

Fostering Early Childhood Entrepreneurship Spirit through Market Day Activities

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Abstract

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Entrepreneurship education in early childhood is essential for fostering independence, creativity, and problem-solving skills from an early age. In response to this need, the Market Day program at RA Muslimat NU Al-Ummah was designed as a community service initiative to instill an entrepreneurial spirit in young learners through contextual and experiential learning. This program aimed to provide meaningful experiences that integrate learning with real-life practices involving social interaction and economic activities. The implementation adopted a qualitative participatory action approach, emphasizing collaborative involvement of teachers, parents, and children. Data were collected through observation, interviews, and documentation to capture the learning process and its outcomes. The findings indicate that the Market Day program successfully enhanced children's independence, self-confidence, and communication skills. However, challenges were identified, particularly in children's limited understanding of currency values and the need for more creative spatial arrangements. The program demonstrates that entrepreneurship education can be effectively integrated into early childhood learning through community-based and contextual activities. Implicitly, this initiative underscores the importance of teacher and parent collaboration in creating sustainable models of entrepreneurship education for early childhood development.

Keywords: MarketDay, Instilling the Spirit of Entrepreneurship, Early Childhood

INTRODUCTION

Early childhood education is widely recognized as a crucial foundation for children's holistic development, as it shapes their character, social competence, and readiness for future learning (Hasanah, 2019). The Indonesian National Education System Law No. 20 of 2003 emphasizes that education for children from birth to six years should provide proper stimulation to support optimal growth and development (Riani Olivia et al., 2022). This golden age period is marked by rapid brain development, where children absorb knowledge and experiences more effectively (Apriyanti & Aprianti, 2023). Therefore, introducing meaningful and enjoyable learning activities during this stage is essential for preparing children's future success (Rahmawati et al., 2022).

Entrepreneurship education has been increasingly recognized as an important life skill that should be introduced from an early age (Hudiya et al., 2023). It does not only refer to business practices but also to values such as independence, creativity, collaboration, and resilience (Faristiana et al., 2023). Research has shown that children exposed to entrepreneurial experiences tend to develop stronger problem-solving skills, communication abilities, and decision-making confidence (Ratnasari, 2017). Unfortunately, many early childhood education institutions in Indonesia still lack structured programs that explicitly foster entrepreneurial spirit (Mulyati, 2024).

One effective approach to instilling entrepreneurial values in young learners is through experiential learning, where children are actively engaged in real-life contexts such as buying and selling (Yektyastuti et al., 2021). Market Day activities are proven to create a fun and interactive learning environment that integrates economic concepts with social interaction (Jemadi, 2023). Previous findings demonstrate that such programs not only strengthen children's understanding of basic financial literacy but also nurture creativity and self-confidence (El Fiah & Purbaya, 2016).

In response to this need, RA Muslimat NU Al-Ummah initiated a Market Day program as part of its community service engagement. This program not only provides direct learning experiences for children but also actively involves teachers and parents in each stage (Hasanah, 2019; Dewi & Supriyanto, 2021). The schoolyard is transformed into a mini market where children take turns as sellers and buyers. Parents contribute by preparing the goods to be sold, while teachers act as facilitators and supervisors. Through this collaborative model, children learn about buying and selling, basic money management, and communication skills in a practical and fun way (Fauziah & Hidayat, 2022).

The Market Day program also provides broader benefits for the community by creating positive interactions between schools, parents, and children. It raises parents' awareness of the importance of entrepreneurship education from an early age while strengthening the school-community relationship (Ismail & Zain, 2021; Suyanto, 2020). Thus, Market Day is not merely a school activity but also a form of community empowerment that supports holistic child development (Abdullah & Ahmad, 2020; Kurniawan & Astuti, 2023).

Previous studies support the importance of such programs in enhancing children's learning interest and skills. Hidayati et al. (2022) reported that community-based tutoring activities successfully fostered children's enthusiasm and motivation for learning at Rumah Pintar Petualangan Batuta. Their findings indicate that when children are given practical and

enjoyable learning experiences, their engagement in the learning process increases significantly. This aligns with the concept of Market Day, which emphasizes experiential learning to foster an entrepreneurial spirit from an early age (Pratiwi, 2022).

Similarly, Widad et al. (2022) found that tutoring programs in Batukuwung Village successfully increased elementary students' learning interest through creative and participatory activities. These initiatives involved active collaboration among teachers, parents, and the community, creating strong synergy in supporting children's learning. This multiparty involvement is highly relevant to the Market Day program at RA Muslimat NU Al-Ummah, where success also depends on collaboration between schools, parents, and the surrounding community (Putri & Sari, 2023; Nugroho & Wahyuni, 2022).

Based on these considerations, this community service program aims to foster the entrepreneurial spirit of early childhood through the implementation of Market Day activities. Furthermore, this initiative seeks to strengthen collaboration between teachers, parents, and the community in supporting children's education. It is expected that the outcomes of this program will serve as a model for community empowerment that can be replicated in other early childhood education institutions, allowing more children to benefit from entrepreneurial education at an early age.

METHODS

This community service program employed a qualitative approach with a case study design to understand in depth the implementation of the Market Day program at RA Muslimat NU AL-UMMAH. The approach was selected to explore the phenomenon holistically within its natural context, emphasizing active participation from all stakeholders, including children, teachers, parents, and the school community. The program was designed to engage all parties in planning, implementation, observation, and evaluation, ensuring that children's learning experiences are meaningful, relevant, and enjoyable.

Planning Stage

The initial stage of the program involved collaborative planning between the researcher and school staff. During this phase, detailed discussions were conducted to design the Market Day activities in accordance with the characteristics and developmental stages of early childhood learners. Key elements such as learning materials, activity structure, children's roles as buyers and sellers, and supporting equipment such as tables, chairs, and simple trading tools were collectively determined. Parents were also involved in preparing items for sale and providing guidance during activities. This careful planning ensured that each stakeholder understood their role, allowing for a smooth and

purposeful implementation aimed at fostering children's understanding of entrepreneurship and social skills.

In addition, an initial assessment of children's abilities was conducted to evaluate reading, basic numeracy, and social interaction skills. This assessment served as a baseline to tailor the activities according to the children's developmental needs, ensuring that every child could participate actively and benefit from the program. Meticulous planning at this stage laid the foundation for Market Day to be both engaging and educational.

Implementation Stage

The second stage involved the execution of Market Day activities, which were conducted regularly every Saturday. Children were given the opportunity to engage directly in the roles of sellers and buyers in a creative and child-friendly mini-market setting. Teachers acted as facilitators, guiding children to understand basic buying and selling concepts, simple money management, and social interaction skills. The researcher provided direct support to ensure that all children participated effectively and achieved meaningful learning outcomes..

During the activities, children were encouraged to take initiative, express opinions, negotiate, and make simple decisions within the context of trade. Parents participated not only by supplying goods but also by providing moral support and encouragement, creating a safe and motivating environment. These interactions allowed children to learn through hands-on experience, fostering creativity, independence, communication skills, and self-confidence.

Observation and Documentation

The next stage involved systematic observation and documentation, where the researcher recorded detailed notes on every dynamic occurring during the activities. Observed aspects included children's participation, comprehension of entrepreneurship concepts, social skills development, and interactions between children, teachers, and parents. Documentation was carried out through field notes, photographs, and video recordings to enrich the data. This phase served both as an evaluation tool and as evidence of the program's effectiveness in developing essential life skills through experiential learning.

Reflection and Evaluation

The final stage focused on reflection and collaborative evaluation. Researchers, teachers, and parents engaged in discussions to assess the program's implementation, identify successes, challenges, and improvement strategies for future activities. The evaluation examined children's achievement in understanding entrepreneurship concepts, communication skills, independence, and other social competencies. Findings from this evaluation were used to inform subsequent cycles of the program, ensuring that activities remained responsive to children's needs and learning contexts.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

Context and Planning of Market Day

The implementation of the Market Day activity at RA Muslimat NU AL-UMMAH is based on the school's understanding of the socio-economic context of the surrounding community, which consists of farmers, traders, and livestock breeders. This context serves as a critical foundation for designing learning programs that nurture entrepreneurial skills from an early age. The principal highlighted that the social environment provides opportunities to cultivate an entrepreneurial mindset among young learners. Program planning was carried out systematically, starting with internal coordination between teachers and the principal to determine the setting, products, location, activities, and funding, followed by meetings with parents to discuss their involvement in preparation for the event.

Program Implementation

The Market Day was carried out with a structured yet enjoyable learning concept. Preparation began one week prior to the event with notifications to parents and students. Teachers arranged the selling booths with tables, chairs, and small umbrellas to create an attractive mini-café atmosphere. Each booth was supervised by a teacher who acted as a mentor, ensuring that children felt safe and confident. Children took turns being sellers and buyers, learning to manage their goods, conduct simple transactions, and engage in social interactions with peers.



Figure 1. Market Day Booth



Figure 2. Market Day Implementation

Development of Independence and Creativity

Observations by teachers and parents indicated that children showed increased independence, initiative, and creativity. Children began to organize their goods, make simple decisions such as setting prices, and demonstrate initiative in creating new items. Their communication skills also improved, as they became more active in speaking, asking questions, and sharing experiences during the activity. Although challenges existed, such as limited understanding of money values and the need to update booth settings to maintain interest, teacher guidance helped children understand basic economic concepts through hands-on practice.

Collaboration between School, Teachers, and Parents

The success of the program was supported by active involvement from teachers and parents. Teachers acted as facilitators, while parents helped prepare the goods and supported the learning process at home. This collaboration created a learning environment that nurtures children's social, emotional, and cognitive development holistically.

Discussion

The results of this community service program align with previous research. Hasanah (2019) emphasized that aligning entrepreneurship education with the child's environmental context is key to building a strong entrepreneurial foundation from an early age. The Market Day program at RA Muslimat NU AL-UMMAH emphasizes experiential learning, allowing children to acquire social and economic skills directly through real-life activities.

Hudia et al. (2023) also found that Market Day is effective in introducing entrepreneurial skills to early childhood, enhancing children's confidence in public speaking,

negotiation abilities, and understanding of basic business concepts. These findings are consistent with observations at RA Muslimat NU AL-UMMAH, where children demonstrated improved communication skills, self-confidence, and independence.

Furthermore, Suyanto (2020) highlighted the importance of involving all educational components—teachers, parents, and the community—for the success of early childhood learning programs. This is evident in the Market Day activity, where active participation from both parents and teachers had a positive impact on children’s development. This collaborative approach ensures that learning does not only occur at school but is also reinforced at home and within the child’s social environment.

Market Day also serves as an effective platform to introduce children to the economic realities and professions in their surroundings, while simultaneously teaching entrepreneurial values in an enjoyable way (Faristiana et al., 2023). Learning through hands-on practice strengthens children’s critical thinking, problem-solving, and creativity, skills that will be valuable for their future life skills development.

CONCLUSION

The Market Day program at RA Muslimat NU Al-Ummah successfully fostered an entrepreneurial spirit in early childhood through engaging and contextual learning experiences. Children not only gained a basic understanding of buying and selling but also developed essential social, communication, and independence skills. This success was strongly supported by close collaboration among teachers, parents, and the school in creating a holistic learning environment. Overall, Market Day has proven to be an effective and inspiring community-based learning model with strong potential for replication in other early childhood education institutions.

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