



UNLOCKING COMMUNITY POTENTIAL: DEVELOPING ENTREPRENEURSHIP INCUBATORS THROUGH ISLAMIC MENTORSHIP

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ABSTRACT

Integrated assistance within Community Vocational Training Centers (BLK-Komunitas), referred to as BLKK programs aimed at fostering entrepreneurial incubators plays a vital role in producing competent and highly competitive entrepreneurs. Such comprehensive mentoring, involving collaboration across various stakeholders—academics, practitioners, and the industrial sector—offers participants essential access to resources, including mentorship, business networks, and funding opportunities. This research adopts a qualitative approach. The findings reveal: 1) BLKK Region III at UIN Prof. K.H. Saifuddin Zuhri Purwokerto serves as an educational and training institution dedicated to empowering communities by enhancing entrepreneurial skills and knowledge; 2) The implementation of the Integrated Mentoring Model within BLKK Region III is aimed at developing a supportive entrepreneurial ecosystem through a holistic approach, encompassing technical, managerial, and marketing skills training. This model integrates various mentoring elements, such as guidance from experienced practitioners, project-based learning, and access to business networks, enabling participants to acquire firsthand insights from industry best practices. 3) Several significant challenges persist, including a shortage of qualified human resources, insufficient infrastructure, and limited access to business capital. Additionally, inadequate support from the private sector and government, coupled with the rapid evolution of market dynamics, further complicate the challenges that need to be addressed.

Keywords: Integrated assistance; community vocational training centers; entrepreneurship incubator

ABSTRAK

Pendampingan terintegrasi di BLK-Komunitas menuju inkubator kewirausahaan sangatlah penting untuk menciptakan wirausahawan yang kompeten dan berdaya saing tinggi. Pendampingan terintegrasi yang melibatkan kolaborasi antara berbagai pihak, seperti akademisi, praktisi, dan sektor industri, dapat memberikan akses kepada peserta terhadap sumber daya yang diperlukan, termasuk mentor, jaringan bisnis, dan peluang pendanaan. Metode dalam penelitian ini yaitu: kualitatif. Hasil dari penelitian ini yaitu: 1) BLK-Komunitas Wilayah III UIN Prof. K.H. Saifuddin Zubri Purwokerto adalah lembaga pendidikan dan pelatihan yang bertujuan untuk memberdayakan masyarakat melalui peningkatan keterampilan dan pengetahuan kewirausahaan; 2) Implementasi Model Pendampingan Terintegrasi di BLK-Komunitas Wilayah III UIN Prof. K.H. Saifuddin Zubri Purwokerto bertujuan untuk menciptakan ekosistem yang mendukung pengembangan wirausaha melalui pendekatan holistik yang mencakup pelatihan keterampilan teknis, manajerial, dan pemasaran. Model ini menggabungkan berbagai elemen pendampingan, seperti mentoring oleh praktisi berpengalaman, pelatihan berbasis proyek, dan akses ke jaringan bisnis, sehingga peserta dapat belajar langsung dari praktik terbaik di industri. 3) Keterbatasan sumber daya manusia yang berkompeten, infrastruktur yang tidak memadai, serta minimnya akses ke modal usaha menjadi beberapa kendala utama. Selain itu, kurangnya dukungan dari sektor swasta dan pemerintah serta perubahan cepat dalam dinamika pasar juga menambah kompleksitas tantangan yang harus dihadapi.

Kata Kunci: Pendampingan terintegrasi; BLK-komunitas; inkubator kewirausahaan



INTRODUCTION

The integrated mentorship model that combines Community Vocational Training Centers (BLK-Komunitas), referred to as BLKK, with entrepreneurship incubators aims to establish an Islamic-based entrepreneurial ecosystem. This model promotes economic independence by fostering businesses that prioritize sustainability and ethical practices aligned with Islamic principles, emphasizing honesty, social responsibility, and fair business ethics.

BLKK serves as a vital platform for technical and managerial training, while the community fosters a collaborative environment for business development. This synergy equips young entrepreneurs with essential skills and knowledge to address business challenges. The mentorship process emphasizes character building and soft skills development, aligning with the values of Islamic entrepreneurship.

Business success within this model is measured by societal and environmental contributions, not just financial gains. In Islam, ideal businesses create jobs, empower communities, and maintain environmental balance. Entrepreneurs nurtured through this model are expected to uphold the principles of barakah (blessing) and social accountability.

The incubation process integrates moral and spiritual values, avoiding practices like usury (riba) and promoting trust (amanah) and fairness. The program covers Islamic financial management, risk mitigation, and ethical business strategies for sustainable growth. This holistic approach aims to produce entrepreneurs who contribute to the ummah's economic development and community empowerment while spreading Islamic values.

BLKK plays a key role in local economic growth (Fauzi, 2023). While it provides valuable training, graduates often struggle to convert skills into sustainable businesses (Sofyan & Ismawati, 2024). Therefore, transitioning from BLKK training to entrepreneurship incubation strengthens community-level entrepreneurial ecosystems. Incubators offer technical support, managerial guidance, market access, and funding resources critical for new entrepreneurs (Asmirelda et al., 2020). Through mentorship, BLKK graduates gain the resources to establish and grow businesses while reducing risks associated with limited experience (Rukmana et al., 2023). Training covers business planning, financial management, and marketing strategies (Mujib et al., 2022), essential for participants who lack formal business education (Latif et al., 2024).

Mentorship programs also facilitate broader network access through mentors, investors, and business communities (Siregar et al., 2019). This expanded network fosters collaboration and investment opportunities that would be difficult to achieve independently (Mustofa et al., 2024). Thus, the BLKK-incubator model enhances graduates' capacities to build sustainable businesses and expand market reach.

The incubation process has three stages: pre-incubation, incubation, and post-incubation. During pre-incubation, participants develop business ideas, design models, and conduct market research (Siregar et al., 2019). This foundation is critical for vocational graduates. The incubation stage involves running businesses under mentor guidance, with BLKK acting as a facilitator connecting participants to incubators that offer operational and marketing assistance. Post-incubation focuses on scaling businesses, enhancing production capacity,

and accessing investors (Harini et al., 2023). This support helps businesses transition from small-scale to broader market operations.

Digital skills training is essential to increase competitiveness in the digital era (Zulkarnain & Andini, 2020). BLKK must offer training in digital marketing, e-commerce, and data management to meet evolving market demands (Sukmana et al., 2023). Addressing funding challenges, incubators guide entrepreneurs in accessing financial resources like microloans, government-backed credit schemes (KUR), and private investments (Husain et al., 2022). Participants receive assistance in drafting business proposals to attract funding (Ardiansyah et al., 2019). Additionally, incubators provide legal and regulatory guidance, ensuring businesses operate legally and sustainably.

Lili Basmala et al. (2019) highlight several strategies for incubator development using a SWOT approach: fostering academia-business-government partnerships to ensure market acceptance; utilizing CSR-driven programs for funding and infrastructure; reinforcing human resources and policies to support development; and upgrading facilities to address weaknesses. Virgiawan (2023) outlines four key aspects of university-based incubators: recruitment, incubation processes, supervision, and impact evaluation. These models strengthen entrepreneurial ecosystems.

In Central Java (Jateng) and the Special Region of Yogyakarta (DIY), transitioning BLKK into entrepreneurship incubators boosts local economies. These regions have significant potential in creative, handicraft, and tourism sectors, yet vocational graduates need managerial guidance to achieve independence (Rizaldi, Waharini, & Yuliani,

2022). Mentorship provides training, market access, and funding while reinforcing essential entrepreneurial skills.

Rayhannisa and Pambudi (2024) emphasize the strong entrepreneurial traditions in Jateng and DIY. Incubator-supported enterprises help vocational graduates develop businesses rooted in local traditions while utilizing digital technologies like e-commerce and digital marketing (Budiman, 2021). Incubators also promote local entrepreneur collaboration, strengthen networks, and build strategic partnerships (Fauzi, 2023).

Vocational graduates often face funding barriers despite having production skills. Incubators guide them in exploring financing options, such as microloans and government programs like KUR, to expand business opportunities (Rizaldi, Waharini, & Yuliani, 2022). Support includes sustainable business plan preparation, market risk assessment, and strategic development.

The facilitation of entrepreneurship incubators in Jateng and DIY enhances local competitiveness. Incubators train participants in innovative product development, service quality, and operational efficiency for global market competition. By transforming BLKK graduates into entrepreneurs, these programs reduce unemployment and contribute to social welfare (Sari, Farida, & Hetika, 2019).

Jateng and DIY have great potential in the creative economy, particularly in cultural products. Incubators refine these products, adding value and marketing them to modern markets. UIN Prof. K.H. Saifuddin Zuhri Purwokerto plays a strategic role in supporting BLKK by providing academic research and programs relevant to local needs.

The university's involvement includes technical training, business consulting, and mentorship. Faculty and students from the Faculty of Islamic Economics and Business assist BLKK participants in business model design, marketing strategy formulation, and financial management based on Islamic principles. This collaboration strengthens participants' capacity to develop sustainable, ethical enterprises. UIN bridges academia and business by expanding networks with local entrepreneurs, regional governments, and incubation institutions. Through research and discussions, the university reinforces the local entrepreneurial ecosystem and promotes regional economic contributions.

In summary, transforming BLKK into entrepreneurship incubators in Jateng and DIY is a strategic initiative for building an inclusive and sustainable entrepreneurial ecosystem. Collaboration among government, academia, and the private sector.

RESEARCH METHODS

This qualitative research explores the experiences, challenges, and needs of participants in Community Vocational Training Centers (BLK-Komunitas), hereinafter referred to as BLKK, mentoring programs in Central Java and Yogyakarta to foster entrepreneurial transformation. In-depth interviews with participants, mentors, and BLKK administrators revealed key aspects of the mentoring process, including motivations, barriers, and personal and social impacts.

Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) complemented the interviews by uncovering shared perceptions, group dynamics, and challenges in business development. These discussions highlighted social interactions,

peer support, and collective learning that shape participants' entrepreneurial journeys.

Field notes, training reports, and case studies of successful participants provided additional insights into the mentoring process. Document analysis shed light on the delivery of entrepreneurship materials, incubator support, and practical skill applications in participants' businesses.

This study offers practical recommendations for enhancing future community-based BLKK mentoring programs, emphasizing the importance of tailored support, effective knowledge transfer, and fostering sustainable entrepreneurial ecosystems.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Overview of the Community Vocational Training Center (BLK-Komunitas) Region III at UIN Prof. K.H. Saifuddin Zuhri Purwokerto

The Community Vocational Training Center (BLK-Komunitas) Region III at UIN Prof. K.H. Saifuddin Zuhri Purwokerto plays a strategic role in empowering local communities in Purwokerto and surrounding areas. This initiative supports government efforts to enhance employability through community-based training programs tailored to local socio-economic needs. The focus is on providing vocational training in information technology, entrepreneurship, and other practical skills to boost regional economic resilience.

BLKK Region III data shows that multiple centers are spread across Central Java and the Special Region of Yogyakarta (DIY). These centers, affiliated with educational institutions and Islamic boarding schools (pesantren), predominantly serve communities linked to religious organizations such as Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) and various pesantren foundations. Their

integration with pesantren ensures that the training programs are culturally and religiously relevant, increasing participation and impact in local communities.

Table 1.

Incubator Institutions/BLKK under Region III at UIN Prof. K.H. Saifuddin Zuhri Purwokerto

No	Vocational Training Center
1	BLKK at Tahfidz Al-Fakhri Islamic Boarding School (Ponpes)
2	BLKK Miftahul Hikmah
3	BLKK under the leadership of Fatayat NU Purbalingga Branch Council (PC)
4	BLKK managed by the Regional Board (PW) of Fatayat NU in the Special Region of Yogyakarta (DIY)
5	BLKK at An-Nahar Foundation, Darul Hikmah Islamic Boarding School
6	BLKK under Fatayat NU Brebes Branch Council (PC)
7	BLKK Bumi Pertiwi Bantarbolang, previously known as Nailul Ulum
8	BLKK established by the NU Subdistrict Representative Council (Majelis Wakil Cabang NU) in Pulosari
9	BLKK Miftahus Sa'adah
10	BLKK at TPI Al Hidayah
11	BLKK managed by the Ansor Youth Movement (GP Ansor) Branch Council in Batang Regency
12	BLKK under the management of Gondang Foundation
13	BLKK at YMI Wonopringgo Pekalongan Islamic Boarding School (PP Pelajar)
14	BLKK under Muslimat NU Pekalongan City Branch Council (PC)
15	BLKK at Yanaabii'ul Qur'an Child Protection and Education Center (PTPA)
16	BLKK Hidayatul Muftadi'in in Bulusari
17	BLKK under Darussalam Islamic Education Foundation (YPP) in Boyolali
18	BLKK at Al-Ma'mur Islamic Boarding School (Ponpes)
19	BLKK under the Nahdlatul Ulama Sleman Branch Council (PC NU Sleman)

20	BLKK Amumarta
21	BLKK under LP Ma'arif NU Cepre, Klaten
22	BLKK Al Musthofa
23	BLKK Anwarus Sholihin
24	BLKK under Muslimat NU Rembang
25	BLKK at Salafiyah At-Taufiq Foundation
26	BLKK under Hasan Kafrawi Islamic Foundation
27	BLKK at NU Subdistrict Representative Council (MWC NU) in Karimun Jawa
28	BLKK at Karang Santri Islamic Boarding School (Ponpes)
29	BLKK at Al-Hidayah Islamic Boarding School in Temanggung
30	BLKK under Daarussalaam Foundation, Sempon
31	BLKK Kampoeng Indonesia Peduli
32	BLKK Al-Fithrah in Semarang City

The Community Vocational Training Center (BLK-Komunitas) of Region III at UIN Prof. K.H. Saifuddin Zuhri Purwokerto has formed strategic partnerships with pesantren (Islamic boarding schools), foundations, and religious organizations such as Nahdlatul Ulama, Fatayat NU, and GP Ansor across Cilacap, Purbalingga, Pemalang, Brebes, and Sleman. This collaboration aims to drive community-based economic development, enhance individual capacities, and create a competitive workforce at both local and national levels.

BLKK focuses on delivering practical, market-driven skills that align with the needs of local enterprises in the Banyumas region and surrounding areas. In addition to technical training, participants receive entrepreneurial guidance to promote economic independence. This dual focus equips them to meet job market demands while also fostering self-reliance.

As part of a socially committed university, BLKK integrates moral values and work ethics into its training programs.

Participants are encouraged to develop strong character and social responsibility, ensuring they contribute positively to their professions or entrepreneurial endeavors. The training emphasizes honesty, integrity, and accountability, in line with Islamic principles.

The program employs a community-based approach by engaging local stakeholders in planning and management, ensuring relevance to local needs. It adopts an inclusive framework that welcomes diverse participants, including youth, women, and individuals with limited access to formal education. This inclusivity helps broaden the program's impact, fostering community empowerment and reducing unemployment through skills development and entrepreneurship.

The Implementation of an Integrated Mentoring Model by the BLK-Community of Region III at UIN Prof. K.H. Saifuddin Zuhri Purwokerto Toward an Islamic Perspective of Entrepreneurship Incubation

The Integrated Mentorship Model developed by BLK-Komunitas Region III at UIN Prof. K.H. Saifuddin Zuhri Purwokerto focuses on enhancing both technical and entrepreneurial skills through a comprehensive approach encompassing training, mentorship, and access to business resources. This program aims to equip participants with practical skills and relevant business knowledge to succeed in the entrepreneurial ecosystem.

The mentorship process begins with a community needs assessment through surveys in Purwokerto and its surrounding areas. Based on these findings, BLKK curates tailored training programs aligned with industry demands, covering areas such as information technology, handicrafts, creative

industries, and other vocational skills. The hands-on training ensures participants gain practical competencies applicable in real-world settings.

Entrepreneurial development forms the core of the mentorship model through a structured incubation program. Participants interested in entrepreneurship are guided through business planning, product development, and marketing strategies (Gunadi, 2018). Mentors provide personalized advice on financial and human resource management, as well as marketing strategies (Hasan, 2018), enabling participants to navigate business challenges effectively.

Marketing training is crucial in this model, especially in the digital era. BLKK delivers both conventional and digital marketing training, emphasizing brand building, target market identification, and the use of online platforms such as social media and e-commerce (Jesika, Lengkong, & Irvan, 2018). These competencies help participants promote their products effectively in a competitive marketplace.

Access to financial capital is another integral component. BLKK collaborates with financial institutions and empowerment programs to facilitate funding through microloans, grants, or other capital schemes. Financial literacy training is also provided to ensure sustainable business management.

The mentorship model emphasizes not only technical skills but also character building and work ethics. Participants are encouraged to cultivate integrity, a strong work ethic, and social responsibility in their business practices, contributing positively to their communities.

The community-based approach strengthens this model by involving local communities throughout the training process

to ensure relevance to regional potential. Business networks are reinforced through collaborations with local governments, business actors, and entrepreneurship support institutions, opening access to business opportunities and strategic partnerships.

Practical insights are provided through case studies and field visits to successful local businesses in Purwokerto. Periodic evaluations and monitoring ensure business sustainability and address participants' challenges with timely solutions.

Digital technology enhances the mentorship process by providing an online platform for training modules, consultations, and real-time evaluations. This integration allows flexible and efficient mentorship, ensuring participants have continuous access to resources regardless of location.

The mentorship model aims to establish a sustainable entrepreneurial ecosystem in the Purwokerto region. It provides comprehensive support, from technical skill development to intensive entrepreneurial mentoring, focusing on long-term business sustainability and local economic contributions.

In the initial phase, the program delivers foundational skills training tailored to local potential, such as IT, handicrafts, and creative industries. After training, high-potential participants are selected for incubation based on creativity, motivation, and commitment. These participants receive intensive guidance in product development, marketing strategies, and business management.

During incubation, mentors from UIN Prof. K.H. Saifuddin Zuhri provide ongoing assistance. They help participants formulate business plans, conduct market research, and assess opportunities. Participants also gain

access to support facilities such as co-working spaces, creative labs, and production equipment to foster innovation.

Marketing receives particular attention, with training in both conventional and digital strategies. Participants learn brand building, target market identification, and leveraging e-commerce platforms to expand market reach. Digital integration enables participants to compete at national and international levels (Budiman, 2021).

BLKK also facilitates access to capital through partnerships with financial institutions, providing training in financial management, grants, and microloans (Henggu et al., 2023). This support ensures participants can secure sustainable funding.

A key feature is personalized mentoring. Each participant is paired with a mentor who provides tailored guidance on business development (Noor, 2011). This individualized approach increases focus and commitment, helping participants implement their business plans effectively.

The mentorship program strengthens business networks by collaborating with local entrepreneurs, governments, and non-profits. These networks provide market access through exhibitions, regional incubation programs, and partnerships with established businesses.

Post-incubation, participants undergo periodic evaluations to ensure business growth. Successful participants share experiences with new cohorts, fostering a continuous learning cycle that promotes sustainability.

This model aims to create a robust entrepreneurial ecosystem in Purwokerto and beyond. BLKK serves as a catalyst, producing entrepreneurs with technical expertise and managerial skills who

contribute positively to the local economy. UIN Prof. K.H. Saifuddin Zuhri seeks to position this program as a national model, enhancing quality through ongoing research and development.

The collaboration between BLKK, UIN Prof. K.H. Saifuddin Zuhri, and various stakeholders aims to produce competent entrepreneurs who improve community welfare. The program integrates technical skills with Islamic moral values to ensure socially responsible entrepreneurship.

Participants are motivated by the opportunity to develop entrepreneurial skills grounded in Islamic principles. Training integrates technical and ethical aspects, ensuring ventures are both profit-oriented and socially beneficial. Participants from BLKK PC Fatayat NU Purbalingga highlight the importance of community support in building solid business networks.

The personalized mentoring provides tailored support, helping participants develop realistic business plans and overcome challenges (BLKK PP Pelajar YMI Wonopringgo Pekalongan). Access to funding is also a strong motivator. BLKK Pimpinan Cabang GP Ansor Kabupaten Batang emphasizes financial access through partnerships with private companies via CSR programs.

Participants appreciate the program's focus on character development and Islamic values such as *amanah* (trust), honesty, and responsibility. These values are essential assets in building sustainable businesses. The program emphasizes ethical decisions based on *barakah* (blessing) and *maslahah* (communal benefit).

The incubation program provides resources like workspaces, technology, and professional networks, helping participants optimize their business potential and

establish impactful ventures. The Integrated Mentoring Model combines technical training with Islamic values, fostering entrepreneurs with integrity and social responsibility.

The core values in this model include honesty, fairness, social responsibility, simplicity, and vigilance against *riba* (usury). Honesty builds trust with customers and partners by ensuring transparency in pricing and product quality (Andriani & Wahyudi, 2024). Justice ensures fair treatment of employees and customers, fostering a sustainable business ecosystem (Srisusilawati, Ibrahim, & Ganjar, 2019).

Social responsibility is emphasized by encouraging businesses to create job opportunities and support social programs. This holistic approach ensures businesses balance profit with ethical obligations.

Simplicity in business practices avoids excessive consumption and promotes efficient operations, strengthening customer trust and loyalty. Participants are taught to value integrity over luxury in their business dealings.

The model also warns against usury, promoting a fair Islamic financial system. Participants learn to manage finances without interest-bearing debt, ensuring ethical business operations aligned with Islamic principles.

Spiritual values shape entrepreneurs to uphold integrity and prioritize public welfare. Sincerity (*ikhlas*) in business fosters social benefits and brings blessings, as emphasized by Al-Ghazali (2004). Respecting others' rights in business dealings prevents conflicts and strengthens trust (Ismail, 2017).

The program integrates prayer and reliance on Allah in business decision-making. Entrepreneurs are encouraged to

initiate ventures with good intentions and seek divine blessings, promoting resilience and accountability (Nasution, 2019).

This mentorship model cultivates entrepreneurs who achieve both economic success and contribute to social welfare. By combining technical skills with Islamic ethics, the program fosters principled entrepreneurs who positively impact society (Hanafi, 2020).

Challenges and Barriers Faced by the Community Vocational Training Center (BLK-Komunitas) at Region III of UIN Prof. K.H. Saifuddin Zuhri Purwokerto

The BLKK (Community Vocational Training Center) in Region III under UIN Prof. K.H. Saifuddin Zuhri Purwokerto aims to become a leading entrepreneurship incubator. However, various internal and external challenges hinder its optimal performance. One of the primary issues is the limited availability of competent human resources in entrepreneurship and industry, which directly impacts the quality of training and mentorship provided. Additionally, inadequate infrastructure—such as insufficient training spaces, outdated equipment, and limited internet access—further reduces the effectiveness of incubation programs.

A significant challenge also lies in participants' limited access to financial capital. Despite receiving training, many participants face difficulties securing funding due to stringent financial institution requirements and limited knowledge of alternative financing options. The absence of comprehensive government policies supporting entrepreneurship incubation further hampers the development of BLKK. Existing policies do not yet create a conducive environment for fostering new

entrepreneurs, necessitating policy improvements to address this gap.

Collaboration with the private sector remains another hurdle. Partnerships with industries are essential for providing participants with job opportunities, mentorship, and business networks. Unfortunately, the low involvement of private sector players deprives participants of valuable resources to expand their entrepreneurial networks. Addressing this challenge requires building stronger collaborations with industries to support participants' business ventures.

Market dynamics are continuously evolving, driven by technological advancements and globalization (Rohman, 2020). BLKK must regularly update its curriculum and training methods to align with industry needs. Failure to adapt may result in participants being ill-prepared for market challenges (Susanto, 2019). Thus, it is crucial to incorporate industry-relevant skills and knowledge into training programs to enhance participants' competitiveness.

Another issue is the low societal awareness of entrepreneurship's importance. In some communities, entrepreneurship is seen as a last resort rather than a viable career option (Wardhani & Arief, 2021). This misconception reduces motivation to participate in training programs. BLKK must promote entrepreneurship as a strategic pillar of economic development to change this perception and increase community engagement.

Participants' diverse backgrounds and characteristics require adaptive mentoring models. However, BLKK often struggles to tailor its training to meet varying needs, reducing the effectiveness of its programs (Hidayat, 2022). Additionally, many participants resist change, remaining

entrenched in traditional mindsets. Addressing this requires fostering openness to innovation through supplementary support and awareness programs (Fauzi, 2021).

A significant barrier is the absence of a robust impact evaluation system. Without accurate evaluation mechanisms, it is difficult to measure the success of programs and identify areas for improvement (Prasetyo, 2020). Comprehensive evaluations are necessary to develop more effective, data-driven strategies that improve program outcomes.

Digital marketing skills are increasingly essential in today's business landscape. However, many BLKK participants lack knowledge in this area, limiting their ability to reach broader markets (Raharjo & Suryadi, 2020). Providing comprehensive digital marketing training can enhance participants' competitiveness and improve their business performance.

Access to relevant information is another critical issue. Participants often struggle to stay informed about industry trends and business opportunities, which are essential for strategic decision-making (Putra, 2019). BLKK must provide access to up-to-date information through seminars, workshops, and online resources to help participants enhance their ventures effectively.

The limited duration of training sessions poses another challenge. The comprehensive nature of training materials is often disproportionate to the time allocated, reducing participants' comprehension and hindering practical application (Santoso, 2021). Efficient time management and focused training approaches are needed to maximize learning outcomes.

The lack of a well-established alumni network is another issue. Successful alumni can serve as mentors for new participants, yet existing networks remain underutilized (Handayani, 2020). Strengthening alumni networks can foster mentorship, knowledge sharing, and ongoing support for new entrepreneurs.

Administrative challenges, including complex bureaucratic procedures, impede program development. Budget uncertainties and funding constraints further complicate the situation, affecting long-term sustainability (Setiawan, 2020). Streamlining administrative processes and implementing sound financial planning are essential to ensure continuity and stability.

Local community involvement is crucial for program success. Active participation from the surrounding community enhances program relevance and sustainability (Wijaya, 2021). Community engagement fosters a sense of ownership, contributing to the long-term impact of initiatives.

Lastly, program sustainability requires long-term strategies to ensure lasting impact. Without comprehensive planning, the benefits of incubation programs may diminish over time (Fauzan, 2019). BLKK must prioritize sustainable practices to produce resilient entrepreneurs capable of sustaining their businesses in the long term.

Strengthening the Role of Community-Based Vocational Training Centers (BLK-Komunitas) as Entrepreneurial Incubators: Strategic Recommendations for Sustainable Business Development

In enhancing the role of Community-Based Vocational Training Centers (BLK-Komunitas), hereinafter referred to as BLKK, as entrepreneurial incubators, a series of strategic steps must be taken to guide participants toward sustainable businesses.

These steps focus on improving technical skills and creating a supportive ecosystem that fosters innovation, market access, and collaboration with stakeholders. Below are ten key recommendations to strengthen the BLKK initiative.

Firstly, mapping participants' potential is essential. This process involves identifying their skills, interests, and aspirations to develop targeted interventions. Understanding participants' profiles ensures entrepreneurial programs align with their strengths and market needs (Fauzi, 2023).

Secondly, integrated entrepreneurship training is crucial. This training should cover both technical skills and essential business management areas such as marketing, financial planning, and human resources. A structured approach will equip participants with a holistic understanding of running a business (Sofyan & Ismawati, 2024).

Thirdly, mentorship from experienced entrepreneurs is pivotal. Mentors provide practical insights and help participants navigate challenges. They also assist in building business networks, which are essential for long-term sustainability (Rukmana et al., 2023).

Fourthly, product development and innovation must be emphasized. Participants should be encouraged to create competitive products by adding value and meeting market demands. Continuous innovation will help them stay relevant in both local and international markets (Asmirelda et al., 2020).

Fifthly, expanding market access is critical. Participants should learn effective marketing strategies using both offline and online channels. Incubators can facilitate product promotion through exhibitions and online marketplaces, increasing participants' reach (Mujib et al., 2022).

Sixthly, access to financing must be prioritized. BLKK should connect participants with financial institutions and government programs. Financial literacy training, including cash flow management and budgeting, is essential to ensure sustainable financial practices (Husain et al., 2022).

Seventhly, establishing cooperatives or joint ventures can strengthen participants' market positions. Cooperatives help reduce costs through collective purchasing and increase competitiveness. This collaborative approach fosters mutual support and resilience (Siregar et al., 2019).

Eighthly, introducing technology-based incubation is vital. Digital tools such as e-commerce platforms, digital marketing, and fintech solutions can improve business efficiency. Participants should be trained to leverage these tools effectively (Zulkarnain & Andini, 2020).

Ninthly, collaboration with the private sector and industry partners should be strengthened. These partnerships provide participants with broader market access, strategic insights, and potential employment opportunities. Industry engagement ensures alignment with market trends (Rayhannisa & Pambudi, 2024).

Lastly, ensuring the sustainability of entrepreneurial programs is key. Long-term strategies should include alumni networks, continuous financing access, and partnerships with government and private sectors. These measures will help participants adapt to changing market conditions and contribute to local economic development (Harini et al., 2023).

To recapitulate, strengthening BLKK as entrepreneurial incubators requires a systematic and comprehensive approach. By implementing these ten recommendations,

BLKK can foster an entrepreneurial ecosystem that supports innovation, collaboration, and sustainable business growth. These interventions will enable participants to build resilient businesses, ultimately contributing to broader socio-economic development.

CONCLUSION

The BLKK Region III at UIN Prof. K.H. Saifuddin Zuhri Purwokerto plays a key role in community empowerment by enhancing skills and promoting entrepreneurial knowledge. Located in Purwokerto, it focuses on supporting micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) and addressing labor market needs through targeted training programs. The center adopts an innovation-driven, collaborative approach by involving practitioners, academics, and local communities to achieve sustainable outcomes.

The Integrated Mentorship Model implemented at BLKK aims to establish a robust entrepreneurial ecosystem through comprehensive technical, managerial, and marketing training. The model incorporates industry guidance, project-based learning, and access to business networks to improve participants' competitiveness. By optimizing local potential through partnerships with private and government sectors, the program creates new business opportunities and fosters sustainable economic growth.

Despite its impact, BLKK faces challenges such as limited human resources, inadequate infrastructure, restricted capital access, and insufficient external support. Additionally, fast-changing market dynamics and societal resistance to innovation hinder its mission. Addressing these issues requires continuous program innovation, strategic collaborations, and entrepreneurial education

to sustain the center's relevance and community impact.

Transforming BLKK into an entrepreneurial incubator focuses on developing participants' technical and managerial capabilities. Integrated training programs cover product innovation, marketing strategies, and financial access. Collaborations with industries and regular evaluations ensure participants are prepared to compete sustainably in the market. This approach highlights BLKK's commitment to producing resilient entrepreneurs capable of driving regional economic growth and adapting to evolving market demands.

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We also thank the Deputy of Information Technology and Business Incubation at the Ministry of Cooperatives and Small and Medium Enterprises for integrating digital technology into training processes and supporting business incubation models. The Ministry's role in facilitating digital transformation and entrepreneurship has been crucial in

preparing participants to compete in a dynamic economy.

We hope this synergy continues, enabling BLK-Komunitas to contribute significantly to community empowerment and the growth of an entrepreneurship-based economy at both local and national levels.

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