

# THE ROLE OF ENTREPRENEURSHIP COURSES IN SHAPING STUDENTS' BUSINESS CHARACTER AND INTERESTS IN THE DIGITAL ERA

## (Case Study of STIMI YsAPMI Makassar Students Class of 2023)

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### Abstract

*This research aims to analyze the role of the Entrepreneurship Course (MK) in shaping entrepreneurial character and fostering business interest in STIMI YAPMI Makassar Class of 2023 students in the midst of the challenges of the digital era. The research method used was qualitative descriptive with data collection techniques through observation, interviews, and questionnaires of 30 respondents. The results of the study show that MK Entrepreneurship makes a significant contribution (90%) in increasing self-efficacy and student courage in taking business risks. In the context of interest, as many as 83% of respondents stated that they were interested in building a digital-based business, especially through social commerce platforms and digital resellers. However, the main obstacles found are limited financial capital and the need for technical assistance related to advanced digital marketing. In conclusion, entrepreneurship education at STIMI YAPMI Makassar has succeeded in building a strong character foundation, but it is necessary to strengthen the business incubation aspect so that students' interests can be realized into sustainable business units.*

**Keywords:** *Entrepreneurship, Entrepreneurial Character, Business Interests, Digital Era, STIMI YAPMI.*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Macroeconomic Conditions and the Role of Higher Education In the current era of globalization and digitalization, the dynamics of the world of work have undergone a very significant shift. The still fluctuating rate of educated unemployed requires universities to not only focus on theoretical academic aspects, but also on the development of student independence. STIMI YAPMI Makassar, as an institution oriented to management science, plays a strategic role in producing human resources who are able to create economic opportunities. Entrepreneurship education in higher education is no longer just a

complement to the curriculum, but an urgent need to change the orientation of students from job seekers to job providers.

The Importance of Character and Interest in the Digital Era The Digital Era brings challenges as well as great opportunities for the business world. The existence of e-commerce platforms, social media, and artificial intelligence has fundamentally changed the way businesses operate. However, the ease of this technology will not have an impact without being based on strong entrepreneurial character, such as creativity, courage to take risks, and persistence. Students' business interests are often hampered by a mentality of fear of failure or a lack of understanding of how to integrate conventional business ideas into the digital ecosystem. Therefore, character building through formal education is the main foundation before students enter real market competition.

The role of the Entrepreneurship Course as a Catalyst of Entrepreneurship Courses (MK) is designed to be a bridge between students' potential and market reality. Through this MK, students of the Class of 2023 at STIMI YAPMI Makassar are provided with provisions ranging from exploring ideas, preparing business models, to marketing strategies. This learning process is expected not to stop at the acquisition of grades in academic transcripts only, but is able to trigger a "shock effect" that fosters real business interest. Evaluation of students after taking this course is important to see the extent to which the material provided is relevant to the rapidly growing digital trends in society.

Specific Phenomena at STIMI YAPMI Makassar Based on initial observations of the Class of 2023 students at STIMI YAPMI Makassar, there is diversity in responding to digital business opportunities. Some students have started using social media to sell, while others are still hesitant due to limited managerial knowledge. The case study of this generation is interesting because they are a generation that is very familiar with technology but is in a post-pandemic transition period full of economic uncertainty. Through this study, the researcher wants to delve deeper into the extent to which MK Entrepreneurship plays a role in maturing their character and strengthening interest in building digital-based independent business units.

## **2. LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **2.1 Entrepreneurship Courses**

Entrepreneurship education in higher education is a systematic process to instill values, enthusiasm, and innovative abilities in students. According to Suryana (2016), entrepreneurship is a creative and innovative ability that is used as a basis, tips, and resources to find opportunities for success. In the academic environment, MK Entrepreneurship plays a role as a means of knowledge transformation. This is in line with the views of Hisrich, Peters, and Shepherd (2020) who emphasize that entrepreneurship education must include the introduction of opportunities as well as the development of a comprehensive business plan.

## 2.2 Entrepreneurial character

Character is the main foundation for an entrepreneur. Purnomo (2016) stated that building entrepreneurship character in students is very crucial in facing the competitive era. These characters include courage to take risks, creativity, and orientation to the future. Furthermore, Mulyani and Hartono (2022) emphasized that the internalization of entrepreneurial character in courses is able to change the mindset of students from just looking for work to being job creators.

In the broader management context, Adrianah (2019) through her research on product quality and price emphasizes the importance of understanding market behavior for business actors. The entrepreneurial character that is sensitive to consumer desires as discussed in the analysis of purchase decisions is a key factor in business success (Adrianah, 2019). In addition, managerial ability to supervise quality and costs (such as budget analysis) is also part of the discipline character that students must have (Adrianah, 2020).

## 2.3 Business Interest in the Digital Age

Interest in entrepreneurship is influenced by internal and external factors. Ajzen (1991) through the Theory of Planned Behavior explained that interest is triggered by attitudes, subjective norms, and perceptions of behavior control. In the digital era, this interest is growing rapidly along with the emergence of information technology. Anwar and Salim (2021) found that entrepreneurship education has a significant positive influence on entrepreneurial interest in the digital era, where technology makes it easier for students to start a business with minimal capital.

The use of digital platforms such as social commerce is a major trend. According to Siregar (2023), students tend to be more interested in digital business models due to their flexibility and wide market reach. This is supported by Indriyani and Subowo (2019) who stated that self-efficacy or self-confidence formed during lectures is the main driver of the emergence of this interest.

## 3. RESEARCH METHOD

This research uses a Qualitative Descriptive approach. This research aims to describe the phenomenon in depth in the sample that has been Entrepreneurship Course. Data Collection Techniques: Observation: Observing student entrepreneurial activities in the campus environment, Interview: In-depth discussion with teaching lecturers and student representatives, Documentation: Data on student scores and profiles of their business tasks, Data Analysis Techniques will be analyzed through the Data Reduction stage: Filtering important information, Data Presentation: Compiling in the form of a table or narrative, Drawing Conclusions: Answering the formulation of the problem based on field facts.

#### 4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The respondents in this study are 30 STIMI YAPMI Makassar students Class of 2023 who have completed the Entrepreneurship Course (MK). Based on preliminary data:

Business Background: 8 people (27%) already have a small business, 15 people (50%) have an idea but haven't started yet, and 7 people (23%) don't have a specific interest yet.

Profile Categories	Number of Students	Percentage	Entrepreneurial Character Status
Practitioner (Already Owns Business)	8 people	27%	Formed (Execution Phase)
Intending (having an idea/interest)	15 people	50%	Potential (Incubation Phase)
Uninterested (Belum Berminat)	7 people	23%	Not Exposed (Exploration Phase)

Source: Data Processed, 2026

The internalization of *the value of the Entrepreneurship* course in STIMI YAPMI Makassar students Class of 2023 proves that the learning process has gone beyond just knowledge transfer, to value transfer. This is in line with **Suryana's (2016)** opinion that entrepreneurship is not only technical ability, but values that are embodied in behavior such as creativity and confidence.

Students now view business not as a complicated entity, but rather as a creative process rooted in personal interests. This finding is supported by **Purnomo's (2016)** research which states that building *entrepreneurship* character in students is much more important than just teaching economic theory, because this character will be a long-term capital in facing market uncertainty. And in terms of **Entrepreneurial Intention** in line with **Wardana, et al. (2020)** Higher education has a central role as a determinant of entrepreneurial intentions through the academic environment

##### 1. Relevance of the Digital Era and Student Interests

There is a significant positive correlation between lecture materials and the current digital ecosystem. As *digital natives*, students of the Class of 2023 intuitively connect basic theories of entrepreneurship with platforms such as TikTok Shop or Shopee. This is in accordance with the literature from Nasution, et al. (2020) which emphasizes that *digital entrepreneurship* requires synchronization between conventional business logic and the use of information technology.

In line with the research of Anwar & Salim (2021), entrepreneurship education in the digital era has indeed been proven to increase interest in entrepreneurship due to the ease of market access. In this context, the role of lecturers at STIMI YAPMI acts as a facilitator to ensure that students' digital energy is directed towards a sustainable business model. This is relevant to the principle in *The Lean Startup* by Ries (2017), where constant innovation and market validation are needed so that student businesses are not seasonal but have long-term scalability. (2023) Information technology is the main catalyst that accelerates student interest in starting a digital business.

## 2. Character Building as a Business Foundation

The results of the study on 30 respondents showed that the character of "Dare to Try" was more dominant than the character of "Financial Management". This confirms the theory of Kasmir (2017) which states that the first step to becoming an entrepreneur is the courage to take risks (*risk-taking*). However, the lack of mastery of financial management is a critical note.

This gap shows that although *the Entrepreneurship course* manages to build an initial mentality, a more technical mentoring or incubation phase is needed. As explained by Hisrich, Peters, & Shepherd (2020), the entrepreneurial process ranges from identifying opportunities to well-established company management. This lack of managerial aspects is also strengthened by the findings of Indriyani & Subowo (2019) that *self-efficacy* (self-confidence) is indeed the main driver, but stable business success still requires deep technical competence. In terms of the Dominance of Brave Character in line with Sukirman (2017) Entrepreneurial values are the key to the success of small businesses, but courage must be accompanied by competence.

## 5. CONCLUSION

Based on the findings of the study, the Entrepreneurship course (MK Entrepreneurship) has a significant role in shaping the confident and innovative character of STIMI YAPMI students from the Class of 2023. The course not only encourages students to think creatively, but also strengthens their courage to explore business opportunities and develop entrepreneurial ideas. In addition, the study shows that students have a very high interest in entrepreneurship, especially in the digital business sector. This indicates that the current generation of students is highly responsive to the opportunities offered by technological development and the digital economy. However, despite their strong interest, students still require more in-depth technical guidance, particularly in understanding and managing digital business operations effectively. The study also reveals that the main obstacles faced by students are limited capital and a lack of confidence when dealing with intense competition in the digital market.

In light of these findings, several suggestions can be proposed. For the institution, STIMI YAPMI is encouraged to establish a Business Incubator forum that can support and monitor students' business ideas even after they complete the Entrepreneurship course. Such a forum would provide students with a platform to continue developing their ideas into real business ventures. For lecturers, it is recommended to include a special practicum on Digital Marketing Tools in the course, so that students can gain practical experience that matches their interests and the demands of the digital era. This addition would help students become more prepared and confident in starting and managing digital businesses.

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