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# The contribution of entrepreneurial learning towards entrepreneurial passion and entrepreneurial action choice of vocational students

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**Abstract.** Entrepreneurship is a process that aims to make changes and create new things, which aims to generate welfare for the individual and add value to society. Subjects or entrepreneurship courses have become compulsory subjects that train to stimulate the students' interest to act actively in entrepreneurship in most of the vocational education in Indonesia at both vocational and university levels. Topic on entrepreneurial passion is barely studied. Therefore, in this study, the authors try to study conceptually the contribution of learning to passion that affects the entrepreneurial action of vocational students. This study is based on literature review aiming to reveal the relationship between entrepreneurial learning, entrepreneurial passion and entrepreneurial action. The first part of this research is the introductory part of entrepreneurial learning that examines theoretical entrepreneurship learning and in the next section examines the relationship between passion and entrepreneurial action in relation to entrepreneurial learning. Finally, a conceptual model is proposed based on the study of the constructed theories and the results of the research and implications are summarized in the conclusion section as the basis for further research.

## 1. Introduction

The demand for entrepreneurial qualification leads entrepreneurs to transform into successful entrepreneurs but in reality, not all entrepreneurs are the passionate ones. Generally, what entrepreneur means is similar as executives who own or manage a business to gain profit. This is a negative feature but very prominent to some entrepreneurs that desire and craving for personal gain as much as possible by justifying all means regardless of the value in society.

The condition of entrepreneurs in Indonesia on GKN and the Ministry of Cooperatives and SMEs websites shows that there is insufficient data that clearly states the condition of the entrepreneurs. The only found data was relate to types of enterprise, which are micro, small, medium and big enterprises. Whilst, the data related to the entrepreneurs' attitudes, activities and individual characteristics which are participated in any enterprise phases based on a survey conducted by Global Entrepreneurship Monitor (GEM) in 2014 to 70 countries, shows that Indonesia is categorized as a country with the income and in the level of efficiency-driven economies.

Based on GEM data in 2014 involving respondents in age 18-6, 72.9% of them believe that in Indonesia, entrepreneurship categorized as one of good carrier choices, 78% picture themselves to be a



successful entrepreneur, and 84.4% judge in order to be a successful entrepreneur, attention of media is the key. The GEM data also shows that in Indonesia, 4.4% entrepreneurial activity is in start-up that is nascent entrepreneurial and new business owners.

Considering the data from MSME of Indonesia, in 2005, microenterprises had a significant increase from 45.2 million units to 52.1 million units in 2009. On the other hand, small, medium and big enterprises decrease drastically in 2005 (1.8 million units) to 2006 (0.51) million units and step up slowly for years to reach 0.59 million units in 2009. This condition indicates that despite the increasing number of microenterprises (sole proprietorship) is significant, the chances of expanding to bigger-sized enterprises is small.

Moreover, considering the labor absorption data in 2009, out of 52.176.795 units of microenterprises only 90.012.694 people are absorbed as laborers, or in other words, every 1 unit of microenterprises only absorbs 1 to 2 workers. While for medium enterprises, out of 41.133 business units, 2.677.565 workers are absorbed, or in other words, every 1 unit of medium enterprises can provide employment for 65 people. Therefore, it is important to encourage every entrepreneurial activity in Indonesia to grow to a greater degree, regardless whether it is because of opportunity or necessity. If every small enterprises is able to grow and absorb more labor, it creates millions of new employments. Encouraging business growth can also contribute more Gross Domestic Income (GDP) to Indonesia's economic growth, and it can reduce poverty and increase prosperity for the society.

Entrepreneurial learning has recently emerged as a new practice involving entrepreneurship and the educational process. Cope [1], argues that a better theoretical understanding of entrepreneurial learning is very important, because through learning entrepreneurs and aspiring entrepreneurs can grow and develop. Entrepreneurship education contains entrepreneurial values taught by teachers to students. These values are independent, creativity, risk-taking, action-oriented, leadership, hard work, and honesty.

Gibcus et al. [2] states that entrepreneurship education has a positive impact on entrepreneurial mindset for the younger generation, their intentions on entrepreneurship, their employability and ultimately on their role in society and economics. Furthermore, he defines that entrepreneurship education prepares responsible individuals, enterprising, have the attitude, possess the skills and knowledge necessary to achieve the goals they set for themselves, in the fulfillment of their life needs.

Beegel [3] argues that adequate formal education can help ones shaping their understanding, ways of thinking, and learning patterns for the business world, but in the real business world, it depends on the ability of each individual, by utilizing and exploring deeper knowledge gained from entrepreneurial learning in school.

Passion has been recognized as a source of motivation and success in entrepreneurship [4]. The view of the importance of passion in the creation and growth of business is undoubtedly, but the systematic theoretical and empirical studies of the impact of passion on entrepreneurial activities is still unable to explain precisely the passion construct in this entrepreneurship [5,6]. In fact, with its positive side, passion is an emotion component that has been widely accepted as a major source of motivation [4,7].

Cardon, Wincent, Singh, and Drnovsek [8], states that entrepreneurial passion is an intense positive emotion that has a motivational effect that can stimulate entrepreneurs to overcome obstacles, and encourage remaining engaged in entrepreneurial activity. Entrepreneurs, who have a high passion, are able to recognize new and creative ways to take advantage of opportunities, despite being in an uncertain and risky environment [6]. Passion makes them love their works and provide extra energy [9,10]. In the same vein Vallerand et al [4] defines passion as a strong inclination toward an activity that people like, that they find important, and in which they invest time and energy. In general, passion can be interpreted as a strong tendency towards an activity that is important and liked by ones, and willing to invest their time and energy.

## 2. Experimental Details

Based on the aforementioned background, this paper intends to a study on entrepreneurship since it is one of the hot topics discussed in all educational institutions around the world, including in Indonesia. All vocational schools in Indonesia have taught entrepreneurship and put as a part of the curriculum so it is necessary for a more in-depth study on entrepreneurship, one of which is the study of the emotional side of entrepreneurship focusing on entrepreneurial passion. This study investigates the effect of learning on entrepreneurial passion of students who manage entrepreneurial activities that eventually affect the entrepreneurial action choice. This paper is intended to discuss and provide input on the importance of entrepreneurial learning entrepreneurial action choice moderated by entrepreneurial passion.

The research method used the study method of literature/conceptual study, that is the researcher want to explore critically to the theoretical and empirical study that exist to contribute thinking in the form of concept and strategy to increase entrepreneurial action through entrepreneurial learning that is moderated by entrepreneurial passion of vocational students.

### 3. Results And Discussion

#### 3.1. *Entrepreneurial Learning*

Entrepreneurship is distinguished as a process of identifying opportunities for creating or releasing value and forming a business, which combines resources to exploit opportunities [11]. Rae and David [12], define entrepreneurial learning as learning to recognize and to act on opportunities, and social interaction to start, organize and manage businesses. Dermol (2010) defines entrepreneurial learning as any form of education and training, both formal and informal, which contributes to entrepreneurial passion and learning with or without commercial goals.

Holcomb et al. [13] define entrepreneurial learning as a process when people absorb new knowledge from experience or observations of other people's behavior, actions and consequences, make intuitive or heuristic conclusions due to uncertain environmental and inconsistent information, and manage the knowledge, which is obtained by connecting the existing knowledge structure.

Deakins and Freel [14], state that entrepreneurs are forced to change behavior through learning experiences. Experience can produce new meaning, and bring changes in the consequences of thinking and behavior. The entrepreneurial learning emphasizes the accumulation of knowledge through observation of ongoing events, imitations and practices, which eventually help entrepreneurs and aspiring entrepreneurs adapt to their external environment [15].

Politis [16] and Moustaghfir and Sirca [17] argue that entrepreneurial learning is a process that facilitates the development of the needed knowledge required to make it effective in starting and managing new business. In his research, he highlights that entrepreneurial learning as a process of experience in which individuals persistently develop their entrepreneurial knowledge throughout their professional lives. One of the approach methods in establishing an entrepreneurial culture is through the education.

Entrepreneurial learning aims to stimulate personal skills starting at an early age in which will shape the basis of entrepreneurial behavior or encourage entrepreneurship as a career choice (Enterprise Directorate-General European Commission, 2004). Entrepreneurial learning as a lifelong learning process, where knowledge is continually shaped and revised when new experiences occur [18]. It is assumed that there is a strong relationship between the entrepreneurial process and learning. Minniti and Bygrave [19], reveal that entrepreneurship is a learning process, and entrepreneurial theory requires learning theory.

#### 3.2. *Entrepreneurial Passion*

Passion has been recognized as a source of entrepreneurial motivation and success [5,20,21]. Passion according to Baum and Locke (2004: 587) is a person's love of his work. Smilor [21] defines passion as enthusiasm, happiness, even the spirit that comes from the energetic and tireless feeling of a meaningful, challenging and inspirational goal.

Vallerand et.al [4] define passion as a strong inclination toward an activity that people like, that they find important, and in which they invest time and energy. It can be interpreted as a strong tendency on activities that are enjoyed and considered important by individuals and lead them to invest time and energy. Passion is a very strong feeling about someone or something. It is an intense emotion, enthusiasm or a strong desire for something. Passion also makes them love their job and provide extra energy to work on it [9].

Carsrud and Brannback (2009: 16), state that entrepreneurial passion is a strong positive feeling and can be felt consciously, arising through participation in entrepreneurial activities associated with a significant and prominent role in an entrepreneur's self-identity. The characteristics of entrepreneurial passion, according to Cardon et.al [8], are an intense positive emotion, which has a motivational effect that stimulates entrepreneurs to overcome obstacles and encourage to remain engaged in entrepreneurial activity. High passionate entrepreneurs are able to recognize new and creative ways to grab any opportunities, despite being in an uncertain and risky environment [6].

### 3.3. *Entrepreneurial Action Choice*

Entrepreneurship requires action, whether it is conceptualized as product creation or as a new process (McMullen and Shepherd, 2006). Alvares and Barney [22] define human behavior, in terms of the impact of their action, as the ability to achieve their goals. In general, this theory suggests that behaviors that facilitate the achievement of one's goals are more likely to occur than behaviors that do not facilitate the fulfillment of one's goals. So in relation to the action of entrepreneurship, the facilitated behavior in achieving the goal of entrepreneurship will enable someone to take entrepreneurial action.

Once we aware of the entrepreneurial process, we realize the urge of conducting research on entrepreneurship and the process in entrepreneurial action. O'Connor (2002) describe that a potential entrepreneur will clarify ideas toward a potential chance in any discussion forum. This kind of discussion take place in the beginning stage of pre-vision and vision as mentioned by Long and McMullan (as cited in Black, 2010). The discussion will come to one's mind who will begin start-up business with good perception towards the particular entrepreneurial action.

Chu (1996) and Greve and Salaff (2003) reveal that entrepreneurs will also benefit from the necessary skills and resources in their entrepreneurial actions through various activities within social networks. Once these resources are collected and action plans clarified, the entrepreneur takes the final step and actually implements his plan, and enters the stage of formation. Greve and Salaff (2003) conclude that during the forming phase, the entrepreneur's focus is on entrepreneurial action, such as selling a product or service, which he will maintain his communication with various members of his social network to broaden and enhance his entrepreneurial insight.

### 3.4. *The Contribution of Entrepreneurial Learning to Entrepreneurial Passion*

Entrepreneurial learning has recently emerged as a new practice involving entrepreneurship and the educational process. Cope [1] argues that better theoretical understanding of entrepreneurial learning is very important, because through learning entrepreneurs and aspiring entrepreneurs grow and develop. Rae [12] and Moustaghfir [17], define entrepreneurial learning as learning to recognize and act on opportunities, and social interaction to start, organize and manage enterprises, thus the concept of entrepreneurial learning is generally defined from the perspective of entrepreneurial theory. Entrepreneurship is not merely a topic, it is also a different way of teaching and helping young people to fully develop their potential (Directorate General for Enterprise and Industry European Commission, 2012: 44).

Gibcus, P., et al. [2], concludes that entrepreneurship education has a positive impact on entrepreneurial mindset for young people, their intentions on entrepreneurship, their employability and eventually on their role in society and economics. Furthermore, Cardon [10] states that passion is the heart of entrepreneurship because it can foster creativity and recognition of new information patterns which are important to the discovery and exploitation of promising opportunities. In the same vein,



Baum and Locke (2004) also argue that (1) a person with a high entrepreneurial passion will be self-motivated to make every effort to benefit from his entrepreneurial learning and (2) entrepreneurial passion can stimulate entrepreneurs to continue learning and improve their entrepreneurial skills and acquire resources to engage in entrepreneurial practices.

A study conducted by Lu, Shan and Chen [15] which focuses on the role of the impact of entrepreneurial learning and entrepreneurial ability on a process involving how entrepreneurial passion affects entrepreneurial output, reveals that new ventures will face great challenges and obligations, novelty and risk of failure. Then, if they solely rely on the experience of the previous ventures, knowledge and entrepreneurial passion, then this is not enough to solve this problem. On the other hand, entrepreneurial ability reflects the ability of the entrepreneur to recognize opportunities and integrate resources.

### 3.5. *The Contribution of Entrepreneurial Learning to the Entrepreneurial Action Choice*

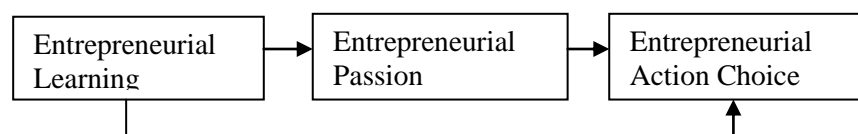
Learning is the process acquiring new knowledge, including specific skills and competencies, obtained from experience or by observing others, assimilating and organizing it with prior knowledge, so they can recall indaily actions [13]. Learning is also defined as a process that arises because of the perception of the senses in which people will develop individuals' ability to act differently, after knowing, doing, and comprehending [23].

Volery and Mueller [24] highlight the role of entrepreneurship education in influencing individual decisions to become entrepreneurs. In relation to this, then participating in entrepreneurship education has been associated with the increased interest in choosing entrepreneurship as a viable career choice. Souitaris, Zerbinati and Al-Laham [25] found that entrepreneurship education could stimulate subjective norms and students' intentions of entrepreneurship by giving them the knowledge, skills and self-confidence that eventually inspired them to choose entrepreneurship as a career. Entrepreneurship education has also been recognized as one of the vital determinants that can influence student career decisions [26,27].

Polistis [16] in his research states that entrepreneurial learning as a process that facilitates the development of required knowledge in determining entrepreneurial action, which then useful in order to act effectively to start and manage new business. His research highlights entrepreneurial learning as an experiential process whereby individuals will continue to actively develop their entrepreneurial knowledge throughout their professional lives. Similarly, Rae and Carswell [1] also argue that entrepreneurial learning is a way of learning to recognize and act on opportunities, interact to start, organize and manage ventures.

## 4. Conclusion

Based on the theoretical studies, it is identified that entrepreneurial learning is a variable that contributes to the entrepreneurial passion, which affects the entrepreneurial actions choice of student. The model is shown on Figure 1.



**Figure 1.** Relationship of Entrepreneurial Learning, Passion and Action Choice

Based on the results of theoretical studies, the relationship between variables from previous research as described above, it reveals that entrepreneurial learning contributes directly to entrepreneurial action choice, it can be happen because entrepreneurial learning give them a set of knowledge about entrepreneurship.

In addition, entrepreneurial learning can also contribute indirectly to the entrepreneurial action choice through entrepreneurial passion, where entrepreneurial learning can support entrepreneurial passion, which will subsequently affect the entrepreneurial action choice. Through a good entrepreneurial learning, the entrepreneurial passion can increase and become stronger for student to choose entrepreneurship as a career.

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