

Project-Based Entrepreneurship Learning to Foster Entrepreneurial Spirit

Semuel Pajala¹, Aprizal², Andi Ferawati³, Abd. Azis^{4*} Rusdiaman Rauf⁵

Correspondence: azist.1966@gmail.com ^{4*}

Department of Industrial Engineering, STITEK Dharma Yadi, Makassar, Indonesia¹

Department of Bisnis Digital, Universitas Dipa Makassar, Indonesia²

Department of Management, STIE YAPI, Bone, Indonesia³

Department of Management, Universitas Alkhairaat, Palu, Indonesia^{4*}

Department of Entrepreneurship, Universitas Handayani Makassar, Makassar, Indonesia⁵

Abstract

This study aims to examine the implementation of Project-Based Learning (PjBL) in Entrepreneurship Education at Universitas Handayani Makassar, using a qualitative approach that combines literature review and in-depth interviews with six lecturers who have applied PjBL in entrepreneurship teaching. The findings from the interviews indicate that PjBL effectively increases student engagement in learning, enriches their practical experiences, and develops essential skills such as problem-solving, communication, and collaboration. However, challenges faced in its implementation include time constraints, limited resources, and the lecturers' readiness to provide intensive guidance to students. Additionally, the role of lecturers as facilitators is crucial to the success of the PjBL model. Based on the research findings, it is recommended that the institution provide additional training for lecturers, enhance the curriculum to integrate PBL better, and offer facilities to support project-based learning. The implementation of PjBL is expected to improve the quality of entrepreneurship education and better equip students with the necessary skills to navigate the competitive business world.

Keywords: *Entrepreneurship learning; Project-Based Learning; Entrepreneurship Education*

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Introduction

The increasingly dynamic development of the world of work and industry requires human resources who not only have theoretical knowledge but also practical skills and a strong entrepreneurial spirit. (Mitra et al., 2011; Kärnä et al., 2021). In today's digital economy and era of globalization, the ability to create opportunities, innovate, and take risks is a significant added value. (Petricevic & Teece, 2019; Rahaman et al., 2021; Susilo & Aisya, 2022), especially for college graduates. Therefore, higher education is required to produce graduates who are not only ready to work but also ready to create jobs. (Helyer, 2011; Okolie et al., 2020). It is in this context that the Entrepreneurship course has a strategic role in shaping the entrepreneurial mindset and character among students.

However, the conventional learning approach, which is still dominant in some educational institutions, often fails to foster enthusiasm and practical skills in entrepreneurship. (C. Jones & English, 2004; Floris & Pillitu, 2019). Learning that is too theory-oriented, one-way lectures, and the lack of direct practice in creating products or services make it difficult for students to apply the concept of entrepreneurship in real life. As a result, Entrepreneurship courses are often seen as a mere academic complement, rather than the primary means of shaping the creative and innovative mindset of students.

One of the learning models that has begun to be developed to answer these challenges is Project-Based Learning (PBL). This learning model emphasizes a learning process based on real projects, collaboration, and problem-solving orientation. (Jones et al., 1997; Jalinus et al., 2017). In the context of entrepreneurship, the PjBL approach enables students to be directly involved in the process of creating business ideas, developing business plans, designing products, and conducting marketing simulations. Students are not only recipients of knowledge but also active actors in a meaningful and contextual learning process. (Morselli, 2018; Chang et al., 2025).

Project-based Entrepreneurship Learning offers a space for students to explore their potential, work in a team, make informed decisions, and face challenges similar to those encountered in the real business world. (Hogue et al., 2011; Afzal & Tumpa, 2025). In addition, PjBL also trains skills in dealing with the rapid era of information technology, such as critical thinking, communication, collaboration, creativity, and digital literacy. Projects that students work on can be in the form of developing new business ideas, launching local products based on regional potential, or creating digital business prototypes, all of which lead to more active, authentic, and relevant learning.

This article aims to examine how the application of the Project-Based Learning learning model in Entrepreneurship courses can have a positive impact on improving students' entrepreneurial competencies. With a descriptive qualitative approach (or one that can be adjusted to the research method), the author will describe the implementation process of PjBL, the challenges faced, as well as the results and benefits experienced by students during the project-based learning. It is hoped that this study will serve as a reference and inspiration for educators and higher education institutions in developing practical, applicable, and empowering entrepreneurship learning strategies.

Research Method

The study employs a qualitative approach to gain an in-depth understanding of the implementation of project-based entrepreneurship learning within the Universitas Handayani Makassar environment in Indonesia. The qualitative approach was chosen because it allows researchers to explore the perceptions, experiences, and views of teachers regarding the implementation of the PjBL model in entrepreneurship courses.

Research Design

This study employs a literature review and in-depth interviews as its primary data collection methods. A literature review was conducted to gain a basic understanding of the concept of PjBL, as well as the application and results of research related to its application in entrepreneurship education. The literature sources used include academic journals, textbooks, and previous research reports.

In addition, interviews were conducted with six teachers of entrepreneurship courses in Universitas Handayani Makassar to explore their experience in applying the PjBL model in the learning process. The selection of teachers is carried out by a purposive sampling technique, taking into account the following criteria: (1) Teachers who have taught entrepreneurship courses for more than two years, (2) Teachers who have implemented PjBL in teaching, and (3) Teachers who have a good understanding of the concept of entrepreneurship and the PjBL model.

Data Collection Procedure

1. Literature Review: Literature data is collected through searches in various academic journal databases, such as Google Scholar and other journal portals (Rauf et al., 2024;

Rauf et al., 2025). The researcher will identify, assess, and summarize the main findings related to the application of PjBL in entrepreneurial learning, as well as its relevance in higher education.

2. In-Depth Interviews: Interviews are conducted in a semi-structured manner using pre-prepared interview guidelines. The interview guide includes questions about the teachers' experiences in implementing PjBL, the challenges they faced, and the benefits and impacts they felt in entrepreneurial learning. This interview lasts 45-60 minutes and is conducted either face-to-face or online, depending on the availability of the instructors. All interviews were recorded with the respondents' permission to ensure the accuracy of data collection.

Data Analysis

Data obtained from literature reviews and interviews will be analyzed using thematic analysis techniques. The data analysis steps include:

1. Transkripsi: The results of the recorded interviews will be transcribed verbatim to facilitate analysis.
2. Coding: The interview data will be coded to identify key themes that emerge, such as challenges in the implementation of PjBL, positive experiences from students, and supporting factors that affect the success of PjBL.
3. Categorization: The themes found will be grouped into relevant categories, such as *teaching techniques*, *learning evaluation*, and *the benefits of PjBL* in improving students' entrepreneurial competence.
4. Interpretation: The researcher will interpret the results of the thematic analysis by referring to the previously reviewed literature. A comparison between the interview findings and the results of the literature review will be conducted to identify similarities and differences, and to draw conclusions about the application of PjBL in STIE Nusantara.

Result And Discussion

Result

This study aims to examine the application of the Project-Based Entrepreneurship Learning model at Universitas Handayani Makassar through a qualitative approach that combines a literature review with in-depth interviews of entrepreneurship course instructors. In this section, the researcher will present the results obtained from interviews with teachers as well as findings from the literature review, which will then be critically discussed to provide a deeper understanding of the implementation and challenges of PjBL in the context of entrepreneurial learning in higher education.

1. Profiles of Faculty Involved in Research

Interviews were conducted with six teachers of entrepreneurship courses at Universitas Handayani Makassar. The teachers involved have a minimum of 2 years of teaching experience and have implemented the PjBL model in their teaching. This teacher profile shows variations in the level of experience and mastery of the PjBL method. Most of the teachers stated that they had known and applied PjBL in the last few semesters, but some teachers were implementing this model for the first time in several batches of students. The interviewed lecturers come from diverse backgrounds in management/economics education, with varying work experiences, ranging from academics with theoretical backgrounds to practitioners who have been directly involved in the world of business

and entrepreneurship. This approach provides a broad overview of how PjBL is accepted and applied in entrepreneurship learning at Universitas Handayani Makassar.

2. Literature Review on PjBL in Entrepreneurship Education

Project-based learning (PjBL) is a method that prioritizes students' active involvement in solving real-world problems. PjBL has the main characteristics, namely, orientation to projects that require critical thinking, collaborative skills, and applicable problem-solving (Issa & Khataibeh, 2021; Viyanti et al., 2022). In the context of entrepreneurship, PjBL is very suitable for teaching students not only business theory but also how to face real challenges in the business world.

PjBL provides a space for students to design and implement their business ideas, aligning with the goals of entrepreneurship education, which aim to foster creativity, innovation, and adaptability in a competitive market. (Cho & Brown, 2013; Pinto & Reshma, 2021). In addition, PjBL not only teaches technical skills but also develops essential soft skills, including the ability to communicate effectively, work collaboratively in a team, and make informed decisions under pressure. (Dembek et al., 2018; Kearney et al., 2024).

Based on the results of a literature review, various studies have shown that PjBL offers numerous benefits in entrepreneurial learning. (Erlanda et al., 2023; Indarini, 2024). The application of the PjBL model increases students' motivation and independence, enriches their practical experience, and improves their problem-solving skills. However, challenges such as limited time, lack of resources, and lecturer readiness are often obstacles in the implementation of PjBL (Widayanti & Hermawan, 2018).

3. Interview Results with Teachers

From interviews conducted with six teachers, various views emerged on the application of PjBL in entrepreneurship courses at Universitas Handayani Makassar. Based on the results of the interview, the lecturer revealed several things that are relevant to the implementation of PjBL:

a. Advantages of Implementing PjBL

1) Most teachers admit that PjBL provides significant advantages in terms of student activation. Teacher A stated, "PjBL changes the dynamics of the classroom to be more lively. Students who are usually passive become more involved because they have to work on real projects."

2) Teacher B added, "Students learn from hands-on experience, not just theory. This makes them better prepared for the world of work."

Other teachers emphasized that PjBL improves students' communication and collaboration skills. Teacher C states, "During teamwork, students learn to convey their ideas clearly and also listen to other people's opinions. This is an important skill in entrepreneurship."

b. Challenges in the Implementation of PjBL

1) Although there are many benefits felt, the implementation of PjBL is not without challenges. One of the most frequently highlighted challenges by teachers is the limited time available to complete projects. Teacher D revealed, "Limited lecture time often makes it difficult for students to complete projects with optimal quality."

2) Teacher E also stated, "In addition, we must pay extra attention to the division of tasks in the project so that all team members can contribute to the maximum."

Teacher F added that project-based teaching requires intensive mentoring and continuous monitoring. "I have to have frequent meetings with the group to make sure they stay on track. Without it, the project could fail or run poorly."

c. The Role of Lecturers in the Implementation of PjBL

- 1) Teachers also emphasized the importance of their role as facilitators in the project-based learning model. Teacher A stated, "As lecturers, we are no longer the main source of information, but as mentors who help students find their own solutions."
- 2) Most teachers agree that the implementation of PjBL requires an individual approach for each student, considering the differences in ability level and learning speed.

Discussion

Based on the results of interviews with teachers and literature reviews, it can be concluded that the application of PjBL in entrepreneurship learning at Universitas Handayani Makassar has a significant positive impact; however, it also faces several challenges. In general, PjBL helps students become more involved in the learning process, collaborate more actively in teams, and be better prepared to face the challenges of the business world.

However, challenges such as time constraints, a lack of resources, and the readiness of lecturers to implement a project-based learning model remain obstacles that need to be overcome. Therefore, to optimize the implementation of PjBL, several strategic steps need to be improved, including:

- a. Develop a more systematic PjBL-based curriculum, taking into account the allocation of sufficient time to complete the project.

Developing a more systematic *Project-Based Learning* (PBL) curriculum involves creating a well-structured and well-planned learning plan, where projects are at the core of the learning process. PjBL emphasizes learning through hands-on experience, where students are given real-world challenges to solve through projects that are relevant to their lives. For this reason, the curriculum needs to be designed comprehensively, starting from the determination of learning objectives and competencies to be achieved, through the steps for working on projects, to the assessment of results.

One of the important aspects in developing the PjBL curriculum is ensuring sufficient time allocation. Projects are not instant activities; Students need time to understand the problem, conduct research, discuss, try solutions, revise, and finally present their work. Without adequate time, this process becomes rushed and fails to provide optimal learning outcomes.

In addition, the curriculum should also provide clear guidance on the role of teachers as facilitators, cross-subject integration if needed, and transparent assessment criteria and objectives. With good systematics and adequate time support, PjBL not only improves students' understanding of concepts but also their collaboration, communication, and critical thinking skills. This will help prepare students to face real-world challenges more effectively.

- b. Improve training for lecturers in terms of the implementation of PjBL, so that they can become more effective facilitators.

Improving training for lecturers in terms of implementing *Project-Based Learning* (PjBL) is a strategic step to ensure the success of this learning approach in the higher education environment. PjBL demands the active role of lecturers not only as material presenters, but also as facilitators who can guide students in designing, implementing, and reflecting on the projects they are working on. Therefore, lecturers need to be equipped with an in-depth understanding of the philosophy, principles, and practices of PjBL through structured and sustainable training.

The training must cover various important aspects, such as designing projects that align with learning outcomes, collaborative student guidance strategies, process-based

assessment techniques, and evaluating project work results. In addition, training also needs to provide simulations and real case studies so that lecturers can experience firsthand the dynamics of PjBL, including how to handle challenges such as time management, student involvement, and cross-disciplinary integration.

By improving the competence of lecturers through this training, they will be more confident and skilled in implementing PjBL in the classroom. Lecturers who act as effective facilitators will be able to create an active, reflective, and meaningful learning environment for students. This will ultimately encourage the achievement of learning that is not only oriented towards mastering theory, but also on the application of 21st-century skills such as critical thinking, creativity, and the ability to work in teams.

- c. Provide additional resources, such as access to industry, sponsorships, or business incubation facilities, that can support student entrepreneurship projects.

Providing additional resources in the context of supporting student entrepreneurship projects means offering access to and practical support outside the classroom, enabling students to develop their business ideas in real-world settings and make them sustainable. These resources take many forms, such as access to industry, sponsorship support, and business incubation facilities.

Access to industry allows students to establish partnerships with businesses, companies, or practitioners in the field. Through this collaboration, students can get market insights, practical guidance, and even internship opportunities or trial opportunities for their products/services. This helps students understand business dynamics more realistically.

Meanwhile, sponsors play a crucial role in providing both financial and non-financial support, including raw materials, production tools, and promotional assistance. With sponsorship, students are not only helped economically but also encouraged to manage their projects more professionally.

Business incubation facilities such as co-working spaces, Business consulting services, mentoring, management training, and access to investors are also critical. Business incubators serve as an intensive coaching environment, enabling student entrepreneurial ideas to develop into sustainable, real-world businesses.

By providing these three forms of additional resources, colleges help students to not only learn about entrepreneurship in theory but also implement it directly, thereby increasing their readiness to face the business world after graduation.

By implementing strategic steps to optimize the implementation of PjBL, Universitas Handayani Makassar has the potential to become a model that can be adopted more widely in other colleges to support more contextual entrepreneurial learning and application. The application of Project-Based Learning (PBL) at Universitas Handayani Makassar has excellent potential to become an entrepreneurial learning model that other colleges can adopt. PjBL is a learning approach that emphasizes an active, collaborative, and contextual process, where students learn through the completion of real projects. When applied in the context of entrepreneurship, this method allows students to develop business ideas, conduct market research, develop business plans, and even implement products or services directly.

At Universitas Handayani Makassar, the implementation of PjBL can be conducted in a structured manner with the support of lecturers who act as facilitators, and a campus environment that fosters experimentation and student innovation. Students are not only equipped with entrepreneurial theory but also encouraged to design and run business projects tailored to local market conditions. This approach makes learning more applicable and relevant to the needs of the modern business world.

In addition, this model has the potential to be adopted by other colleges because it is flexible, can be adapted to the local context of each campus, and equips students with fundamental skills, such as critical thinking, teamwork, creativity, and problem-solving. By emulating this practice, other institutions can enhance the quality of entrepreneurial learning and produce graduates who not only understand business concepts but are also prepared to become strong business actors in the field.

Conclusion

Based on the results of research conducted using a qualitative approach, including literature reviews and in-depth interviews with lecturers of entrepreneurship courses at Universitas Handayani Makassar, several conclusions can be drawn regarding the implementation of Project-Based Entrepreneurship Learning.

1. The Implementation of PjBL Increases Student Engagement

Project-based learning models have been proven to increase student engagement in entrepreneurial learning. Through relevant and authentic projects, students not only learn theory but also gain practical experience that is essential in facing the challenges of the business world. The implementation of PjBL encourages students to be more active, creative, and collaborate in teams, thus enriching their learning.

2. Benefits of PjBL in Entrepreneurship Skills Development

Project-based learning enhances a range of skills essential for entrepreneurs, including problem-solving, teamwork, effective communication, and independence. Students can more easily relate lecture material to real-world experiences in the business world, making learning more applicable and contextual.

3. Challenges in the Implementation of PjBL

Despite the numerous benefits obtained, the implementation of PjBL also faces several challenges. Some teachers expressed obstacles related to limited time, resources, and the readiness of lecturers in providing intensive assistance to students. This requires extra support from the campus, both in terms of facilities, lecturer training, and curriculum arrangement that support the successful implementation of PjBL.

4. The Role of Lecturers as Facilitators

In the PjBL model, the role of lecturers shifts to facilitators who guide students in completing entrepreneurial projects. Lecturers not only teach, but also provide individual and group support, enabling students to develop effectively in their projects. Therefore, improving the competence of lecturers in implementing PjBL is very necessary.

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