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Transforming Primary Education: School Ecosystems for Independent Character and Young Entrepreneurship

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Abstract:
The changing demands of the labor market and persistent youth unemployment underscore the need to transform of primary education beyond knowledge transmission toward the development of independent and entrepreneurial capacities. This article aims to examine the role of entrepreneurship education in cultivating independent character, explore its implementation in the primary education, and formulate strategies for transforming schools into ecosystems that support young entrepreneurial development. This study employed a library research approach. Data were collected through the identification, selection, documentation, and interpretation of scholarly articles, books, policy documents, and relevant publications addressing the primary education, entrepreneurship education, character education, educational transformation, and sustainable development. The data were qualitative and analyzed through thematic categorization, comparison, interpretation, and synthesis to identify educational patterns and formulate strategic implications. The findings indicate that entrepreneurship-oriented education can strengthen independent character through creativity, initiative, responsibility, problem-solving, adaptability, and confidence in learning and decision-making. These character dimensions can be fostered through the integration of a contextual curriculum, experiential learning (learning by doing) and co-curricular activities, school-based entrepreneurial initiatives, teacher capacity development, and collaboration among schools, families, the community, and local economic stakeholders. Such transformation supports Sustainable Development Goal 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth) by establishing early foundations for productive, innovative, and responsible economic participation. The study concludes that transforming the primary schools into entrepreneurial ecosystems can provide a sustainable educational pathway for cultivating independent character while preparing young learners to become adaptive, creative, and socially responsible future value creators.

Keywords: Primary Education; School Ecosystem; Independent Character; Entrepreneurship Education; SDG 8

Introduction

Primary education plays a crucial role in instilling the character, mindset, skills and basic competencies needed by the younger generation to become productive individuals. In accordance with Law Number 23 of 2014 concerning Regional Government, the management of primary education is the authority of the district/city government. This provides a legal and strategic basis for Regional Governments to transform of primary education as a means of developing entrepreneurial values. A some of studies show that cultivating entrepreneurial character from an early age can increase creativity, courage to take risks, and the ability to solve problems. (Hogenstijn & Cuypers, 2023; Diepolder et al., 2025). In connection with the entrepreneurial values that develop in children, this is in line with John Dewey's opinion that everyday life should be a source of activity where children can learn about life and life skills. (Nadya Salsabila et al. 2023). Therefore, the form of transformation of primary education through strengthening entrepreneurship education is not only aimed at improving the quality of human resources, but also as a step to align the primary education with local economic dynamics, long-term employment challenges, and produce the next generation who are ready to face various economic challenges in the future.

Education in the 21st century era is required to be able to produce a generation that is creative, innovative, adaptive, competitive, and oriented towards sustainability. (Nandita et al. 2026). Meanwhile, in reality there is a gap between the output from the world of education and the real needs of the world of work. So far, the education process still tends to focus on students' academic achievements, while the development of non-academic skills (soft skills) and the ability to create job opportunities through entrepreneurship has not received optimal attention. Reality shows that the implementation of entrepreneurship education in schools still faces challenges such as limited facilities, lack of teacher competence, and minimal collaboration with the industrial world. (M. Alwi Abdul Aziz 2026).

This gap is one of the reasons why the unemployment rate in Kediri Regency exceeds the average for East Java Province, even though this region is a strategic area that holds a lot of local economic potential. This region is still faced with structural challenges in the employment sector, especially in terms of the high level of open unemployment (TPT). (Sidqi & Risani, 2025). This is based on data from the Central Statistics Agency which shows that the TPT in East Java Province in February 2025 was 3.61%. However, as of February 2026, East Java's TPT fell to 3.55%. (Jatim 2026). Judging from data from the labor department sourced from BPS Kediri Regency, it is also stated that the TPT figure in 2026 will still be recorded at 4.71%. (D 2026). This phenomenon shows that there is a mismatch between educational output and the real needs of the world of work, as well as the lack of alternatives for entrepreneurship-based job creation. The focus of education in the current era should not only be about teaching children to be good at reading books, but also as a place for the ecosystem for young entrepreneurs to grow. In the process of developing an entrepreneurial spirit through education, the stages of forming an entrepreneurial character that come from learning and habits are formed from an early age from the first educational pathway that students must go through. (Riyana et al. 2025). Therefore, a more systemic and sustainable approach is needed, starting from primary education as the foundation for the formation of future human resources.

Various global studies have explored the effectiveness of entrepreneurship education at primary and secondary levels. Among them are Hogenstijn and Cuypers who report that sustainable social and entrepreneurship education programs in elementary schools significantly increase interest in entrepreneurship and awareness of social issues

in children. (Hogenstijn & Cuypers, 2023). Meanwhile, the "My First Enterprise" program implemented in Mexico has succeeded in strengthening students' entrepreneurial abilities through a fun and applicable learning approach. (Cárcamo-Solís et al., 2017). However, in Indonesia, the integration of entrepreneurship education in the school curriculum is still partial and has not yet become a sustainable systemic initiative.

In the context of Kediri Regency, concrete steps need to be taken to align the primary education with local economic dynamics and long-term challenges. Schools are no longer sufficient to act as knowledge transfer institutions, but must develop into learning ecosystems that form adaptive, innovative and competent characters. This approach aligns with the current direction of national curriculum policy, which prioritizes experience-based learning, contextual co-curricular activities, and the holistic strengthening of graduate profiles. The contextual approach emphasizes the importance of learning that is relevant to real-life situations, ensuring that learning experiences hold direct meaning in everyday life. (Hamidah & Ahid, 2025).

Therefore, it is important to design schools as an ecosystem for the growth of young entrepreneurs, starting from the primary education level (SD and SMP) through collaboration and a curriculum approach. Educational transformation cannot be carried out partially, but rather needs to be designed a long-term strategy through holistic regional policies. This article aims to analyze the role of entrepreneurship education in fostering independent character while examining its application in primary and secondary education. This study is also directed at identifying relevant entrepreneurship education practices from various contexts and formulating strategies for transforming of primary education through building schools as ecosystems for the growth of young entrepreneurs. This transformation is deemed necessary to be designed holistically and sustainably through strengthening the curriculum, educator capacity, contextual learning experiences, school collaboration with families, communities, the business world and local government, as well as policy support that is responsive to local economic potential and the direction of regional education policies that are more progressive, relevant and impactful for the future of the younger generation. Through this synthesis, it is hoped that this article will provide conceptual contributions and policy recommendations for the development of primary education that is not only oriented towards academic achievement, but also forms a generation that is independent, creative, innovative, adaptive, and capable of creating economic and social value as part of sustainable regional development in accordance with the principles of SDG 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth), and able to contribute to reducing the level of open unemployment in the future.

Methods

This study employs a library research approach. Library research is a study used to collect information and data with the help of various kinds of materials in libraries such as documents, books, magazines, historical stories, and so on. (Sari and Asmendri 2020). The aim of this research is to explore various models of entrepreneurship education at the elementary level as well as develop policy recommendations that are relevant for stakeholders in the Kediri Regency area and strategies for transforming of primary education in realizing schools as young entrepreneurial ecosystems. Data was collected through identification, selection, documentation and interpretation of scientific articles, books, policy documents and relevant publications based on online data related to primary education, entrepreneurship education, character education, educational transformation and sustainable development, especially SDG 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth). The data used are qualitative in nature. Data analysis was carried out

including the following stages: (1) collecting and organizing data; (2) categorization based on main themes; (3) presenting data narratively; and (4) drawing and verifying conclusions. The analysis process follows the qualitative research cycle, starting from identifying the research focus, data collection, analysis, interpretation of results, to preparing a research report. (Ayu, Dina, and Khoiriyah 2025). Therefore, this research data was analyzed through thematic categorization, comparison, interpretation and synthesis to identify educational patterns and formulate strategic implications for the transformation of schools into environments that foster independent young people who have entrepreneurial capacity.

Results and Discussion

The findings and analysis are organized into three dimensions which include: 1) primary entrepreneurship education as the formation of human capital and independent character; 2) entrepreneurship education within the primary education ecosystem; and 3) Implementation Strategy for Primary Entrepreneurship Education.

1. Primary Entrepreneurship Education as the Formation of Human Capital and Independent Character

Transforming education in Indonesia is an important effort to improve the quality and learning outcomes in elementary schools. (Sutanto, 2024). Primary education in Indonesia tends to emphasize cognitive aspects and mastery of material, but is still weak in developing character and soft skills needed in the world of work. This causes many graduates who are "smart in theory" but are not ready to face real economic challenges, also including creating job opportunities. Therefore, the entrepreneurship education that combines cognitive, affective and psychomotor dimensions in a balanced manner can be a long-term solution that addresses the challenge of systemic open unemployment.

The human capital theory developed by Gary S. Becker states that education is a form of investment in human resources that has a direct impact on increasing individual productivity and welfare, as well as having a positive impact on long-term economic growth. (Becker, 1964). This theory emphasizes the importance of instilling basic competency values and work characteristics which are the foundation for an individual's readiness to enter the world of work or develop a business independently. In line with this theory, Martínez-Gregorio and Badenes-Ribera in their meta-analysis show that entrepreneurship education interventions at primary and secondary education levels significantly increase long-term entrepreneurial intentions which on a macro scale can contribute to reducing unemployment rates. Entrepreneurship education from an early level plays a significant role in forming entrepreneurial intentions and abilities. Even though it does not directly produce entrepreneurship, primary education is an important phase in forming human capital from an early age through strengthening financial literacy, courage to take risks, and problem solving skills. (Martínez-Gregorio et al., 2021).

The Human Capital Theory perspective has long positioned education as a strategic investment in knowledge, skills, productivity and economic growth. (Faliyandra, 2026). Therefore, entrepreneurship education at elementary school level is seen as an initial investment to build potential, especially in the areas of creativity, independence, problem solving abilities and the ability to create opportunities. Although this process is not immediate in the short term, it is long term. Entrepreneurship education interventions at various levels of education were found to have an influence on increasing entrepreneurial intentions. Meanwhile,

from a macro perspective, strengthening entrepreneurial activity can contribute to reducing unemployment in the long term. (Hariandi, 2026).

When education only produces graduates who are waiting for formal employment, the potential for productivity becomes stagnant. On the other hand, education that instills innovative and entrepreneurial values from an early age will encourage children to grow up with an independent mindset and be adaptive to change, including intense competition in the job market. When elementary school students are equipped with innovative and independent thinking skills from an early age, they have a greater tendency to create jobs rather than just looking for work. Primary education is not only a means of increasing literacy and numeracy, but also the foundation for developing productive human capital. (Cárcamo-Solís et al., 2017; Becker, 1964). Thus, an understanding is gained that strategies for overcoming unemployment are not sufficient to be carried out through post-school vocational training, but must start from primary education through entrepreneurial orientation.

In the context of Kediri Regency, entrepreneurship education can be a long-term strategy in dealing with the unemployment rate which is still relatively high, where it appears that the TPT for Kediri Regency was recorded at 4.71% in 2025, while the TPT for East Java Province in the same period was at 3.61%. Success does not only depend on the curriculum and students, but also requires school and teacher readiness, family support, the environment, and local government policies. Thus, primary entrepreneurship education needs to be developed as part of an ecosystem that forms productive human resources and is able to create economic opportunities. This approach can be integrated through school market practice activities, simple projects, such as processing local products and problem-based learning where students are invited to solve real economic challenges in their environment. This model aligns well with current curriculum policies that promote interdisciplinary co-curricular programs and the cultivation of an independent, entrepreneurial spirit all without burdening schools with large-scale physical projects.

Dharmawati, in her research on elementary school students in East Jakarta, shows that the application of a recycling-based entrepreneurship education model not only improves students' technical skills, but also fosters creative attitudes, responsibility and resilience. In this study, the entrepreneurship education model developed can also increase the entrepreneurial knowledge aspect by 76.16%, the attitude aspect by 79.84%, and the entrepreneurial skills aspect by 82.64%. (Dharmawati et al., 2020). Of course concrete steps need to be taken to align the primary education with local economic dynamics and long-term employment challenges.

In the context of Kediri Regency which is rich in potential for agriculture, plantations, fisheries and creative industries, a local content-based approach like this can be used as a strong and relevant pedagogical tool. Some schools in this region no longer only act as places for the transfer of material knowledge, but are developing to align with the direction of the national curriculum policy which prioritizes project-based learning and strengthening competencies, one of which is entrepreneurial competency. The entrepreneurship theme teaches students creativity and skills in producing craft products, students are introduced to a variety of techniques for producing craft products, cultivation and management. Entrepreneurship projects can develop students' abilities and skills by integrating various STEAM-based knowledge and disciplines (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Mathematics). (Kodrat S. Kodrat, 2015). One of the schools that has used the independent curriculum, especially in the field of Entrepreneurship, is SMP PGRI 1

Kediri which has the theme "Responsible Entrepreneurship". However, the transformation of primary education as a long-term solution to unemployment cannot only be seen from the perspective of the curriculum and students. Structural factors such as teacher readiness, family support, and regional policies also play an important role. The success of primary entrepreneurship education in reducing unemployment requires an ecosystem approach, not just one-way instruction in the classroom.

2. Entrepreneurship Education within the Primary Education Ecosystem

Urie Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory places education as part of a complex social system, where interactions between individuals and their environment shape behavior and character. Schools function as the main microsystem that can facilitate the growth of entrepreneurial values if supported by the mesosystem (family or community) and ecosystem (educational policies or local economy). (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). Hogenstijn and Cuypers emphasized the importance of a supportive social environment to foster entrepreneurial interest from an early age. Through a social project approach and problem-based activities, children can experience real situations that hone empathy, creativity and leadership which are important components of the entrepreneurial ecosystem. (Hogenstijn & Cuypers, 2023).

Various countries have developed entrepreneurship education models for elementary and middle school age children with approaches tailored to the characteristics of each student. One of them is the My First Enterprise program in Mexico which was introduced by Cárcamo-Solís using a play-based entrepreneurship learning approach. This program shows that this learning can strengthen students' entrepreneurial abilities and successfully improve managerial skills, as well as simple business understanding among elementary school students. (Cárcamo-Solís et al., 2017). Meanwhile, in the Netherlands, social entrepreneurship learning programs in elementary schools have been proven to increase children's empathy and social awareness, in addition to fostering the courage to start small projects collaboratively. (Hogenstijn & Cuypers, 2023).

These studies show that the success of entrepreneurship programs at the elementary level depends on a fun, interactive, and experience-based approach. Entrepreneurship education that is too theoretical or emphasizes business aspects alone is less effective at this level. (Testa & Frascheri, 2015). Schools in Indonesia can adapt this model to local content, such as utilizing mini market activities in schools, student savings programs, school community-based business projects, as well as collaboration with local MSMEs (UMKM).

Entrepreneurial activities can increase elementary school students' self-confidence. Children who are involved in entrepreneurial projects at school show a significant increase in the courage to express opinions, think creatively, and take initiative which are important indicators of entrepreneurial readiness. This proves that the entrepreneurship program is not just a practical activity, but also a strategic character building instrument. (Lia et al., 2022). Participatory and contextual methods have proven effective in shaping the entrepreneurial character of students at the primary education level. The Market Day program at North Metro Lampung Elementary School has been implemented in various elementary schools with significant results. This activity not only improves students' business planning skills and creativity, but also strengthens their self-confidence and communication skills. The research results show that students are involved in the planning, production and marketing stages which directly foster entrepreneurial values. (Aulia et al., 2024).

Kusuma identified strategies in the school management model, such as Market Week, market visits, entrepreneurship-based extracurriculars, and continuous teacher training, resulting in a school ecosystem that supports the growth of an entrepreneurial spirit. Structuring the school atmosphere is also linked to the internalization of entrepreneurial values, starting from a motivating environment to rewarding student initiative. (Kusuma, 2023).

The educational management side shows the importance of teachers and school principals in overseeing entrepreneurship programs in elementary schools. Their study at SD Muhammadiyah Pakem, Sleman found five main strategies, namely: Providing entrepreneurship material to teachers, integrating material in lessons, providing supporting facilities, entrepreneurship-based activities, and parental involvement. This model illustrates that implementing effective entrepreneurship does not only require learning methods, but also system support from all elements of the school. (Hasanah & Nurafni, 2023). Endang Mulyani proposed an integrative entrepreneurship education model for elementary and middle schools, namely: improving the curriculum, active role of schools, organizing learning, and teacher training. He emphasized that entrepreneurial values must be instilled through existing lessons, without having to create new courses. This means that science or mathematics learning, for example, can also be developed to instill the values of problem solving and entrepreneurial creativity. (Mulyani, 2012).

These studies show that the success of entrepreneurship programs at the elementary level depends on a fun, interactive, and experience-based approach. (Dewi & Barkah, 2025). To realize schools as ecosystems for the growth of young entrepreneurs, there are several educational transformation strategies. This strategy can be initiated by integrating entrepreneurship education into co-curricular activities aligned with the Graduate Profile and character building programs and further supported by strengthening the capacity of teachers and school principals. Apart from that, collaboration between schools and local economic actors is needed so that students gain more contextual experiences. The sustainability of the program also needs to be supported through appropriate incentives and regulations, as well as regular monitoring and evaluation to see the effectiveness of the program and enable its gradual implementation in other schools. Thus, the transformation of entrepreneurship education does not only focus on learning activities but also builds a school environment that supports students' entrepreneurial skills in a sustainable manner. These findings as a whole reinforce several key principles:

a. Project-based learning (Market Day, business prototype) increases motivation and soft skills development.
b. The role of teachers, school principals and parents as driving agents is very decisive.
c. Integration in subjects, without adding to the curriculum load, is more relevant in elementary and middle school.
d. A school ecosystem that supports activities, facilities and awards that support entrepreneurial habits.
e. Local contextual approaches, such as recycling programs, are considered to be able to create real meaning for students.

3. Implementation Strategy for Primary Entrepreneurship Education

Moberg distinguishes two approaches to entrepreneurship education, namely education for entrepreneurship (focusing on entrepreneurial readiness in the future) and education through entrepreneurship (using entrepreneurial methods as a learning approach). The second approach is more relevant for primary education

because it emphasizes experience-based learning, projects and collaboration. (Moberg, 2014). Through the "My First Enterprise" program in Mexico, it is proven that the learning by doing approach is very effective in introducing simple business concepts and basic economic logic to elementary school students. (Cárcamo-Solís et al., 2017). This can be an inspiration to build a similar model in Kediri Regency.

The problem of open unemployment in Kediri Regency indicates the need for a long-term preventive strategy. Primary education with an entrepreneurial ecosystem approach is a strategic starting point for forming an independent and innovative young generation. Concepts such as education through entrepreneurship, school ecosystems, and ecological approaches to education provide a strong framework for designing the primary education interventions that are responsive to economic challenges. By building a school ecosystem that supports entrepreneurial values, local governments can transform of primary education from a teaching institution into a space for directed and sustainable entrepreneurial competency growth.

The district government has full authority in managing the primary education in accordance with Law no. 23 of 2014 concerning Regional Government where all forms of innovation and contextual programs, including entrepreneurship education at the elementary and middle school levels, are within the control of the Regional Government. Therefore, local governments hold an important key in integrating an entrepreneurial approach into the primary and junior high school systems through regulation, facilitation, and cross-sector partnerships. These strategies must be prepared systematically and based on local data which is explained in detail as follows:

a. Strategy 1: Integration of Entrepreneurship into Co-curricular Programs and Contextual Curricula

   The first strategy is to integrate entrepreneurship education into the co-curricular program and the contextual curriculum. Entrepreneurship material can be integrated into co-curricular programs and relevant subjects through experiential learning (learning by doing), locally-focused modules (such as Kediri-style batik or products made from tofu/tempeh), and simple school bazaars. The Education Department can develop local entrepreneurship modules specifically for elementary and middle schools based on Kediri's potential, such as batik, processed food, and digitalization of local products. This module is not only a teaching material, but also an exploration medium for students to learn to produce and market.

   Previous best practices in fostering entrepreneurship demonstrate the effectiveness of integrating such learning into school activities. Research at SDN 3 Sendang Agung indicates that an entrepreneurship-oriented co-curricular program is effective in developing students' entrepreneurial spirit through contextual activities such as "market days," culinary corners, and bazaars while also cultivating creative, innovative, and independent character traits. (Wirayuda et al., 2023). Furthermore, at SDN Telaga Biru 4 Banjarmasin, the use of entrepreneurship-based contextual learning modules has been shown to enhance students' business competencies by involving them in the creation of simple snacks, deepening the value of collaboration, and fostering a concern for product quality. (Radhaina et al., 2024).

   These findings confirm that the integration of entrepreneurship into co-curricular programs can be optimized through the use of contextual, relevant, and practical modules in the classroom. Such entrepreneurship modules can be

designed based on local economic potential ranging from Kediri's batik and tofu or tempeh based food products to the digitalization of goods from micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) serving as both instructional materials and tools for experiential learning. Through this approach, students can gain meaningful, hands on insight into production processes, packaging, and marketing, all without placing an undue burden on schools or parents to organize elaborate exhibitions or showcases.

b. Strategy 2: Training and Strengthening the Capacity of Teachers and School Principals

The transformation of primary education in realizing schools as entrepreneurial ecosystems requires fundamental changes in the mindset and competence of educators. Teachers and school principals must adopt an entrepreneurial pedagogy approach, not only as teachers, but as innovative facilitators who are able to design, accompany and evaluate entrepreneurial project-based learning processes. Research shows that teacher and student training that integrates digital technology in entrepreneurial activities (digital entrepreneurial pedagogy) has been proven to increase understanding, basic managerial skills, and readiness to utilize digital platforms for school economic activities. (Aisah Sarip & Kartika Sari, 2022).

This approach is strengthened by the edupreneurship program run at SD Negeri 1 Mulyoagung Malang Regency where teachers are given comprehensive training on business management, innovation and marketing. As a result, teachers not only teach entrepreneurship, but are also able to transfer these skills to students and manage entrepreneurship-based community service activities in schools. (Mawardi et al., 2025). This kind of program opens up space for teachers to be creative and initiate entrepreneurship programs that are integrated into learning and extracurricular activities.

The school principal plays a strategic role as a driver and motivator. Research on the entrepreneurial competency of school principals at SMPN 2 Pulung Ponorogo highlights that principals who have an entrepreneurial spirit are able to create innovation and an entrepreneurial culture in their school. They form school activities that directly increase the motivation of teachers and students to become entrepreneurs and create small business programs/units within the school environment. (Istiqomah & Munir, 2023). This means that school principal training must focus on aspects of innovative leadership and empowering school resources.

c. Strategy 3: Collaboration between Schools and Local Economic Actors

Collaboration between schools and local economic actors is the key to building an authentic and sustainable entrepreneurial ecosystem. Collaboration between elementary schools and the Business or Industrial World (DUDI) in the national curriculum provides significant benefits, including improving practical skills, career readiness, and adaptation to local economic needs. (Junaidi & Rahayu, 2024). This strengthens the argument that students and teachers get real experience, not just theory. Research at SMP Dharma Wanita 9 Taman shows that school cooperatives and regular bazaars really foster students' entrepreneurial spirit. Students are involved in the production process, marketing, and small shop management within the school, while learning to be honest, confident, and work together. (Al-Qodry & Fadil, 2024). This model is considered easy to replicate in the Kediri region.

d. Strategy 4: Incentives and Supporting Regulations

Transforming of primary education in Kediri Regency by realizing schools as young entrepreneurial ecosystems requires a clear legal framework and budget. For this reason, the first strategic step includes regional regulations, for example through Regent Regulations (Perbup) or Education Service Decrees, which specifically regulate the implementation of entrepreneurship programs as part of regional education policy. This regulation provides certainty and legality for schools to implement planned entrepreneurship programs. The second step is the implementation of financial incentives and non-financial rewards. The District Government can allocate BOSDA Funds (Regional BOS Funds) or add school innovation fund items to the APBD. Regulations like this ensure that the entrepreneurial innovation budget becomes an official mechanism that can be accessed by schools. These funds can be used to fund student entrepreneurial projects, provide materials, training, and product marketing support. Apart from the financial aspect, giving awards based on the achievements of the entrepreneurship program is also important. For example, schools that successfully hold entrepreneurial bazaars, produce local products, or establish partnerships can be given certificates, charters, or official recognition from the Regent/Education Service. This not only improves the status of the school but also motivates principals and teachers to incorporate entrepreneurship programs into the school's vision.

e. Strategy 5: Monitoring, Evaluation, and Replication

This strategy is the final step where continuous monitoring and evaluation (monev) is important to carry out based on regulations. Regulations should require reports regarding the use of innovation funds and the achievements of entrepreneurship programs, such as the number of participating students, types of activities, project value and impact. This evaluation is the basis for expanding and replicating the pilot program in more schools in the medium term. Meanwhile, to ensure the effectiveness of school programs as a young entrepreneurial ecosystem, Kediri Regency needs to build a comprehensive and sustainable monitoring and evaluation system. This starts from establishing key performance indicators (KPI), such as: the number of students participating in entrepreneurial projects, the quality and innovation of student products, the number of active partnerships with local economic actors, as well as measuring character development (self-confidence, creativity, responsibility) through psychometric instruments. Responsive approaches such as the CIPP Model (Context, Input, Process, Product) can be used to understand the added value of each stage of an entrepreneurship program. This evaluation should be carried out periodically, and the results used to improve program design. Apart from that, the government needs to develop a roadmap for program replication from pilot schools to all schools in stages. This process requires a gradual approach: starting from trials (pilots), intensive assistance (coaching), to institutionalization.

A synthesis of the reviewed literature indicates that transforming primary education through entrepreneurship education requires an integration of individual capacity building, a supportive educational environment, and experiential learning. Human Capital theory emphasizes the importance of developing productive capacity from an early age, while the educational ecology perspective highlights the influence of interactions between the school and its surrounding environment. Both perspectives are reinforced by entrepreneurship education models that emphasize initiative, creativity,

experience, and problem-solving. Integrating these three elements provides a conceptual foundation for a primary education transformation that extends beyond academic achievement, aiming instead to shape a young generation that is independent, innovative, and adaptive. This conceptual synthesis is presented in the following figure.

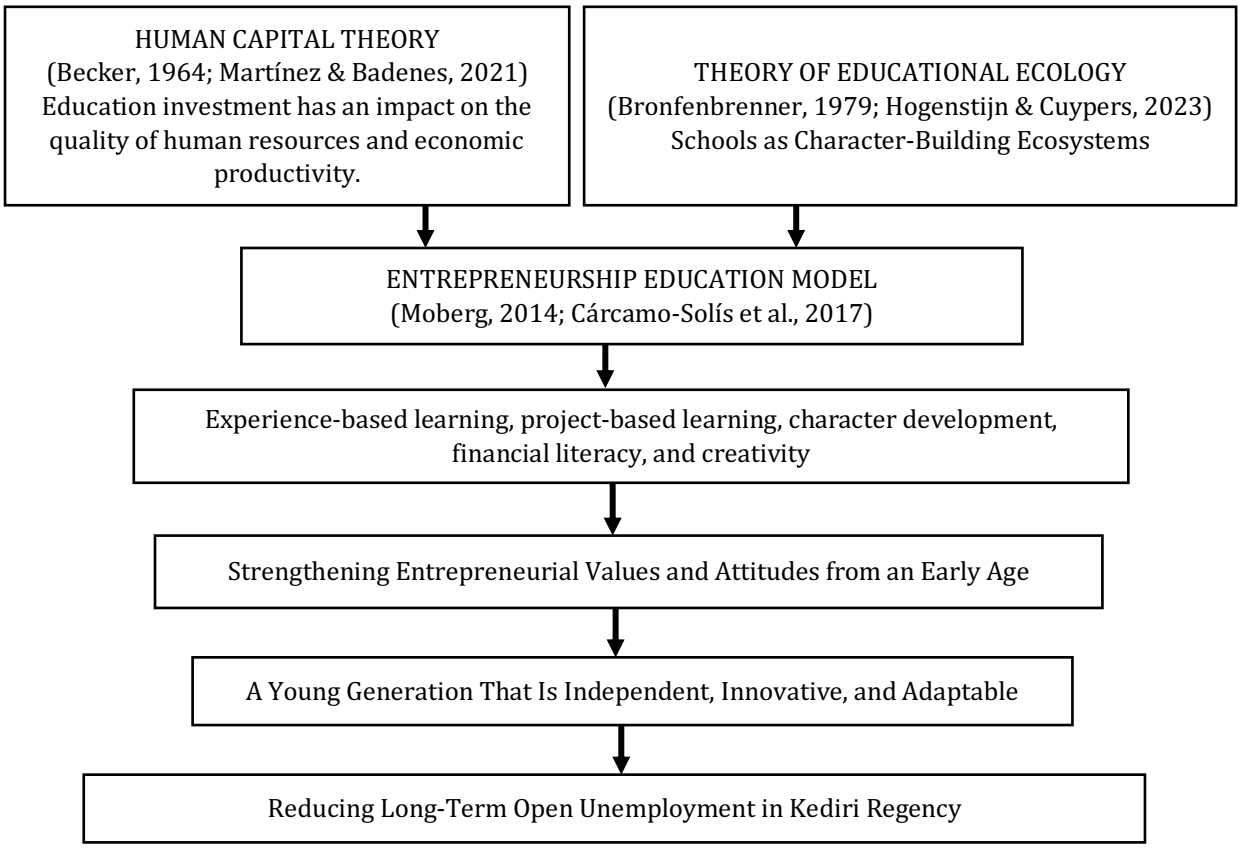


Figure 1 shows that the transformation of primary education is not a linear process, but rather an interconnected process between human capital formation, educational ecology, and entrepreneurship education. Experience-based learning functions as a pedagogical mechanism for translating entrepreneurial values into concrete learning experiences, while the school environment provides social and institutional conditions for the growth of independent character. Thus, the formation of an independent, innovative and adaptive young generation is a long-term educational investment that can strengthen economic participation and readiness to face the world of work. This orientation is in line with SDG 8, especially in strengthening productive capacity, entrepreneurship, creativity, innovation and decent work, while opening space for local economic contexts such as Kediri to support sustainable educational and economic development.

Conclusion

Entrepreneurship education at the elementary level (primary and junior high school) has a potential contribution in forming character and economic skills from an early age as a long-term effort to equip students to become economic actors in the future and overcome the problem of open unemployment in the region. The values of independence, creativity, problem solving and the courage to take risks can be instilled through contextual curriculum and project-based activities. With this approach, students, in the end, help reduce the unemployment rate. Various Best Practices, including market days, student cooperatives, entrepreneurial bazaars, local thematic modules, and

experience-based learning (experiential learning) in several primary and secondary schools in Indonesia and other countries have proven to be able to increase learning motivation, entrepreneurial attitudes, and children's social competence. This shows that educational innovation has a real impact in building an entrepreneurial ecosystem in the school environment. The active role of the regional government and the Education Department is the key to the success of this program considering that primary education is under the authority of the district according to Law no. 23 of 2014. Transformation of primary education requires systematic support from local governments through five main strategies, namely: 1). integration of entrepreneurship education into the intra-curricular and co-curricular activities, based on the Graduate Profile; 2). training and capacity building for teachers and school principals; 3). collaboration with business actors such as MSMEs, cooperatives and BUMDes; 4). incentives and supporting regulations to ensure program sustainability; and 5). a system of monitoring, evaluating and replicating the program in stages from pilot schools to all educational units. Implementation of these strategies must be data-based and adapted to regional economic potential, and carried out collaboratively across sectors. Apart from that, it is also important to allocate a special budget, issue implementing regulations, and carry out trials through pilot schools (pilot projects) before it is replicated more widely. Thus, primary education in Kediri Regency not only functions as an institution for transmitting knowledge, but also as a socio-economic ecosystem which is a place for students to grow so that they have an independent spirit and are adaptive to changing times. It is hoped that this effort can become the foundation for long-term economic development based on superior human resources that are formed early and able to reduce the level of open unemployment in Kediri Regency in the long term.

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