action (skill). Experience builds a person's ability to perform subsequent actions better due to having performed actions in the past; 3.) Expertise, the skills a person possesses will make them proficient in performing certain skills. Expertise will enable someone to do something according to what they have been taught.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Seeing the reality of the problem of unemployment and job competition in Indonesia which is quite serious, narrowing down to vocational school graduates who have difficulty finding work, the path of entrepreneurship has become an alternative solution as well as an effort to increase employment opportunities today.

The Relationship Between Interest in Entrepreneurship and Readiness to Become an Entrepreneur

Entrepreneurship is not easy; it requires a strong interest in achieving entrepreneurial readiness. Entrepreneurial interest among students is currently relatively low, especially at the Vocational High School (SMK) level, despite the learning and theory provided in school (Awaah et al., 2023; Soomro & Shah, 2022). This low interest reflects students' suboptimal mental readiness and motivation to start their own businesses after graduation. Many students still rely on the hope of working in industry, thus lacking the initiative and courage to take risks necessary in the world of entrepreneurship. This shows that entrepreneurial readiness is determined not only by technical skills but also by internal factors such as interest and self-confidence (Dewaele & Peter, 2024; Vazard, 2024). As shown in Table 1, entrepreneurial interest can be fostered through several supporting aspects.

This supporting aspect emphasizes that interest is not merely a fleeting attraction, but rather a combination of profound cognitive, affective, and motivational dimensions (Hunaidah et al., 2024; Ulansari et al., 2024). Hurlock highlights the importance of both

cognitive and affective aspects, where understanding a field and emotional attachment to a particular activity will encourage someone to continue engaging. Pintrich & Schunk add that a positive attitude, active participation, and self-confidence are key markers of strong interest. Meanwhile, Drucker views entrepreneurial interest as the ability to recognize opportunities, take risks, and take initiative creatively and innovatively. All of these aspects are crucial in creating strong interest. Without interest, skills and opportunities will not be optimally utilized, making interest a key foundation in building entrepreneurial readiness and success, especially for students entering the workforce or starting their own businesses. Overall, a strong entrepreneurial interest will encourage individuals to learn independently and dare to face the challenges of running a business.

The Role of Learning Independence in Shaping Entrepreneurial Readiness

Independence requires the ability to freely control and regulate one's thoughts, feelings, and actions, as well as to work independently to overcome feelings of shame and doubt. Students who demonstrate independent learning tend to demonstrate initiative, self-confidence, and decision-making skills, which are fundamental to the world of entrepreneurship (Ulfah, 2023). Meanwhile, independence in entrepreneurship encompasses not only the ability to learn independently but also the ability to seek information, evaluate opportunities, and develop business plans independently.

The role of independent learning in shaping entrepreneurial readiness requires psychological capital and basic skills. Psychological capital can be achieved through pre-established self-reliance, namely self-confidence, the ability to work independently, mastering appropriate skills and expertise, valuing time, the ability to manage schedules, and taking responsibility. As is currently known in the world of education, it is very rare for students to possess a spirit of maximum independence, especially entrepreneurial independence. Therefore, psychological capital can be maximized through basic skills honed within the school and community life systems. Schools and the community environment significantly influence children's behavior and independent nature because both are the primary socialization agents after the family, which plays a crucial role in shaping character, values, and life skills (Karataş et al., 2024). Within schools and the community, through approaches, teaching, and culture, productive skills can be triggered that impact independence and entrepreneurial readiness.

The Contribution of Productive Skills to Entrepreneurial Readiness

Productive skills are a person's ability to efficiently and effectively produce something of value, whether in the form of goods or services, through the application of knowledge, technical expertise, and work attitudes appropriate to the needs of the workplace or business. Productive skills are a crucial point in entrepreneurial readiness. Productive skills such as literacy, technical, interpersonal, and problem-solving skills significantly support entrepreneurial activities (Sudirtha et al., 2021). Literacy skills provide a practical foundation for starting and implementing entrepreneurship. Technical skills are crucial for increasing business efficiency, quantity, and quality (Thornhill-Miller et al., 2023). Interpersonal skills are beneficial in creating and encouraging business independence. Meanwhile, problem-solving skills are essential in responding to and determining solutions to the dynamics of economic and business problems in entrepreneurship. The contribution of these productive skills is significant in supporting business growth

(Remlein et al., 2024). Therefore, it is crucial to train aspiring young entrepreneurs in these skills to prepare them for their ventures.

One way to implement productive skills training for the younger generation as a way to reduce the low employment rate and maximize industrial competition is through high school students to prepare them for the world of work. This can be realized through programs beyond direct theoretical learning. These can take the form of extracurricular activities or fieldwork experiences. Fieldwork experiences serve to strengthen entrepreneurial readiness.

Field Work Practice as a Strengtheners of Entrepreneurial Readiness

The influence of hands-on work experience (PKL) in shaping students' readiness and confidence for entrepreneurship is significant. PKL (Field Work Practice) helps prepare students by providing real-world work experience (Nasib et al., 2022). This preparation not only prepares them for industrial work or employment, but also equips them to create their own jobs through entrepreneurship programs.

Internship experience has a positive and significant effect on the perception of productive skills. The better the internship experience, the better the perception of productive skills. Conversely, the less experience gained during internship, the lower the perception of productive skills. This relates to previous theories of entrepreneurial interest, which state that the tendency to feel interested and happy in doing business can make someone start to enjoy something they are facing or working on (Canco, 2022; Isma et al., 2023). By implementing internships, students' interest in work and enthusiasm in entrepreneurship will increase due to habits and direct learning in the field.

Internship experience in strengthening entrepreneurial readiness can be achieved through the implementation of programs that create a generation of impactful start-ups. This is supported by several previous studies showing that participation in entrepreneurship learning and Industrial Work Experience (Prakerin) has a positive and significant influence on students' level of entrepreneurial interest (Renaningtyas et al., 2021; et al., 2024). Internship programs offered can include entrepreneurship learning, industrial work experience, entrepreneurship programs, and others. The programs provided must have clear achievement indicators so students can evaluate themselves and prepare for future entrepreneurial activities.

Implications of Findings for Vocational High School Education

Schools play a strategic role in strengthening students' entrepreneurial interest and readiness. Given the current situation, vocational high school (SMK) students are the primary target for preparing to enter the workforce. Implementing programs through contextual and applied learning approaches can be an alternative solution to improving entrepreneurial readiness in vocational high school students (Kim & Park, 2023; Renaningtyas et al., 2021).

One effective strategy is through learning through Field Work Practice (PKL) activities, which encourage students to solve real-world challenges collaboratively, creatively, and responsibly. Through PKL, student engagement increases and a sense of ownership of their work develops, which is crucial for fostering an entrepreneurial spirit. Furthermore, integrated entrepreneurship training with field practice has been shown to foster interest in and readiness for entrepreneurship.

Entrepreneurship training can be integrated with the development of productive skills to enhance independence, literacy skills, technical abilities, interpersonal skills, and problem-solving. The training provided can be integrated into the student's chosen subject or vocation. This aims to ensure the relevance of business topics to students' skills and interests. This can be an innovation due to the current lack of entrepreneurship field practice (Tripathi et al., 2022). However, the challenge here is systematic and sustainable program management so that students' products and entrepreneurial activities can be continuously evaluated.

Overall, there is a relationship between fieldwork experience and entrepreneurial interests developed during school education, leading to the creation of a generation of entrepreneurs. Students' readiness for entrepreneurship and their perceived ability to develop productive skills are influenced by each individual's interest and independence in entrepreneurship. Creating systems and programs, especially within schools, that support entrepreneurial interests and independence indirectly fosters the creation of start-ups for the younger generation. This is an effort to address the current challenges of unemployment, high job competition, and a lack of job opportunities.

CONCLUSION

Fundamentals finding: There is a relationship between fieldwork practice and entrepreneurial interests developed during school education, leading to the creation of a generation of entrepreneurs. Students' readiness for entrepreneurship and their perceptions of productive skills are influenced by each individual's interest and independence in entrepreneurship. **Implications:** Entrepreneurship is an alternative solution and effort to increase employment opportunities today. Readiness for entrepreneurship is influenced by entrepreneurial interest, personal independence, productive skills such as literacy, technical skills, interpersonal skills, and problem-solving, as well as the implementation of fieldwork practices in education. Fieldwork practices, an effective learning strategy, can encourage students to solve real-world challenges collaboratively, creatively, and responsibly. **Limitations:** The research was limited to a literature review of several previous studies and relevant literature. The review was conducted solely to determine the relationship between students' entrepreneurial interest and their entrepreneurial readiness. **Future Research:** Future research is expected to analyze the influence of students' experiences during Field Work Practice (PKL) on their perceptions of productive subject skills. Overall, these findings can inform innovative studies in developing entrepreneurship studies in education and economics.

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