

Education Business Incubation Model as a Drive for Innovation and Strengthening Elementary School Independence

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Abstract: Educational business incubation has become an important strategy for strengthening independence and innovation in elementary schools in the era of educational transformation. This approach allows schools to function not only as teaching institutions but also as centers for community-based economic and social empowerment. This study employs the Systematic Literature Review (SLR) method to analyze various scientific publications related to the implementation of educational business incubation, edupreneurship, and the strengthening of elementary school institutions. The findings indicate that educational business incubation programs can create alternative funding sources, expand opportunities for innovative learning, and reinforce a participatory culture within schools. Beyond financial aspects, business incubation also promotes cross-sector collaboration among schools, government, private sectors, and communities, thereby establishing a sustainable edupreneurship ecosystem. Through strategic and collaborative management, elementary schools can become independent, innovative institutions with high competitiveness in facing future educational challenges.

Keywords: Collaborative Ecosystem; Educational Business Incubation; Edupreneurship; Elementary School Independence; School Innovation.

1. Introduction

Educational business incubation is a strategic approach in elementary education to strengthen school independence and competitiveness amidst the dynamics of changing times. Through incubation programs, schools function not only as teaching institutions but also as centers for developing community-based entrepreneurial potential (Kusuma & Fitria, 2025). This concept encourages schools to establish business units or productive programs relevant to local needs. In this way, schools are able to generate alternative funding sources outside of government budgets. Educational business incubation is a concrete form of integration between learning, economic empowerment, and sustainable development within the elementary school environment.

The implementation of educational business incubation provides a significant opportunity for elementary schools to build financial and institutional independence. Complete dependence on government operational funds often limits schools' room for innovation in learning. Through professionally managed business units, schools can allocate additional funds for facility development, teacher training, and project-based learning activities. This allows schools to be more flexible and responsive to student needs and changes in the educational environment. Thus, business incubation is an alternative solution to support the transformation of elementary schools into resilient educational institutions (Rahmah, 2024).

Beyond just the economic aspect, educational business incubation also plays a crucial role in fostering a culture of innovation within the school environment. The business development process involves teachers, students, and the community, creating meaningful, contextual learning. Students learn to connect theory with practice through entrepreneurial activ-

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ities, such as production, marketing, and simple business management. Teachers are also encouraged to be more creative in designing lessons relevant to real life. This collaboration fosters an adaptive, participatory, and visionary school culture.

The implementation of educational business incubation in elementary schools also aligns with the direction of national education policy, which encourages the independence of educational units (Fadlil, 2024). This approach supports the government's efforts to strengthen the role of schools as centers of innovation and community empowerment. By developing entrepreneurship programs, schools can leverage local potential, create added value, and expand their social role. This is a crucial strategy in addressing the challenges of limited resources and strengthening the competitiveness of elementary schools in the global era. Furthermore, business incubation aligns with the spirit of Freedom to Learn, which emphasizes flexibility and independence.

However, the success of educational business incubation programs is highly dependent on various supporting factors. Visionary leadership, teacher competence, community support, and partnerships with various parties are crucial elements in building a sustainable program. Without collaboration and careful planning, incubation programs risk becoming short-term activities without significant impact. Therefore, it is crucial for schools to have a clear, measurable, and participatory management strategy. In this way, business incubation can have a real impact on the independence of elementary schools (Husni, 2025).

Based on this urgency, this study focuses on understanding how the educational business incubation model can drive innovation while strengthening the independence of elementary schools. This approach highlights not only economic aspects but also the dynamics of learning, school culture, and the collaborative ecosystem that forms within it. Using the Systematic Literature Review (SLR) method, this study analyzes various previous studies to identify patterns, opportunities, and effective implementation strategies. The results are expected to provide theoretical and practical contributions to elementary schools in developing sustainable educational business incubation models. Thus, elementary schools can emerge as independent, innovative, and highly competitive institutions.

2. Research Methods

This study employed a Systematic Literature Review (SLR) approach, which aimed to collect, analyze, and synthesize various research findings related to the education business incubation model. The SLR process involved several stages: topic and keyword identification, literature searches from indexed national journals, selection of relevant literature based on inclusion and exclusion criteria, content analysis of selected articles, and preparation of a thematic synthesis. The literature sources included publications from 2020–2025 to obtain a current overview of the practice of the education business incubation model in the elementary school context. The analysis results were then mapped to identify education business incubation as a driver of innovation and strengthening independence.

3. Results and Discussion

Educational Business Incubation Model in the Elementary School Context

The educational business incubation model is a strategic approach to encourage innovation and independence in elementary school management. In the context of elementary education units, business incubation is not solely oriented towards financial gain, but rather serves as a means to develop creativity, entrepreneurship, and institutional independence (Suryanto et al., 2025). This incubation process involves planning, coaching, mentoring, and developing business units relevant to the school's needs and potential. Through this mechanism, elementary schools have the opportunity to optimize internal resources such as teachers, students, and the surrounding environment. Thus, educational business incubation can be an important instrument in strengthening the sustainability of educational programs while creating added value for the community.

In its implementation, the educational business incubation model in elementary schools needs to be adapted to the characteristics of the students and the school culture. Ideally, the business units developed should be based on local potential, such as craft products, small-scale agriculture, healthy canteen management, or additional educational services. These activities not only serve as an alternative source of funding but also serve as contextual learning media for students. Through direct involvement in entrepreneurial activities, students can develop critical thinking skills, responsibility, and collaboration. Furthermore, teachers act as

facilitators and mentors, guiding students in understanding production processes, simple financial management, and basic marketing strategies (Rahmatullah & Sariakin, 2023).

The educational business incubation model also strengthens the role of schools as centers of community empowerment. Schools are no longer viewed simply as places to transfer knowledge, but as agents of social change capable of creating education-based economic opportunities. In this context, partnerships with external parties such as local governments, businesses, local communities, and parents are crucial. This collaboration enables schools to obtain support from resources, training, and broader market access. Through this collaborative ecosystem, schools can develop sustainable incubation programs and provide tangible benefits to the entire school community.

The implementation of the educational business incubation model at the elementary school level also contributes to institutional independence. With professionally managed business units, schools have independent funding sources to support learning programs, develop infrastructure, and increase the capacity of teachers and students (Mawardi et al., 2025). This aligns with the spirit of educational decentralization and strengthening school autonomy. Furthermore, educational business incubation can foster a culture of innovation within the school environment, where the entire school community is encouraged to think creatively, adaptively, and productively. This culture is a crucial asset for elementary schools to survive and thrive amidst the increasingly complex dynamics of educational and economic change.

Driving School Innovation

School innovation is key to meeting the challenges of 21st-century education, characterized by technological developments, social dynamics, and demands for global competency. In the elementary school context, innovation is not always synonymous with the use of advanced technology; it also encompasses changes in mindsets, learning strategies, and institutional management (Mulyadi, 2025). The educational business incubation model can serve as a key driver in creating an innovative culture within the school environment. When schools begin developing business units or entrepreneurship programs, they are indirectly building a learning system that is creative, contextual, and relevant to real life. This expands the school's role beyond simply being an educational institution to also serving as a center for innovation and community empowerment.

Driving school innovation stems from active collaboration between various educational components, including teachers, students, principals, and the community. Teachers play a crucial role as pioneers in renewing learning strategies that integrate entrepreneurial values into teaching and learning activities. For example, mathematics or science lessons can be linked to the production and sales processes of school products. Meanwhile, the principal is tasked with creating an organizational climate that is open to new ideas and supports measured risk-taking. Thus, innovation is not merely a short-term project, but becomes part of a sustainable school culture.

School innovation can also be spurred through the use of information and communication technology. The presence of digital platforms, social media, and various learning applications can be effective means of expanding the reach of educational business incubation programs (Mukaromah, 2020). Schools can utilize technology for product promotion, financial management, and project-based learning. This use of technology not only improves operational efficiency but also builds digital literacy for teachers and students. The integration of technological innovation and entrepreneurship programs makes schools more adaptive to changes in the external environment.

Furthermore, driving school innovation also depends on visionary and collaborative leadership. A principal with a clear vision will be able to encourage all elements of the school to move in the same direction. This type of leadership creates a learning environment that is open to experimentation, supports creativity, and rewards initiative. Innovation born of visionary leadership not only enriches learning strategies but also strengthens the school's independence in managing resources independently and sustainably. Thus, educational business incubation is not just an additional project, but becomes the foundation for driving real change in the elementary school environment (Ginting, et. al, 2024).

Strengthening Elementary School Independence through Educational Business Incubation

Elementary school independence is a crucial aspect in realizing adaptive, innovative, and sustainable educational units. In the context of educational decentralization, schools are required to not only rely on government funding but also be able to manage resources independently (Ramadhan et al., 2025). The educational business incubation model can be an effective strategy for strengthening this independence. Through the planned development of

school business units, schools have alternative funding sources that can support various educational activities. This allows schools greater flexibility in developing learning programs, improving facilities and infrastructure, and enhancing the competencies of teachers and students.

Strengthening elementary school independence through educational business incubation concerns not only financial aspects but also institutional aspects and organizational culture. When schools are able to manage incubation programs professionally, a productive, collaborative, and responsible work culture emerges. Teachers, students, and the community are actively involved in the management process, fostering a sense of ownership of the school's programs. The independence fostered through this participatory process is far stronger than mere reliance on external funding. Thus, educational business incubation also serves as a means of empowering school members to think creatively and find solutions to the challenges they face (Arma & Iswatiningsih, 2025).

School independence is also closely linked to their ability to make strategic decisions that align with local needs. Through educational business incubation programs, schools can design business units relevant to the potential of their surrounding environment, such as agricultural processing, handicrafts, or supplementary educational services. This approach enables schools to become not only consumers but also producers, actively contributing to local economic development. When schools have autonomy in managing resources and determining development priorities, their resilience to various changes and crises is strengthened.

Furthermore, strengthening the independence of elementary schools through educational business incubation has an impact on improving the overall quality of education (Purnamasari, 2023). Independent funding sources enable schools to conduct teacher training, develop contextual curricula, and improve the distribution of educational services more equitably. Furthermore, financial independence also strengthens schools' bargaining power in establishing partnerships with various parties, including the government, the private sector, and the local community. This creates a positive cycle: the more independent a school is, the greater its opportunities for growth and innovation. Thus, educational business incubation is not only an economic tool but also a strategic instrument for creating resilient and competitive elementary schools.

Collaboration and the Edupreneurship Ecosystem

Collaboration is a key element in building a strong edupreneurship ecosystem within elementary schools. Education business incubation cannot run optimally if it relies solely on the school's internal role. It requires the involvement of various stakeholders, such as local governments, businesses, non-governmental organizations, local communities, and parents (Kurniyanti et al., 2025). Through cross-sector collaboration, schools gain resource support, access to knowledge, and a broader market network. This creates a mutually reinforcing ecosystem, where each party contributes and plays a strategic role in fostering school independence.

In practice, collaboration can be realized through various forms of partnerships. Local governments can provide regulatory support and initial funding, while the private sector can partner in entrepreneurship training or marketing school products. Local communities and parents can also act as supporters or primary consumers of school-produced products. This form of collaboration not only provides economic benefits but also fosters a sense of shared ownership of the edupreneurship program. Thus, education business incubation becomes part of a collective movement to strengthen the quality and independence of elementary schools.

The edupreneurship ecosystem also encompasses the development of interschool learning networks. Through forums or communities of practice, schools can share experiences, business models, and program development strategies. This collaboration enables faster and more effective joint innovation than working individually (Arif, 2024). Furthermore, interschool networks can open up opportunities to develop joint products or services, such as through student entrepreneurship exhibitions or school markets. With the establishment of this collaborative ecosystem, elementary school innovation and independence are no longer fragmented but become collective movements with broad impact.

The success of the edupreneurship ecosystem depends heavily on visionary leadership, open communication, and well-planned collaborative management. Schools need to establish clear, transparent, and mutually beneficial collaboration mechanisms for all parties. Furthermore, efforts are needed to strengthen the capacity of human resources within schools to manage partnerships professionally. If this collaborative ecosystem operates well, education business incubation will not only become an alternative source of funding but also a driving

force for change and innovation in elementary education. Thus, collaboration is not merely a complement, but rather the main foundation for the sustainability of edupreneurship programs in elementary schools (Afifandasari & Subiyantoro, 2022).

4. Conclusions

The educational business incubation model has strategic potential in driving the transformation of elementary schools into independent, innovative, and adaptive educational institutions. Through the incubation program, schools can develop business units based on local potential that not only serve as alternative funding sources but also as contextual learning tools for students. The innovations generated by this program expand the role of schools as centers of community empowerment, beyond mere formal educational institutions. Furthermore, the independence created allows schools flexibility in resource management and strategic decision-making. The success of this model depends heavily on the formation of a collaborative and sustainable edupreunion ecosystem between schools, the government, the business sector, the community, and the public.

Readers, especially educators and school principals, are encouraged to utilize educational business incubation as an innovative strategy to strengthen school independence through developing teacher entrepreneurial competencies, partnering with businesses and communities, and inter-school collaboration. For future researchers, it is recommended to conduct field research to test the effectiveness of the educational business incubation model in various school contexts and to identify success factors and implementation challenges to make the resulting model more adaptive and sustainable.

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