



# Designing a Learner-Centered Entrepreneurship Curriculum to Empower MSMEs in Cirebon through Institutional and Ecosystem Alignment

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## ABSTRACT

This study aims to design a learner-centered curriculum that supports the empowerment of micro, small, and medium enterprises in Cirebon. It responds to the need for academic programs that connect more closely with real challenges faced by MSMEs in the region. Using a qualitative method, the research explores both external and internal conditions, including the ecosystem environment, institutional readiness, and stakeholder roles. Several analysis tools are used such as PESTLE, the Entrepreneurship Ecosystem Model, Service Quality Model, Value Proposition Canvas, and stakeholder mapping. The study also involves interviews with local MSMEs and the head of the Cirebon MSME department. From these insights, a flexible and collaborative curriculum framework is proposed. It puts students at the center of the learning process while ensuring direct involvement with MSMEs and community actors. The curriculum is designed to be practical, responsive, and aligned with national education standards, aiming to build strong collaboration between SBM ITB and the Cirebon ecosystem.

## INTRODUCTION

Indonesia has continued to show strong economic performance even during global uncertainty. In 2024, the country's GDP grew by 5.03 percent, with Java being the largest contributor to the national economy. West Java plays a major role in this growth, supported by trade, manufacturing, and digital industries. Among the cities in West Java, Cirebon holds a strategic position as a gateway connecting the western and eastern regions of Java. Its economic development is driven by the growth of micro, small, and medium enterprises. MSMEs in Cirebon have contributed significantly to the local economy and continue to expand with support from public programs like the Business Development Service.

However, many MSMEs still face difficulties such as limited access to capital, complicated regulations, and a lack of support systems. These challenges show the need for a stronger

entrepreneurial ecosystem. One effective way to support this is by improving entrepreneurship education. Unlike traditional education that focuses on theories, entrepreneurship education teaches students how to think creatively, take risks, and solve real-world problems. Through this kind of education, students can become job creators and contributors to local economic growth.

To reach its full potential, Cirebon needs support from various sectors. Collaboration between the government, businesses, academic institutions, and communities is important to build a supportive ecosystem for entrepreneurs. SBM ITB, as an academic institution focused on entrepreneurship, has an important role in this mission. With the recent opening of SBM ITB's Entrepreneurship Program at the Cirebon campus, there is now a greater opportunity to make real contributions to the development of local MSMEs.

This study explores how a learner-centered curriculum can be designed to help empower MSMEs in Cirebon. It focuses on creating a learning model that connects academic knowledge with local needs. The curriculum will be built on insights from ecosystem analysis, stakeholder roles, and the readiness of SBM ITB to support such initiatives. By designing a curriculum that is practical, collaborative, and grounded in the realities of the Cirebon economy, this research hopes to support long-term development and meaningful impact for both students and local businesses.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

This study is supported by eight main frameworks that help explain how education can strengthen the growth of MSMEs in Cirebon. These frameworks are Entrepreneurship Education, the Entrepreneurship Ecosystem Model, the PESTLE framework, the Service Quality Model, the Value Proposition Canvas, Social Network Analysis, the Quadruple Helix Model, and the Learner-Centered Education approach.

Entrepreneurship Education serves as the foundation of this study. It focuses on building entrepreneurial thinking and behavior through learning. This includes developing skills such as creativity, problem solving, and the ability to take initiative. Unlike conventional education, entrepreneurship education prepares students to create value and contribute to their community through action.

The Entrepreneurship Ecosystem Model by Isenberg and the PESTLE framework are used in this study to examine the external environment that influences the growth of MSMEs. The Entrepreneurship Ecosystem Model explains how MSMEs develop within their surroundings by highlighting six key elements which are policy, finance, culture, support, human capital, and markets. These elements work together and shape whether the ecosystem supports or holds back entrepreneurship. To further explore the challenges that MSMEs face from outside forces, the PESTLE framework is applied. This tool analyzes political, economic, social, technological, legal, and environmental conditions. By using both models, the study is able to understand the full picture of external factors that need to be addressed through educational programs that support MSME empowerment.

The Service Quality Model and the Value Proposition Canvas are used in this study to understand the internal readiness of SBM ITB in supporting MSME empowerment through education. The Service Quality Model or SERVQUAL is applied to assess the quality of academic services by looking at five key dimensions which are reliability, responsiveness, assurance, empathy, and physical facilities. These aspects help measure whether the institution is able to meet student's expectations and support their learning journey effectively. Meanwhile, the Value Proposition Canvas is used to explore how well the curriculum aligns with students' actual learning needs. It helps compare what the institution provides with what students truly experience and expect from their education. Together, these tools offer insights into how prepared SBM ITB is internally to design and deliver a relevant and impactful program that connects with the real needs of students and the MSME sector.

Social Network Analysis is used to understand the strength of stakeholder connections and collaborations. This analysis shows how different actors in the Cirebon entrepreneurship ecosystem are linked and how they influence each other. It helps identify gaps and opportunities for stronger cooperation. The Quadruple Helix Model explains how four main actors which are the government, academia, business, and community work together to support innovation. Their collaboration is essential to create a system that empowers MSMEs and supports sustainable development.

Finally, the Learner-Centered Education approach is used as the basis for curriculum design. This approach places students at the center of learning and encourages active participation, critical reflection, and real-world engagement. Through this model, students are not only learning but also contributing directly to solving problems faced by MSMEs. Together, these eight frameworks build a strong foundation for creating a curriculum that is practical, inclusive, and connected to the real needs of MSMEs in Cirebon.

## **METHODS**

This study uses a qualitative approach to explore how stakeholder collaboration and ecosystem conditions can support the development of a learner-centered curriculum for MSMEs in Cirebon. The methods used are:

### **Data Collection**

This study uses a qualitative method to explore how a learner-centered curriculum can support MSME empowerment in Cirebon. The main source of data comes from interviews with selected participants who are directly involved in the local entrepreneurship ecosystem. These participants include MSME actors and the head of the local MSME development department in Cirebon. The selection of informants is based on their relevance and experience in the field so that the data gathered is rich and meaningful.

The interviews are conducted using semi-structured questions. This means that while there is a guide for the discussion, the questions are flexible and allow participants to share their views freely. This approach helps the researcher understand the deeper insights and real conditions experienced by MSMEs and supporting institutions. The interview questions are designed based on the theories and frameworks explained in the literature review. Each question is linked to one or more concepts such as the entrepreneurship ecosystem, external environment, service quality, or stakeholder roles.

In addition to interviews, the study also uses supporting documents and secondary data to complement the primary findings. These include local government reports, policy documents, and academic references that describe the context of MSMEs in Cirebon. By combining direct interviews with supporting materials, the study ensures that the information collected is complete, relevant, and reliable.

### **Data Analysis**

After collecting the data, this study uses a qualitative analysis approach to understand and organize the findings. The analysis begins by reviewing all interview transcripts and notes. Each response is read carefully to find important themes, patterns, and insights that relate to the research focus. These insights are then grouped based on the frameworks used in the study such as the entrepreneurship ecosystem, PESTLE, service quality, and stakeholder collaboration.

To make sure the analysis is accurate and trustworthy, the researcher uses triangulation. This means comparing the interview results with secondary data and official documents to confirm the consistency of the findings. This process also includes reflecting on the responses through several review sessions to make sure the interpretation matches the actual context of MSMEs in Cirebon.

The results are then organized based on two main areas. The first is external conditions, which focus on the ecosystem environment and external challenges faced by MSMEs. The second is internal readiness, which looks at how well the academic institution is prepared to deliver a relevant and effective curriculum. From this analysis, the study identifies key problems, needs, and opportunities that become the foundation for designing the proposed solution.

## RESULTS

The findings of this study are grouped into two key areas: the external ecosystem analysis and the internal institutional readiness. The external analysis, guided by the PESTLE framework and the Entrepreneurship Ecosystem Model, shows that MSMEs in Cirebon face many real challenges. These include limited access to capital, weak market linkages, low adoption of technology, and lack of structured support from formal institutions. Although there are various programs available, many MSMEs still feel they are working in silos without strong connection to academia or government support. This highlights the need for a more coordinated approach that includes education as a tool for empowerment.

The internal analysis uses the Service Quality Model and the Value Proposition Canvas to assess the capacity of SBM ITB to respond to these issues. The study finds that while the institution has strong academic infrastructure, digital platforms, and a culture of entrepreneurship, there are still gaps in aligning the curriculum with the actual needs of MSMEs. For instance, practical exposure is not yet embedded as a formal part of academic delivery and most student engagement with MSMEs happens through extracurricular activities. These findings support the need for a new curriculum approach that is more grounded, experiential, and co-created with local stakeholders.

As a result, a learner-centered curriculum is proposed to address both the internal and external challenges. This curriculum consists of six flexible modules designed to help students connect with the realities of MSMEs through applied and reflective learning which can be seen in table below.

**Table 1 Structure of the Proposed Curriculum**

Module Theme	Learning Outcomes Addressed	Delivery Method	Expected Competency
Understanding Local Business Context	Demonstrate understanding of local challenges and communicate across disciplines	Field visits, stakeholder interviews, mapping	Ability to analyze MSME context and external conditions
Personal Learning Blueprint	Manage learning independently and set reflective goals	Mentor sessions, peer-sharing, goal-setting	Ability to define personal learning goals aligned with real needs
Collaborative MSME Lab	Work collaboratively, apply knowledge, and communicate effectively	Co-design with MSMEs, immersion projects	Collaboration, communication, and empathy

Solution Design Studio	Solve problems through innovation and real-world application	Prototyping, design-thinking, problem-solving	Practical innovation and contextual problem-solving
Feedback and Iteration Lab	Reflect on learning, improve based on feedback, and think critically	Feedback cycles with peers and stakeholders	Adaptive learning and reflective improvement
Community Reflection Forum	Contribute ethically to society and demonstrate social responsibility	Presentations, reflection journals, ecosystem forums	Ecosystem contribution and critical thinking

This curriculum is intentionally designed to move beyond the traditional lecture-centered approach. It places greater emphasis on student agency, meaningful community connection, and continuous reflection. Students are encouraged to take responsibility for their learning journey while receiving support from mentors, peers, and ecosystem actors. The structure of the curriculum remains flexible and responsive, grounded in the actual needs of the Cirebon region.

By combining academic structure with community relevance, the curriculum supports both student growth and MSME empowerment. It serves as a bridge between education and development, ensuring that learning creates real impact.

## DISCUSSION

The results of this study show that MSMEs in Cirebon face many external challenges such as limited access to capital, weak digital literacy, and a lack of strong collaboration among ecosystem actors. At the same time, the internal review of SBM ITB shows that the institution has the potential to support local development, but its current learning model still needs improvement to meet the needs of MSMEs. These findings highlight the importance of designing a curriculum that connects classroom learning with real conditions in the field.

The use of the Entrepreneurship Ecosystem Model and the PESTLE framework helps uncover the complex environment where MSMEs operate. These tools make it clear that students need to understand more than just business theory. They must also learn about social, political, and economic realities that affect local entrepreneurs. At the same time, the internal assessment using the Service Quality Model and the Value Proposition Canvas shows that students want more practical experiences that allow them to engage directly with the problems faced by MSMEs.

The proposed learner-centered curriculum addresses both sets of findings. It gives students the chance to work closely with MSMEs, design real solutions, and reflect on their learning. This approach is not only more relevant to the local context, but it also helps students grow key skills such as problem solving, collaboration, and critical thinking. Through fieldwork, mentoring, and community-based projects, students become active contributors to the development of MSMEs.

This curriculum also creates space for stronger collaboration between ecosystem actors. By involving government, business, community, and academia in the learning process, the model strengthens local partnerships and opens new opportunities for innovation. It reflects the spirit of the Quadruple Helix Model where all sectors work together to support entrepreneurship.

Overall, the study shows that education can be a powerful tool to support MSME empowerment if it is built with real collaboration, clear purpose, and a strong connection to the community. A curriculum that is responsive and reflective can help shape students not only as future entrepreneurs but also as problem solvers for their region.

## CONCLUSION

This study explores how a learner-centered curriculum can help empower MSMEs in Cirebon by connecting academic learning with real needs in the field. The research finds that MSMEs face several external challenges such as limited funding, low digital skills, and weak collaboration with key institutions. At the same time, SBM ITB has strong academic potential but still needs to provide more practical experiences that allow students to engage directly with MSMEs.

To respond to these challenges, the study proposes a flexible and reflective curriculum made up of six modules. Each module is designed to help students explore real problems, work with business owners, and grow their skills through active learning. This curriculum supports student development while also bringing value to the local economy. It shows that education can create real impact when it is built with community connection, collaboration, and a focus on solving real-world problems.

## SUGGESTION

For future researchers, there are several directions to continue this study. One important step is to evaluate how the proposed curriculum performs after it is implemented. This includes looking at how it affects student learning outcomes and how it contributes to the development of msme in Cirebon. By observing the long-term impact, researchers can better understand whether the curriculum brings real value to both students and local businesses.

It is also suggested to compare similar curriculum models in other regions to find which approaches work best in different local ecosystems. Such comparison will help identify key factors that influence the success of entrepreneurship education in specific areas. Lastly, future research can explore how digital tools might help expand the reach of the curriculum and support stronger collaboration between students and msme, especially across different location.

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