

Entrepreneurial Readiness among University Students: Implications for Higher Education Development

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Abstract

This study aims to analyze the level of entrepreneurial readiness among university students, focusing on key indicators such as entrepreneurial motivation, knowledge, managerial skills, organizational or work experience, and environmental support. The research employed a quantitative approach with a descriptive research design to provide an objective and measurable overview of students' readiness for entrepreneurship. The population consisted of all active students at the selected university, and a sample of 275 students was obtained using proportional random sampling. Data were collected using a structured, closed-ended questionnaire with a five-point Likert scale. The results revealed that the majority of students demonstrated a high level of entrepreneurial readiness, with 79.27% in the high category and 4.73% in the very high category, while 16.00% were in the moderate category. No respondents fell into the low or very low categories, indicating that all students possessed at least a moderate level of readiness. These findings suggest that students generally have adequate motivation, knowledge, skills, and environmental support to initiate entrepreneurial activities. The high readiness levels may also reflect the effectiveness of entrepreneurship education programs implemented by higher education institutions. Nevertheless, the presence of students in the moderate category indicates a need for further development, particularly in enhancing practical experience, risk-taking ability, and direct business exposure. Therefore, targeted interventions such as mentoring, practice-based entrepreneurship training, and business network expansion are recommended to elevate students' readiness to a higher level.

Keyword: Entrepreneurial Readiness, University Students, Entrepreneurship Education, Quantitative Research, and Descriptive Analysis



INTRODUCTION

The increasingly competitive nature of the job market demands that university graduates possess more than just academic competencies (Ma'dan et al., 2019). Currently, educated unemployment has become a pressing issue in many countries, including Indonesia. A significant number of university graduates face difficulties securing employment aligned with their field of study (Sujito & Bahagijo, 2022). This phenomenon suggests that higher education systems need to offer alternative solutions, one of which is by fostering entrepreneurial readiness among students (Rahayu et al., 2020). Entrepreneurship is regarded as a strategic approach to reducing unemployment and promoting economic self-reliance among the younger generation (Mustofa et al., 2021).

Students, as agents of change, possess significant potential to become innovative entrepreneurs. They are within a productive age group, have access to technology, and benefit from broad knowledge and skills resources (Kojo et al., 2020). However, such potential does not automatically guarantee entrepreneurial success without adequate readiness. Entrepreneurial readiness encompasses personal motivation, entrepreneurial knowledge and skills, practical experience, and sufficient environmental support (Li et al., 2022). Without these factors, students may encounter various obstacles when initiating and sustaining business ventures.

Universities in Indonesia have begun to respond to these challenges by integrating entrepreneurship courses into the curriculum, establishing business incubation centers, and organizing student business training and competitions. However, the existence of these programs does not fully ensure that students are genuinely prepared to become entrepreneurs after graduation (Hastuti et al., 2020). Many students remain hesitant, fear failure, or lack clear business ideas (Gani et al., 2019). This indicates that entrepreneurial readiness involves not only cognitive dimensions but also affective and socio-environmental factors (Xue, 2017). Entrepreneurial education plays a vital role in cultivating creative and innovative mindsets among learners (Indrakurniawan et al., 2023).

Students' entrepreneurial readiness is also influenced by non-academic experiences such as involvement in student organizations, internships, or social activities that foster leadership and responsibility (Afandi & Syofyan, 2020). Additionally, the surrounding environment—such as family, peers, and academic mentors—plays a critical role in shaping students' attitudes and decisions regarding entrepreneurship (Nurmaliza et al., 2018). Therefore, a comprehensive mapping of students' entrepreneurial readiness is essential, taking into account various relevant and contextual indicators (Hubbansyah et al., 2023).

This study aims to identify and describe the extent to which students in higher education





institutions possess entrepreneurial readiness. Utilizing a quantitative approach and survey method through the distribution of structured questionnaires, this research will examine students' readiness across five main dimensions: motivation, knowledge, skills, experience, and environmental support (Sulistiyan et al., 2021). The analysis is expected to provide an objective overview that can serve as a foundation for higher education institutions to formulate more effective and targeted strategies.

By generating accurate data on students' levels of entrepreneurial readiness, universities can design more purposeful programs in the form of curriculum innovation, training, and support mechanisms such as access to funding and business networks (Putri et al., 2019). Moreover, this research is expected to contribute theoretically to the body of literature on entrepreneurship in higher education and offer policy recommendations to strengthen the entrepreneurial ecosystem on campus. In the long term, a high level of entrepreneurial readiness among university students will contribute to the growth of a generation of young, creative, innovative, and self-reliant entrepreneurs in Indonesia.

METHOD

This study employed a quantitative approach with a descriptive research design. The quantitative approach was selected as the study aims to provide an objective and measurable description of students' entrepreneurial readiness using a structured questionnaire as the primary instrument. The descriptive design was utilized to obtain comprehensive information about the actual conditions of entrepreneurial readiness among university students based on the data collected from respondents.

The population of this study consisted of all active students enrolled at the university where the research was conducted. A sample of 275 students was selected using proportional random sampling, taking into account representation based on academic programs, semesters, and gender. This sampling technique was employed to ensure that the research findings accurately reflect the actual distribution of the population.

Data collection was conducted through the administration of a closed-ended questionnaire that was systematically developed to measure the variable of entrepreneurial readiness. The questionnaire items were constructed based on key indicators of entrepreneurial readiness, including entrepreneurial motivation, entrepreneurial knowledge, managerial skills, organizational or work experience, and environmental support such as from family, university, and peers. Each item was rated using a five-point Likert scale, with response options ranging from "strongly not ready," "not ready," "moderately ready," "ready," to "strongly ready."



Table 1. Entrepreneurial Readiness Category

Category	Score
Strongly Ready	5
Ready	4
Moderate	3
Not Ready	2
Strongly Not Ready	1

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

To find out the general picture of the level of entrepreneurial readiness of students, a descriptive analysis was carried out on the data from filling out questionnaires in each research indicator.

Description of Entrepreneurial Readiness Indicator Data

This analysis includes the calculation of mean scores, median, mode, standard deviation, minimum scores, maximum scores, number of scores (sum), criterion scores, and percentage achievements. These values are used to see the tendency of respondents' answers, the level of achievement towards the ideal score, and the variation in data on each indicator of entrepreneurial readiness. The results of this descriptive analysis are presented in Table 1 as follows.

Tabel 2. Description of Entrepreneurial Readiness Data

Data Description	Item 1	Item 2	Item 2	Total
Mean	16,03	15,99	16,39	48,41
Median	15,00	16,00	16,00	49,00
Modus	15,00	15,00	15,00	49,00
Std. Deviasi	2,08	2,10	2,11	5,02
Minimum	10,00	9,00	10,00	36,00
Maximum	20,00	20,00	20,00	60,00
Sum	4409,00	4398,00	4506,00	13313,00
Skor Kriteria	5500,00	5500,00	5500,00	16500,00
Total	80,16	79,96	81,93	80,68

Based on Table 2, the results of the descriptive analysis of the indicators of student entrepreneurial readiness showed that the mean value in the indicators Y21 was 16.03, Y22 was

15.99, and Y23 was 16.39, with a total average of 48.41. The median values for each indicator are in the range of 15.00–16.00, which suggests that the data tends to be evenly distributed around the midpoint. The mode value in all three indicators is the same, which is 15.00, which indicates that this score is the score that most often appears in the three indicators of entrepreneurial readiness.

The standard deviation value for each indicator ranges from 2.08 to 2.11, while the total is 5.02. This shows that the variation or spread of the data is relatively low, which means that respondents' answers tend to be homogeneous. The minimum value obtained in each indicator is in the range of 9.00–10.00, while the maximum value reaches 20.00 in all indicators. When viewed from the total score, the Y21 indicator obtained a total score of 4,409.00, Y22 of 4,398.00, and Y23 of 4,506.00, bringing the total to 13,313.00. When compared to the maximum score criteria for each indicator of 5,500.00, the achievement percentage for Y21 is 80.16%, Y22 is 79.96%, and Y23 is 81.93%, with an overall average achievement of 80.68%.

This percentage shows that in general, the level of student entrepreneurial readiness is in the high category. This indicates that students have the motivation, knowledge, and skills to start entrepreneurial activities. However, the percentage of achievement that is still below 85% shows that there is room for improvement, especially in strengthening factors that can optimally increase entrepreneurial readiness.

Criteria for Classification of Entrepreneurial Readiness Score

To find out a more detailed picture of the level of entrepreneurial readiness of students, a frequency distribution analysis was carried out based on a predetermined score interval. This categorization aims to map the level of student readiness from the very low to very high category. With this approach, the proportion of students in each category can be seen, making it easier to identify groups that need further guidance and groups that already have optimal readiness for entrepreneurship. The results of the frequency distribution analysis are presented in the following table.

Tabel 3. Classification of Entrepreneurial Readiness Score

No.	Category	Interval	Frequence	Percentage
1	Strongly Not Ready	15,000 - 18,015	0	0,00
2	Not ready	18,015 - 31,005	0	0,00
3	Moderate	31,005 - 43,995	44	16,00
4	Ready	43,995 - 56,985	218	79,27
5	Strongly Ready	56,985 - 60,000	13	4,73

	Total		275	100
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Based on the results of the frequency distribution analysis in the table above, it can be seen that the level of entrepreneurial readiness of students is spread across three categories, namely medium, high, and very high categories. There were no respondents in the very low or low categories, each of which had a frequency of 0 respondents or 0.00%. This shows that all respondents have a minimum level of entrepreneurial readiness in the medium category.

In the medium category, there were 44 respondents or 16.00% of the total respondents. This indicates that some students have quite good entrepreneurial readiness, but still need improvement, especially in terms of knowledge, skills, and environmental support in order to move up to a higher category. The high category was the most dominant category, covering 218 respondents or 79.27% of the total respondents. These findings show that the majority of students have relatively mature entrepreneurial readiness, both in terms of motivation, entrepreneurial knowledge, managerial skills, and relevant experience. They are estimated to have sufficient confidence and ability to start entrepreneurial activities. Meanwhile, the very high category was only filled by 13 respondents or 4.73%. Students in this category are estimated to have excellent entrepreneurial readiness in all indicators, and have mastered the skills needed to develop business ideas in real life.

Overall, these findings show that 84.00% of students are in the high and very high categories, which means that the majority of students have great potential to become entrepreneurs. However, there are still 16.00% of students in the medium category, so it is necessary to provide more intensive coaching, training, and mentoring programs so that their readiness level can be increased to a higher category.

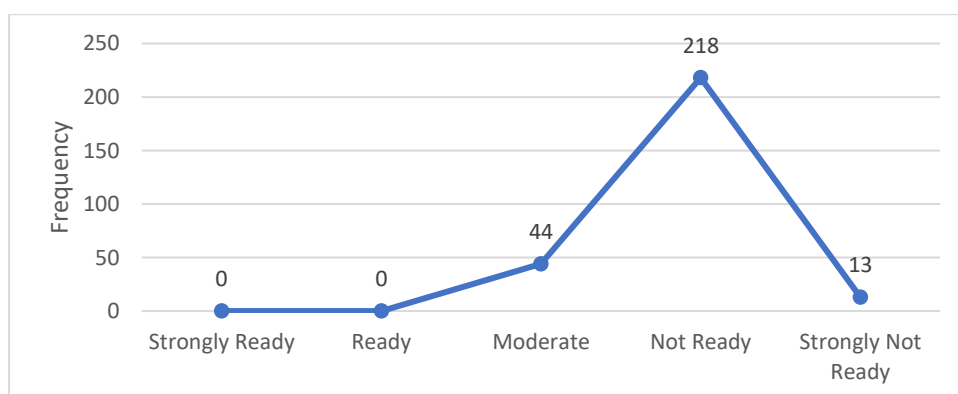


Figure 1. Entrepreneurial Readiness Score

DISCUSSION

The findings of this study indicate that the majority of students fall into the high category in terms of entrepreneurial readiness, amounting to 79.27%, with an additional 4.73% in the very high category. This suggests that most students already possess sufficient motivation, knowledge, skills, and environmental support to initiate entrepreneurial activities. This finding is consistent with the assertion of Suyati and Rozikin (2021), who state that students with access to entrepreneurship education and a supportive environment tend to exhibit higher readiness to embark on entrepreneurial ventures. The high percentage in both the high and very high categories may indicate that higher education institutions have been relatively effective in equipping students with entrepreneurial competencies (Dharmawati et al., 2020).

Nevertheless, 16.00% of students are in the moderate category, indicating that while they demonstrate a reasonable level of entrepreneurial readiness, it has not yet reached optimal levels. This could be attributed to limited practical experience, a lack of willingness to take risks, or insufficient exposure to the business world. According to Xue (2017), entrepreneurial readiness is determined not only by knowledge and skills but also by affective factors such as self-confidence, perseverance, and risk management abilities. Therefore, students in this category require more intensive support in the form of practical training, mentoring, and direct experience in business activities.

The high level of entrepreneurial readiness among the majority of students may also reflect the success of higher education institutions in implementing entrepreneurship programs. Various initiatives—such as offering entrepreneurship courses, establishing business incubation centers, organizing business plan competitions, and providing digital marketing training—can significantly contribute to enhancing students' entrepreneurial readiness. Aqmal et al. (2020) also emphasize that practice-oriented entrepreneurship education has a positive impact on students' preparedness to start a business. Consequently, maintaining and further improving the quality of these programs is essential for sustaining the growth of students' entrepreneurial potential (Kusmintarti et al., 2020).

Overall, these findings suggest that students have considerable potential to become young, creative, and innovative entrepreneurs. However, to fully optimize this potential, higher education institutions need to strengthen the entrepreneurial ecosystem by providing sustained support, such as access to start-up capital, business networking opportunities, mentorship programs, and the integration of entrepreneurial activities into the curriculum (Kojo et al., 2020). In doing so, students will not only be prepared to start a business after graduation but will also be able to sustain and expand their ventures. In this context, the results of this study can serve as a



foundation for developing more targeted and needs-based entrepreneurship development strategies in higher education.

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings of this study on entrepreneurial readiness among university students, it can be concluded that, in general, students demonstrate a high level of readiness. This is evidenced by the fact that 79.27% of respondents fall into the high category and 4.73% fall into the very high category, while the remaining 16.00% are in the moderate category. No respondents were found in either the low or very low categories, indicating that all students surveyed possess at least a moderate level of entrepreneurial readiness.

The high level of entrepreneurial readiness among students suggests that they already possess essential assets, including motivation, knowledge, managerial skills, organizational or work experience, and sufficient environmental support to initiate and develop a business. These findings also reflect the success of higher education institutions in implementing various entrepreneurship programs, such as entrepreneurship courses, training programs, business competitions, and student business incubation initiatives.

Nevertheless, the presence of students in the moderate category indicates that there is still a group requiring further development, particularly in terms of practical experience, risk-taking ability, and direct exposure to the business world. Therefore, it is necessary to implement more intensive development strategies through mentoring, coaching, practice-based entrepreneurship training, and the expansion of business networks so that their readiness can be elevated to a higher category.

Overall, this study indicates that students hold significant potential to become young, creative, and innovative entrepreneurs. With continuous support from higher education institutions and their surrounding environment, it is expected that students will not only be prepared to start a business upon graduation but will also be capable of sustaining and expanding their ventures, thereby contributing to economic growth and job creation in society.

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