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The Principle of Edupreneurship in the Development of Automotive Services Business at US Car Wash in Gowa Regency in 2025

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Abstract

This study aims to analyze the application of edupreneurship principles in the development of the automotive service business at US Car Wash in Gowa Regency. Edupreneurship, as an integrative approach that combines educational values and entrepreneurial practices, is expected to encourage innovation, organizational learning, human resource development, and business sustainability. This research employed a qualitative case study design. Data were collected through in-depth interviews with the owner, operational manager, employees, and customers, participatory observation of service activities, and documentation. Data validity was ensured through source and method triangulation, while the findings were analyzed using thematic analysis to identify recurring patterns related to learning, empowerment, innovation, and sustainability. The findings indicate that US Car Wash consistently integrates edupreneurship principles by providing continuous technical and service training for employees, educating customers regarding preventive vehicle maintenance, encouraging collaborative problem solving, and implementing environmentally friendly innovations such as water-saving systems and biodegradable cleaning products. These practices improve employee competence, service quality, customer satisfaction, and business competitiveness while simultaneously creating educational and social value for the surrounding community. The study implies that integrating educational values into micro and small business management can strengthen local economic resilience and become a practical model for vocational training institutions, policymakers, and entrepreneurs seeking sustainable business development.

Keywords: Edupreneurship, Business Development, Automotive Services, Social Impact, Qualitative Case Study

Introduction

The Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) sector of automotive services in Indonesia showed rapid growth, but the majority were still stuck in conventional managerial patterns. Micro-scale business orientation generally only focuses on achieving short-term profitability and mechanical transactions alone. On the other hand, increasing consumer expectations and fierce competition require service business actors to present unique and sustainable competitive advantages. In this context, the edupreneurship approach emerged as a transformative strategy capable of transforming commercial business entities into learning and empowerment spaces.

However, there is conceptual confusion in the literature and business practice regarding limitations *edupreneurship*. Often, edupreneurship is simply equated with the concept of conventional on-the-job learning (*learning by doing*) or simply friendly customer service (*Service Excellence*). In fact, *edupreneurship* have distinctive characteristics and key values (*key values*) which is much more extensive. Edupreneurship is a hybridity between entrepreneurial orientations (*entrepreneurial mind-set*) and educational-social values (*educational and social values*) (Rohman et al., 2023). Its main characteristic lies in the pillars *value co-creation* (shared value creation with consumers), *human capital empowerment* (sustainable empowerment for the underskilled workforce), and *social impact* (education-based social impact).

Perspective social edupreneurship The measure of a business's success is not solely measured by financial profits, but by the extent to which the business is able to create educational and social impacts for its stakeholders (Balasundari & Marythangam, 2025). Like social business models such as waste banks, whose main indicators are the level of environmental awareness and the effectiveness of community waste management, edupreneurship in the automotive service sector is measured by increasing customer technical literacy and increasing the independence and work character of its employees.

The fundamental problems of US Car Wash in Gowa Regency before adopting the edupreneurship approach are the high turnover rate of employees, the low level of initial skills of local workers recruited from youth who have dropped out of school, and the fierce price competition between car wash businesses in the Gowa area. Conventional management approaches based on repressive supervision have proven to fail to build a stable quality of service. Faced with these challenges, US Car Wash transformed by integrating educational values into daily business operations. This business not only washes vehicles, but also designs its work environment as a vocational training laboratory for employees and a vehicle maintenance education center for vehicle owners.

Although studies on edupreneurship have begun to develop, most of the previous literature still focuses on formal educational institutions or entrepreneurship programs in higher education (Passavanti et al., 2023). There are still *Gap* literature on how the principle of edupreneurship is operationalized in the informal micro service sector and how this concept clearly distinguishes itself from ordinary service practices.

Therefore, the research, which will be carried out in 2025, aims to explore, dissect, and empirically prove the application of the principle of edupreneurship in the development of automotive service businesses in the US Car Wash Gowa Regency. This study specifically analyzes the typical *value-added* of edupreneurship and how the variable of edupreneurship is the main driving factor for business sustainability and community social empowerment.

Research Methods

This study explicitly uses a qualitative approach with a holistic case study type (*single holistic case study*) (Richstein, 2026). This research expressly does not use quantitative or *mixed methods* (mixed method). Methodological reasons for design rejection *mixed methods* or quantitative is to maintain a deep interpretive focus (*interpretive depth*) in capturing meaning, the process of social interaction, and the shift in values *edupreneurship* in the field naturally without the intervention of statistical control variables.

Informant sample framework (*sampling frame*) determined using the *non-probability sampling*, i.e. *purposive sampling* with the establishment of measurable inclusion criteria (*criterion sampling*) (July, 2023). The informants in this study consist of one Business Owner as the main decision-maker and idea designer *edupreneurship*, one Operational Manager as the executor of daily supervision and employee training facilitator, three Employees or Technicians (senior and junior) who have participated in the continuous vocational mentoring process for at least six months, and three Routine Customers who have washed or maintained vehicles at least three times in the last six months and received educational interactions. The determination of the total number of eight informants is based on the principle of data saturation (*data saturation*), where the data collection process is stopped when the interview no longer produces new variables or information.

This research combines two types of data sources, namely primary data and secondary data (July, 2023). Primary data were obtained directly from the first source at the research site through two methods, namely in-depth interviews (*in-depth interview*) using interview guidelines (*interview guide*) as well as digital audio recording tools to explore perception, motivation, and internalization of values *edupreneurship*, as well as passive participatory observation in which researchers observe the activity of *briefing*, job training, and the process of educational interaction with consumers using observation guidesheets and field notes (*field notes*). Meanwhile, secondary data was obtained from supporting documents such as business profiles, employee attendance or evaluation records, photos of training activities, and service SOP documents by utilizing documentation matrix and instrument cameras.

In order to ensure the validity of qualitative instruments and the degree of trust (*credibility*) data, three data validity procedures are used (Arslan, 2022). The procedure includes triangulation of sources to test the correctness of information by comparing the statements of owners, managers, employees, and customers; triangulation techniques or methods to compare interview results with field observation data and documentary evidence; and *member checking* by reconfirming interview transcripts and preliminary analysis drafts to key informants to avoid bias or misinterpretation of researchers.

Data analysis was carried out following the framework of the qualitative thematic analysis of the model Afisah et al. (2024) through three simultaneous stages. The stage begins with *data condensation* which includes selection, encoding (*Coding*), and data focusing *edupreneurship*, followed by *data display* through the presentation of data in the form of a qualitative thematic narrative, and ended with *conclusion drawing/verification* for the critical and confirmatory conclusion to be drawn.

Research and Discussion Results

1. Empirical Evidence of Added Value and Typical of Edupreneurship in the US Car Wash

Field findings at US Car Wash Gowa Regency empirically prove that the application of *the principle of edupreneurship* produces *unique value-added* which clearly distinguishes it from the conventional car wash business or just ordinary *learning by doing* practices. If in the conventional automotive service business, workers are only positioned as mechanical production instruments and customers are merely objects of economic transactions, then in US Car Wash daily business operations are transformed into a *dual learning ecosystem*. This ecosystem works simultaneously in two main streams, namely transforming the internal capacity of the workforce through informal education in the workplace, and expanding technical literacy and ecological awareness of customers through educational service interactions. The distinctive value of *edupreneurship* at the study site manifests itself manifested itself in four main pillars.

The first pillar is transformative employee *mentoring* that goes beyond the boundaries of conventional *learning by doing* concepts. In ordinary car wash businesses, *learning by doing* generally takes place randomly, instinctively, and without the direction of character development or career level improvement. In contrast, at US Car Wash, the learning process is designed in a structured manner through continuous vocational mentoring, *daily reflective briefings* before operations begin, and soft-skills formation-based evaluations. This approach is profoundly expressed by the Owner of US Car Wash through his telling:

"If you only tell people to wash their cars, all washes can be done. But here we nurture young people who have dropped out of school or have no skills. We teach discipline, manners, and basic financial literacy so that they have an independent future." (Owner Interview, March 07, 2025)

The statement confirms that *edupreneurship* in the US Car Wash performs an adaptive informal education function in the workplace. This process does not just transfer physical skills in spraying or drying vehicles, but also shapes work ethic, personal responsibility, daily discipline, and economic independence for workers, the majority of whom come from marginalized backgrounds. This is in line with the theory *experiential learning* from Pole & McGee (2025) and entrepreneurship learning ecosystem from Saha & Chattopadhyay (2025), where the commercial work environment is optimally utilized as a space for self-capacity growth.

The second pillar is consumer education and *value co-creation*. One of the main advantages that differentiates US Car Wash from similar competitors in Gowa Regency is the presence of interactive communication patterns with an educational dimension to vehicle owners. The technicians are not only in charge of physically cleaning the vehicle, but also play the role of basic technical educators. They proactively provide explanations about the technical condition of customer vehicles, such as how to maintain the elasticity of glass rubber, maintain clean air conditioning circulation, prevent corrosion in the *understeel*, and recommend the selection of cleaning agents that do not damage the base coat. The educational impact of this service pattern is felt directly by regular customers as conveyed in the following interview excerpts:

"I subscribe here not only because it is clean, but the instructions from the technician are very useful. They tell you how to take care of the glass rubber and tires so that they don't brittle quickly. So I get new knowledge every time I wash the vehicle." (Customer Interview, March 13, 2025)

This interactive service practice shows the fulfillment of the concept of *value co-creation*. The added value of automotive services is no longer one-way from service providers to consumers, but is created together through a mutually beneficial knowledge transfer process. Customers gain additional advantages in the form of self-driving vehicle maintenance literacy, while US Car Wash gains advantages in the form of strong consumer loyalty and a positive business reputation.

The third pillar emphasizes on dimensions *social edupreneurship* where a measure of business success is measured from non-economic criteria. By framework *social edupreneurship*, the performance of a business entity is not only evaluated based on the amount of sales turnover or net profit margin alone, but also from the extent to which the business activity is able to produce social and educational impacts on the surrounding environment. US Car Wash consistently takes on a social role by recruiting underprivileged youth, school dropouts, and local unemployed groups in Gowa Regency. This effort then galvanizes them through a gradual mentoring system to become a workforce that is not only technically skilled, but also ethical and future-oriented. This indicator of social success is proven in real terms in the field through a decrease in employee job satisfaction, increased confidence in communicating with customers, and the birth of the independence of employee alumni, some of whom have been able to open independent service business units in their home areas. These empirical findings further strengthen the theoretical argument that business-based *edupreneurship* can operate as an agent of social change (*agent of social transformation*) effective at the local level (Qi et al., 2025).

The fourth pillar is manifested in the form of operational innovation based on *eco-edupreneurship*. The educational values applied at US Car Wash do not stop at human capacity development alone, but are also internalized into the form of ecological *awareness* that is manifested in business operational decisions. In order to respond to the issue of water scarcity and environmental pollution due to industrial detergent waste, US Car Wash adopts water-saving cleaning plant technology with a controlled pressure spray system and replaces all cleaning chemicals with *biodegradable liquid vehicle shampoo*. This innovative step simultaneously functions as a means of environmental education for employees and customers. Through this daily practice, employees are taught to appreciate the efficiency of using natural resources, while customers are educated about the importance of choosing environmentally friendly automotive services to maintain the preservation of the groundwater ecosystem in the Gowa Regency area.

2. Discussion: *Edupreneurship* as a Sustainable Competitive Advantage

To comprehensively understand how *edupreneurship* constructs a sustained competitive advantage, it is important to sharply compare the differentiation between conventional management, ordinary *learning by doing* practices, and *edupreneurship* applied in the US Car Wash. In terms of primary focus, the conventional automotive services business is purely pursuing the achievement of short-term financial profits and operational efficiency. The

practice of *learning by doing* used to go a little further by providing partial technical skill improvement without any direction of self-development. Meanwhile, *edupreneurship* at US Car Wash integrates the achievement of profitability, the inculcation of sustainable education values, and the creation of positive social impact in a balanced and simultaneous manner.

Differentiation continues in the meaning of employee roles. In the conventional paradigm, employees are only treated as tools or physical laborers whose positions can be replaced at any time. In ordinary *learning by doing* practices, employees are seen as workers who learn independently while completing work without structured guidance. On the other hand, *edupreneurship* at US Car Wash positions employees as active vocational learners as well as future entrepreneurial candidates who continue to be fostered in their leadership capacity and independence.

From the perspective of customer relations, conventional approaches and ordinary *learning by doing* tend to trap interactions in the transactional pattern of standard service buying and selling. Meanwhile, *edupreneurship* turns these relationships into a pattern of *value co-creation* through mutually empowering educational dialogue. As a result, the measure of business success has also undergone a fundamental shift. If conventional businesses only measure success based on turnover growth and net profit margin, and *learning by doing* usually measures it from the level of neatness of the wash results alone, then the success of *edupreneurship* in the US Car Wash is measured compositely through a combination of achieving healthy profitability, increasing consumer technical literacy, and successfully empowering local human resources.

When analyzed using theoretical glasses *Resource-Based View* (RBV) developed by Cai et al. (2025), the competitive advantage built by US Car Wash is not sourced from external physical assets such as high-pressure washers or hydraulic equipment that are easy to purchase and replicate by competitors with large capital holdings. US Car Wash's long-lasting competitive advantage (*sustained competitive advantage*) is actually firmly rooted in the ownership of intangible resources (*intangible assets*) which is unique and rare. These intangible resources include the formation of an organizational learning culture (*learning culture*) conducive, the accumulation of human capital (*human capital*) ethical and skilled, as well as social capital ownership (*social capital*) in the form of trust and a positive reputation in the eyes of the public and customers. These intangible resources are built through a process of long-term social interaction so that they are very difficult to imitate by similar business actors.

Development *edupreneurship* In the U.S., Car Wash is also shaped by a transformational leadership style consistently demonstrated by business owners. The owner does not position himself as an authoritarian and repressive supervisor, but rather acts as a mentor, communicator, and facilitator of learning. The intensive mentoring process, the habit of reflective meetings before operations, and the openness of two-way communication channels succeeded in fostering a sense of belonging (*sense of belonging*) as well as a very high organizational commitment among employees (Willenberg, 2022). This high commitment has a direct impact on reducing the rate of work accidents, minimizing customer complaints, and creating service quality stability.

Conceptually, the findings of this study confirm that the integration of educational values and entrepreneurial orientation has been proven to be able to transform informal micro-scale businesses into business entities that are adaptive, resilient to market competition, and have real social use values for the economic development of local communities. The

implementation of *edupreneurship* at US Car Wash proves that the micro business sector can play an active role as an inclusive informal education center as well as a driver of a sustainable local economy.

Conclusions and Suggestions

The principle of *edupreneurship* has been proven to be applied in a real and sustainable manner in the development of the automotive service business at US Car Wash Gowa Regency in 2025. *Edupreneurship* at the study site serves as a key variable driving business success that provides distinctive added value. The value of *excellence of edupreneurship* distinguishes itself from ordinary *learning by doing* through four tangible manifestations, namely the pillar of *vocational mentoring* and employee character, the pillar of vehicle maintenance education for consumers (*value co-creation*), the pillar of social empowerment for underprivileged local youth, and the pillar of *eco-edupreneurship*). The success of this business is proven not only to be measured by economic profitability alone, but also by creating social impact and increasing public literacy.

Owners of US Car Wash Gowa Regency are advised to prepare guidelines or internal training curriculum modules based on simple picture modules (*SOP Edu-Vocational*) so that the *mentoring* process for new employees can run more structured and standard. Business owners are also advised to create physical and digital educational media, such as short brochures or *QR-Code-based content* in the waiting room regarding tips for maintaining independent vehicles, in order to strengthen the image of *edupreneurship* in the eyes of consumers. MSME actors in similar automotive services can adopt *transformational mentoring* patterns to reduce employee turnover and build service differentiation advantages that do not focus on price wars. The Regional Government and the Gowa Regency Cooperatives/MSMEs Office are expected to facilitate a partnership program between *edupreneurship*-based micro-enterprises and local vocational job training institutions (BLK) in the form of skills certification for informal workers.

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