

Creative Youth Against Unemployment: Strengthening Community-Based Social and Entrepreneurial Skills in Bone Regency, South Sulawesi

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Abstract

This study aims to analyze the effectiveness of the Community Empowerment Program (PKM) "Creative Youth Anti-Unemployment" in improving the social skills and entrepreneurial capacity of community-based youth in Bone Regency, South Sulawesi. A descriptive qualitative approach was used with 30 research subjects, consisting of 22 youth program participants, 3 community leaders, 3 training facilitators, and 2 supporting partners from MSMEs and the local government, selected through purposive sampling. Data collection techniques included Focus Group Discussions, in-depth interviews, and field observations. Data analysis was conducted using the Miles-Huberman model through the stages of reduction, presentation, and drawing conclusions. The results show that the community plays a significant role in developing participants' social skills, including communication, leadership, and teamwork. Practice-based training and mentoring improve entrepreneurial capacity, product design, financial management, and business marketing skills. The integration between the community and training encourages participants' readiness to start independent businesses and reduces the risk of unemployment. The PKM program successfully fosters a resilient, creative, and proactive entrepreneurial mindset and strengthens social networks that support business sustainability. These findings confirm that community-based youth empowerment is an effective strategy for economic independence and sustainable social capacity development.

Keywords : Community; Entrepreneurship, Youth

1. Introduction

Bone Regency shows a still quite high youth unemployment rate based on preliminary observations of the Manpower Office report, which noted that more than 6,500 productive-age youth have not found permanent employment in the past year. This condition is influenced by limited job skills relevant to industry needs and a lack of motivation to create independent business opportunities. Youth have not received adequate access to soft skills training such as communication, teamwork, leadership, and self-management, which are standard in the modern job market. Communities often rely on conventional employment sectors whose opportunities are increasingly limited due to changes in the regional economic structure. Changing workforce needs demand adaptability and creativity that have not yet been developed strongly in most youth in Bone. This study differs from other community-based youth empowerment research because it integrates a practical entrepreneurship training approach with Bone's local wisdom values, including Tolaki cultural norms and the spirit of mutual cooperation, as part of



the learning module. This integrated model emphasizes building entrepreneurial capacity while strengthening local cultural identity, so that the program not only improves skills and business readiness but also instills a contextual understanding specific to Bone's youth. Dependence on formal employment leads to low interest in exploring the creative economy sector (Mardiyyah et al., 2026). Limited access to professional training tends to make young people passive and lack the confidence to compete. This situation makes improving youth competency an urgent need to reduce the potential for chronic unemployment. Strategic, empowerment-based programs are needed to optimize the potential of Bone Regency's young generation.

Youth actually have significant capacity to enhance the dynamics of the creative economy when provided with training support and spaces for actualization. Field observations of local youth communities indicate that basic skills in art, digital technology, creative crafts, and even culinary businesses have not received ongoing development. This potential has only developed as a hobby and has not been converted into market-oriented economic opportunities. Access to entrepreneurial knowledge remains limited, both in terms of capital, networks, and business management. This situation makes it difficult for most young people to start new businesses even with innovative ideas. The social environment also does not strongly encourage an entrepreneurial mindset because work orientation is still dominated by expectations of the formal sector. The absence of systematic training platforms creates a disparity between creative potential and technical marketing skills (Asrijal et al., 2025). Youth desperately need programs that teach business strategy, digital marketing, product branding, and simple financial management. Creating these learning spaces is key to transforming youth resources into regional economic assets (Prayoga et al., 2025).

Youth communities in Bone Regency have a strong social influence and can be an effective means of developing productive activities. Initial observations of the activities of hobby groups and youth organizations indicate a strong spirit of collaboration, but this has not yet been directed towards economic development. Community activities are still predominantly recreational in nature, thus not having a significant impact on the financial independence of their members. The potential for solidarity and social networks could actually be a driving force for collective entrepreneurship. The creative resources spread among community members can be integrated into collaborative economic projects. Awareness of joint business opportunities has not yet developed due to the lack of professional mentoring. Community activities tend to occur without regular planning oriented towards achieving economic empowerment targets. Training and mentoring programs are urgently needed to transform communities into spaces for developing entrepreneurial skills. Community empowerment will increase youth economic resilience and strengthen productive social relationships.

Strengthening social skills is crucial for improving youth readiness to enter the workforce or establish a business. Communication, negotiation, leadership, and problem-solving skills have been shown to significantly impact career and business success (Imran et al., 2025). Initial observations indicate that most youth still have low self-confidence when speaking in public or presenting business ideas. This condition hinders their ability to build professional networks, which are crucial for entrepreneurial success. Strong social skills help youth promote products, maintain customer relationships, and collaborate with business partners. Intensive training programs are needed to foster professional communication patterns and business relationship-building skills. Soft skills training components will improve youth mental readiness to face market competition. Strengthening creative, innovative, adaptive, and resilient characters is crucial for fostering an entrepreneurial mindset. Developing a creative youth profile will significantly contribute to community economic independence (Nawawi, 2023; Tam et al., 2021).

The "Creative Youth Against Unemployment" PKM program is designed as a solution to strengthen social and entrepreneurial capacity through community-based empowerment. This approach provides a space for youth to learn through real-world practices relevant to regional economic needs. Community-based training enables collaborative knowledge transfer, mutual support, and maximizes the creative potential of each member. Program activities focus on providing social skills training, business mentoring, and small business incubation opportunities. Mentoring is directed at creating market-

oriented products or services with market value. The concept of digital literacy empowerment is also part of the program, enabling youth to utilize technology for marketing and business networking. The program provides a structured learning experience that combines theory, practice, and performance evaluation. Community involvement allows for continued mentoring after the training is completed. This program is projected to create productive youth capable of creating new job opportunities.

The success of youth empowerment through this program depends heavily on synergy between regional stakeholders. Collaboration with local governments, educational institutions, MSMEs, and local communities can strengthen the implementation of entrepreneurship training. Partnership networks provide opportunities for market access, business mentoring, and sustainable product development. Youth will gain firsthand empirical experience from successful entrepreneurs in their respective fields. The collaborative approach also opens up the possibility of micro-capital support for young people starting businesses. Strengthening the business ecosystem is crucial to ensure youth entrepreneurial activities continue after the training ends. Utilizing local resources can create production cost efficiencies and strengthen product competitiveness (Agbenyegah, 2022). Strategic partnerships will enhance the long-term sustainability of the empowerment program. The integration of all these elements increases the opportunity for youth to become drivers of the regional economy.

This program is expected to have a positive multiplier effect on the regional economic development of Bone Regency. Increasing the number of young entrepreneurs will encourage the creation of new jobs and a more dynamic creative economy. Creativity-based economic growth contributes to increased community income while reducing dependence on the formal employment sector. Shifting the mindset of young people from job seekers to job creators will strengthen regional competitiveness. Local entrepreneurial activity also has the potential to encourage the emergence of unique Bone products with economic value. The digital marketing training component allows local products to reach a wider market. Community-based youth empowerment strengthens social solidarity and fosters collective economic cooperation. This dynamic has the potential to create a sustainable culture of creativity and innovation. This transformation is a crucial foundation for regional economic independence.

The successful implementation of the "Creative Youth Anti-Unemployment" Community Service Program (PKM) is expected to become a model of empowerment that can be replicated in other regions. This program emphasizes a paradigm shift in youth development from being objects of development to being subjects driving the economy. The training provided targets a balance of technical and non-technical skills improvement so that youth can adapt to developments in the digital era. The program's output is not only individual skill improvement but also the formation of a productive, independent community ecosystem. Sustainable post-program development will ensure that pioneered businesses can survive and thrive. Collaborative commitment among stakeholders is a driving force for the program's long-term success. Consistent empowerment will increase youth confidence in implementing business ideas. Competitive, creative youth will make strategic contributions to the economic and social development of Bone Regency. This effort aligns with the goal of creating a productive, innovative, and independent generation in a sustainable manner.

2. Method

This study uses a descriptive qualitative approach to gain an in-depth understanding of the process of strengthening community-based social and entrepreneurial skills among youth in Bone Regency, South Sulawesi. Thirty research subjects were recruited, consisting of 22 youth participants in the "Creative Youth Against Unemployment" PKM program, three youth community leaders or managers, three facilitators of entrepreneurship and soft skills training, and two supporting partners from MSMEs and local government representatives. They were selected through purposive sampling because they were deemed to have the most relevant information on the youth empowerment phenomenon. Data collection was conducted through Focus Group Discussions (FGDs), in-depth interviews, and field observations. The FGDs involved 22 youth program participants, each lasting 90–120 minutes, to explore learning experiences, obstacles, and the impact of the training on

entrepreneurial readiness, including communication, teamwork, and the application of practical skills. In-depth interviews were conducted with three community leaders, three facilitators, and two supporting partners, lasting 45–60 minutes each, to explore the effectiveness of the training, participants' continued needs, and the role of the community in supporting business sustainability. Field observations during the activity (3–4 hours per session) focused on social interactions, participant participation, skill application, and adaptation to community-based learning models and local values. This combination of techniques ensured comprehensive and accountable data. Research instruments included FGD guides, interview guides, observation sheets, field notes, and visual documentation to strengthen data accuracy (Moleong & Surjaman, 2014). Data analysis used the Miles-Huberman model through a process of data reduction, thematic data presentation, and drawing conclusions based on identified patterns of findings. Data validity was strengthened through source triangulation, technical triangulation, time triangulation, and member checking with informants to ensure interpretations aligned with field reality. All stages of the research were directed at producing a comprehensive picture of the effectiveness of the implementation of the PKM "Creative Youth Against Unemployment" program in realizing youth economic independence through community-based empowerment.

3. Result

1. The Effectiveness of the Community as a Vessel for Strengthening Youth Social Skills

Participants' more proactive and communicative behavior was evident through increased initiative in group discussions, active participation in completing assignments, and the ability to express ideas openly. The dynamics of social interactions among community members fostered a supportive learning environment, enabling the exchange of experiences, collaborative learning, and the systematic development of interpersonal skills (Anfas et al. 2024). This process aligns with Bandura's social learning theory, which emphasizes the role of observation, modeling, and interaction in shaping individual behavior and skills. Active participation in group activities enhanced problem-solving, negotiation, and collective decision-making skills relevant to the entrepreneurial context. Participants' involvement in community projects provided real-world experiences that strengthened their sense of responsibility, leadership, and adaptability to changing situations. Structured activities and repeated mentoring strengthened the internalization of values of cooperation, empathy, and effective communication. These findings support the view that communities serve as effective non-formal educational platforms for developing youth's soft skills. A conducive community environment provides an essential foundation for developing resilient, creative, and proactive character traits necessary to address social and economic challenges.

Youth communities in Bone Regency play a significant role as social learning spaces that support the development of communication, leadership, and teamwork skills. Intense interactions between members during training foster collaboration, shared decision-making, and a sense of responsibility. Focus group discussions (FGDs) revealed that participants felt more confident in expressing ideas and actively participating in group discussions. In-depth interviews with community leaders emphasized the importance of mentors as facilitators in stimulating positive interactions, providing feedback, and guiding problem-solving strategies. Structured group activities allow participants to learn through direct experience, strengthening negotiation and collective decision-making skills (Assidiqi & Sadiyah, 2025). Participants' more proactive and communicative behavior is evident through increased initiative in discussions, active participation in completing assignments, and the ability to express ideas openly. The dynamics of social interactions between members create a supportive learning environment, enabling the exchange of experiences, collaborative learning, and the systematic development of interpersonal skills. This community environment serves as an important foundation for developing adaptive, creative, and resilient youth soft skills.

Community activities provided practical experiences that allowed participants to intensively hone their interpersonal skills. Participants reported improved ability to express opinions, listen to other perspectives, and collaborate with group members. Facilitators emphasized the importance of

collaborative project simulations for developing leadership competencies and conflict management skills. Repeated mentoring fostered a sense of individual and collective responsibility for group assignments. Focus group discussions (FGDs) demonstrated increased tolerance, empathy, and the ability to build professional relationships among community members. The social interactions that occurred during the training served as a vehicle for developing communicative and adaptive youth character. Active participation in collaborative activities reduced participants' social anxiety when facing new situations. These structured activities also fostered the ability to build social networks that support career development and independent entrepreneurship.

Participation in community activities strengthens youth motivation to actively participate in group projects. Participants reported a sense of ownership in the program and felt valued for their contributions. Interviews with facilitators indicated that active participant involvement contributed to the achievement of group goals. Group activities encouraged participants to increase initiative in solving practical problems and fostered creativity in formulating solutions. Social learning taught participants to manage conflict, build consensus, and work collectively. These activities fostered tolerance, discipline, and responsibility for group outcomes. Group discussions generated more innovative creative ideas than individual learning. These findings confirm that communities are an effective medium for strengthening youth's soft skills (Dhalia et al., 2024).

In-depth interviews revealed that mentors played a strategic role in guiding participants. The facilitators' guidance and feedback fostered the development of communication, leadership, and collaborative skills. Participants became increasingly able to manage internal conflicts with a collective approach and develop creative problem-solving strategies. Participants reported increased confidence when presenting ideas to a group. The dynamic interactions between members encouraged collaboration, innovation, and more effective decision-making. Community activities strengthened the social competencies needed to face entrepreneurial challenges. Focus group discussions (FGDs) noted an increase in the ability to build professional relationships among community members. The community environment became a means of cultivating proactive, empathetic, and cooperative attitudes.

Participants' involvement in community activities also influenced their ability to adapt to changing situations. Participants were able to adjust to the changing dynamics of group projects and devise alternative strategies when faced with obstacles. Facilitators emphasized the importance of flexibility in decision-making and teamwork. In-depth interviews confirmed that adaptation skills were enhanced through simulations of real-life activities that require high levels of coordination. Group activities fostered the ability to prioritize, manage time, and complete tasks effectively. Participants learned to resolve conflict, maintain open communication, and foster productive collaboration. These adaptation skills are crucial in shaping the character of resilient youth who are ready to face social and economic challenges (Setyawan, 2025). A responsive community environment facilitates the continuous development of interpersonal skills.

Observations and interviews revealed significant differences between participants who were active and those less involved in the community. Active participants tended to be more confident, communicative, and innovative in completing group assignments. Sustained community activities fostered productive social interaction habits and fostered leadership development. Consistent mentoring reinforced soft skill mastery through repeated and ongoing discussions. Focus group discussions (FGDs) confirmed improvements in interpersonal skills with increased participation. Active participants also took more initiative in leading projects and motivating other members. These activities fostered a sense of responsibility and teamwork. These findings confirm that the community is an effective vehicle for honing youth's social skills.

The final analysis showed that the formation of a structured community is a crucial strategy for developing youth social skills. Actively engaged participants demonstrated improved communication, leadership, and teamwork. Facilitators played a significant role in guiding the interaction process and ensuring the achievement of social competencies. Active participation in group projects provided practical experience that fostered soft skills. Positive behavior and sustained improvements in social

interactions were observed in participants who consistently engaged. The results of focus group discussions (FGDs) and in-depth interviews supported the finding that communities effectively foster interpersonal skills. Collaborative activities provided a realistic and applicable means of social learning. Youth who were active in the community were more prepared to face entrepreneurial challenges and build social networks that supported economic independence (Ramadhani & Nur, 2025).

2. Entrepreneurial Capacity Building through Practice-Based Training and Mentoring

The entrepreneurship training provided by the PKM program provides hands-on experience in designing and managing small businesses, enabling participants to learn through real-world practice and reflection. Participants are able to develop simple business plans and present product concepts professionally, demonstrating strategic planning and effective communication skills. Facilitators provide practical guidance on financial management, marketing strategies, and product development relevant to the principles of entrepreneurship education. In-depth interviews revealed an increased understanding of market opportunities, business risks, and competitor analysis among participants. Focus group discussions (FGDs) confirmed that real-world practice strengthens the internalization of business concepts compared to theoretical learning alone. Intensive mentoring encourages participants to be more confident in making business decisions, in line with Kolb's experiential learning theory, which emphasizes experience-based learning. Business incubation activities allow participants to experience the entire production and sales process, enhancing adaptability and problem-solving skills (Genadi et al., 2025). Results indicate improved skills in managing and achieving economic independence for their businesses.

Entrepreneurship training provides participants with the opportunity to develop creativity and product innovation tailored to local market needs. Participants improve their ability to design high-value products while implementing differentiation and branding strategies relevant to the dynamics of business competition. The application of market analysis and competitive advantage evaluation strengthens understanding of product positioning and consumer segmentation (Setyanto et al. 2025). In-depth interviews revealed participants' awareness of the importance of long-term business planning, including risk management, profit projections, and resource allocation. Collective decision-making in group projects enhances problem-solving and team coordination skills. Practice-based activities emphasize digital marketing mechanisms, product distribution, and service innovation, in line with Kolb's experiential learning principles. These activities foster an adaptive, creative, and innovative entrepreneurial mindset. Participants demonstrate a readiness to implement business ideas in a concrete and sustainable manner.

Ongoing mentoring was a key factor in enhancing participants' entrepreneurial capacity. Participants were able to resolve technical and managerial issues that arose during business management, demonstrating improved operational and management competencies. Feedback and reflection on the activities encouraged regular evaluation of business performance and data-driven decision-making. In-depth interviews demonstrated participants' ability to utilize local resources for production efficiency and cost control. Promotion strategies, market network development, and team coordination focused on strengthening participants' practical competencies. The activities also strengthened time management, mental resilience, and the ability to navigate operational obstacles. Participation in the training broadened their understanding of realistic business risks and opportunities. These findings are consistent with entrepreneurship literature that emphasizes the importance of hands-on practice and mentoring in developing the capacity of budding entrepreneurs (Ardli & Luayyin, 2024).

Practice-based training has been proven to improve participants' digital marketing skills, particularly in utilizing online platforms for product promotion and consumer interaction. During the training, participants learned to design creative content and develop digital branding strategies that emphasize the importance of business image and communication consistency, in line with digital marketing theory that emphasizes the integration of brand identity and customer experience. This process also deepened participants' understanding of the relationship between branding, digital

communication, and consumer perception of products. Collaboration among community members is a crucial tool for improving the effectiveness of digital marketing and sales strategies, in line with the principle of social learning, which emphasizes collective interaction in the transfer of competencies. Practical activities allow participants to learn from both successes and failures, thus continuously developing analytical, adaptable, and innovative skills, consistent with the literature on entrepreneurship education that emphasizes experiential learning. This approach encourages participants' creativity in developing new products and adapting to dynamic market trends, enabling them to respond quickly to changes in the business environment. The digital competencies acquired serve as a key asset for business sustainability in the digital economy era, supporting literature that emphasizes the importance of digital literacy for the development of young entrepreneurs (Syahvinka et al., 2025). As a result, participants demonstrated greater readiness to face market competition with structured, applicable strategies based on practical understanding.

Active participation in collective venture projects developed participants' team management skills, including division of tasks based on expertise, coordination among members, and effective communication. Analysis of interviews and focus group discussions (FGDs) showed that participants were able to resolve internal conflicts constructively while enhancing individual responsibility within the group. The collaborative process encouraged the development of group decision-making strategies and leadership that adapted to project dynamics. Team performance evaluation and project leadership initiatives were integral to the development of participants' managerial capacity, in line with Bandura's social learning theory, which emphasizes learning through social interaction and direct experience (Aziz & Shohib, 2024). Group activities fostered collaborative creativity in addressing production and marketing challenges, while strengthening situational analysis and critical decision-making skills. As the training progressed, participants' team management skills improved significantly, demonstrating that repeated practical experience has a positive impact on the development of managerial soft skills. The acquired competencies serve as key assets for managing an independent business that is effective, sustainable, and adaptable to market changes. These findings reinforce the entrepreneurship literature that emphasizes the importance of teamwork and collaborative experiences as practical learning tools.

Participants' readiness to face business challenges increased, as reflected in their ability to identify new business opportunities and demonstrate greater individual initiative. Innovative strategies were implemented in product development and market expansion, demonstrating participants' adaptability to competitive dynamics (Michael & Chris, 2022). Continuous evaluation improved operational efficiency and marketing strategy effectiveness, in line with the principles of continuous improvement in business management. Concepts of innovation, risk analysis, and mitigation were applied to daily business management, enabling participants to learn to balance opportunities and threats realistically. Practical activities fostered a proactive attitude, a sense of responsibility, and a strong entrepreneurial mindset, core competencies for young entrepreneurs. This process strengthened data-driven evaluation and decision-making skills, supporting sustainable business management. Findings confirmed that practical experience provided a deeper understanding than theory alone. Participants demonstrated a high level of readiness to start a real, independent business, while also being able to respond quickly to market dynamics.

Program evaluation demonstrated significant improvements in participants' overall business planning and management skills. Participants were able to prepare simple financial reports, develop sales strategies, and conduct regular performance monitoring, in accordance with integrated business management principles. A continuous evaluation process was a key focus to ensure effective business management while supporting the development of operational analysis skills. Participants' understanding of risk mitigation and resource management strengthened through hands-on practice. Practical experience facilitated understanding of business theory and the application of real-world strategies, enabling participants to connect academic concepts with practical applications. Social networking and community support strengthened business sustainability, reflecting the importance of social capital for entrepreneurial success. These activities fostered a resilient, creative, and adaptive entrepreneurial mindset, consistent with entrepreneurship education literature that emphasizes the

relationship between competencies, attitudes, and practices. The final results demonstrated participants' readiness to start and manage their own businesses, while minimizing the risk of initial failure.

The final analysis confirmed the effectiveness of practice-based training and mentoring in enhancing youth entrepreneurial capacity. Participants were able to design innovative products, manage businesses, and implement digital marketing strategies in an integrated manner. Intensive mentoring proved to be a key factor in the transformation of youth from job seekers to job creators, in line with human capital theory, which emphasizes competency development through practical experience. Collaborative activities strengthened team management, communication, and business strategy skills, while fostering more mature problem-solving skills. Active participation created an in-depth learning experience, enhancing analytical, evaluation, and decision-making skills based on real-world situations. These findings are consistent with entrepreneurship education literature that emphasizes practice and mentoring as key components of young entrepreneur development. Practice-based training also improved digital marketing skills, product planning, branding strategy, and team management capabilities through collective projects. Continuous evaluation and reflection activities encouraged participants to realistically understand business risks and opportunities, fostering a resilient, creative, and proactive entrepreneurial mindset. The final analysis confirmed that the integration of practice, mentoring, and local cultural values played a crucial role in the transformation of participants from job seekers to job creators, enhancing economic capacity, business management, and entrepreneurial readiness in a sustainable manner.

3. Contribution of the PKM Program to Reducing the Risk of Unemployment and Youth Economic Independence

The "Creative Youth Anti-Unemployment" Community Service Program (PKM) has been proven to improve participants' economic readiness through synergy between social and entrepreneurial skills training. Focus group discussions (FGDs) revealed increased optimism among participants in starting their own businesses, consistent with human capital theory findings that improving socioeconomic competencies can encourage active economic participation. Field observations noted increased participant involvement in creative economic activities such as culinary production, crafts, and digital marketing, demonstrating the implementation of the knowledge gained in the training. In-depth interviews revealed a shift in mindset, from those focused on job search to those focused on creating business opportunities, in line with the principles of an entrepreneurial mindset. Intensive mentoring helped participants identify market opportunities and systematically manage business risks, in line with the experiential learning model. Community-based activities enhanced social networks and support among members, supporting social capital theory, which emphasizes the importance of networks for entrepreneurial success. These results demonstrate a significant improvement in participants' ability to apply social and entrepreneurial skills. The PKM program provides a foundation for the sustainable development of youth economic independence through an integrative approach (Kesumadewi & Aprilyani, 2024).

Participation in creative economy activities fosters practical experience relevant to market needs, in line with the concept of learning by doing, which emphasizes learning through hands-on practice. Analysis of the activities demonstrated that participants were able to design, produce, and market products adaptively according to local market conditions, reflecting a contextual understanding of entrepreneurial principles. In-depth discussions with participants revealed their awareness of the importance of flexibility to fluctuating demand, while emphasizing adaptive decision-making skills. Interpersonal and leadership skills improved through group interactions, significantly contributing to business success. Community-based mentoring strengthened coordination among members, creating a collaborative and supportive entrepreneurial ecosystem. These activities also fostered a resilient and creative entrepreneurial mindset, in line with the literature on entrepreneurship psychology. Evaluation results showed that participants became more economically independent, confirming the effectiveness

of integrating hands-on practice with social networks. These findings emphasize that authentic engagement in productive activities prepares participants to face the challenges of a dynamic economy.

Community involvement is a crucial factor in supporting the sustainability of youth businesses, in line with the concept of participatory development, which emphasizes collaboration with local stakeholders (Halid et al., 2023). Community support in the form of networking access, mentoring, and material assistance has been shown to facilitate production processes and marketing strategies. Participants can leverage social networks to effectively expand market share and increase product visibility. Collaborative activities also enhance social responsibility and solidarity, supporting the theory of social embeddedness, which links economic success to social integration (Aisyah et al., 2024). Continuous mentoring strengthens managerial capabilities while helping participants overcome production and distribution barriers. Collective activities encourage joint innovation and new product development, enhancing business competitiveness. Data analysis confirms that community integration with training not only increases program effectiveness but also strengthens social networks that support business sustainability. These results emphasize the strategic role of community involvement in building youth economic independence through social synergy and entrepreneurial practices.

The program evaluation demonstrated a significant improvement in participants' readiness to enter the business world independently. Participants were able to develop a well-thought-out business plan and marketing strategy tailored to market conditions, reflecting a realistic understanding of entrepreneurial management principles. This change in mindset was evident in their ability to anticipate risks and manage finances more systematically, in line with literature emphasizing the importance of financial literacy for the development of start-up businesses. Readiness to face production and distribution challenges increased, evidenced by greater confidence in navigating operational obstacles. Group interactions enabled participants to share experiences and solutions, strengthening collaborative capacity that supports innovation. Practical activities fostered creativity and problem-solving skills that are adaptive to market dynamics. Increased awareness of economic opportunities that can be exploited independently confirmed the role of real-world practice in reducing the risk of unemployment. These results highlight the importance of integrating practical experience and project-based learning strategies in building economic independence.

The PKM program also encourages the optimization of local resources as a strategy for developing creative businesses, in line with the concept of sustainable entrepreneurship. The use of local raw materials not only reduces production costs but also increases the product's relevance to local market preferences. Collaboration among members in the production process strengthens productivity and innovation, in line with the principle of a resource-based view that emphasizes the importance of managing local assets for long-term competitiveness. Participants were able to design efficient and creative products despite facing resource constraints, demonstrating a crucial adaptive capacity in social entrepreneurship. This activity fosters strategic thinking that considers efficiency, quality, and product added value, supporting the ongoing sustainability of the business. The integration of practice with the optimization of local resources creates a solid foundation for the development of creative youth businesses. Results indicate that this strategy not only increases competitiveness but also fosters innovative and independent entrepreneurial attitudes. These findings emphasize the importance of a local resource-based approach to strengthening economic independence.

Active participation in training and mentoring enhances participants' mental and technical readiness to face entrepreneurial challenges. Participants demonstrate enhanced strategic decision-making skills, identify new business opportunities, and develop effective marketing plans. This process fosters a proactive, resilient, and creative mindset, key characteristics of successful entrepreneurs according to entrepreneurship psychology literature. Collaboration within groups supports the formation of social networks that strengthen coordination and problem-solving. Real-world experiences accelerate the internalization of entrepreneurial skills and build participants' confidence in taking calculated risks. These activities enhance their ability to adapt to changing market demands and local economic dynamics. The final results confirm participants' increased readiness to start independent

businesses. The PKM program has been shown to contribute to strengthening entrepreneurial capacity and reducing the risk of unemployment among youth.

The final evaluation demonstrated the program's positive impact on participants' overall economic behavior. Creativity, innovation, and productivity increased, demonstrating participants' ability to synergistically apply social and technical skills in business management. The transformation of mindsets from job seekers to job creators was evident through active participation in creative economy activities. Community support strengthened social networks, facilitated knowledge exchange, and provided additional resources to support business sustainability. The integrative approach of training, practice, and community support resulted in participants' readiness to face increased market competition. The hands-on, hands-on activities fostered a consistent sense of responsibility and economic independence. These findings confirm that community-based strategies and hands-on practice are effective in building youth entrepreneurial capacity. The PKM program provides a relevant model for unemployment reduction and sustainable economic empowerment.

The overall analysis shows that the integration of skills training, practical experience, and community support creates economically independent and adaptive youth. Participants are able to apply social and entrepreneurial skills in productive activities, demonstrating increased managerial, communication, and innovation capacity. The collaborative approach strengthens participants' mental and technical readiness to face business challenges. This activity fosters resilience, creativity, and proactivity, which are essential for maintaining business sustainability. The ability to capitalize on local economic opportunities demonstrates the effectiveness of community-based strategies and hands-on practice. The final results confirm participants' readiness to start independent businesses and maintain business productivity. This PKM model has proven effective as a strategy for reducing unemployment and empowering youth. The findings highlight the importance of synergy between training, practice, and community social networks in building sustainable economic independence.

4. Conclusion

The conclusion of this study indicates that the "Creative Youth Against Unemployment" Community Service Program (PKM) is effective in improving the social skills and entrepreneurial capacity of youth in Bone Regency, South Sulawesi. Active participation in the community strengthens participants' communication, leadership, teamwork, and adaptability skills. Group project-based activities and intensive mentoring foster proactive, creative, and resilient character development. Practice-based entrepreneurship training enhances participants' ability to design products, manage finances, and market their businesses effectively. Continuous mentoring strengthens participants' readiness to face risks and market opportunities. The integration of the community and training allows participants to implement social and entrepreneurial skills in real-world settings. Collaborative activities facilitate realistic learning experiences and enhance creativity and innovation. The results show that participants are able to identify new business opportunities and optimally utilize local resources. The PKM program fosters an independent, job-creating entrepreneurial mindset. Community support and social networks strengthen the sustainability of the businesses initiated by participants. Participants' economic preparedness increases, significantly reducing the risk of unemployment. These findings confirm that community-based youth empowerment is an effective strategy for building sustainable economic independence.

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