

FOSTERING CREATIVITY AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP SKILLS IN THE CONTEXT OF MALAYSIA MADANI: PERSPECTIVES FROM ORGANIZERS ON ARTS AND CRAFTS POP-UP EVENTS WITHIN TERTIARY INSTITUTIONS

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Abstract: *This study examines the role of arts and crafts pop-up events in fostering creativity and entrepreneurship skills among tertiary students, within the framework of the Malaysia MADANI initiative. Using qualitative methods, including semi-structured interviews with students who have organized such events, the research explores how these experiences empower students to enhance their creative problem-solving abilities, develop entrepreneurial skills, and engage with diverse audiences. The study highlights the significance of creating conducive learning environments, integrating technology, and promoting inclusivity. It also underscores the importance of feedback mechanisms and reflective practices in strengthening both creative and entrepreneurial outcomes. The findings suggest that these events offer students valuable practical experience, helping them build confidence, improve social skills, and gain market exposure, all of which contribute to their professional development. Based on these insights, the research proposes recommendations for universities to further cultivate creativity and entrepreneurship through structured initiatives, regular pop-up events, and support systems, including mentorship and digital marketing training.*

Keywords: *Creativity, entrepreneurship, arts and crafts, pop-up events, Malaysia MADANI framework, tertiary education*

Introduction

The concept of Malaysia MADANI represents a transformative vision for the nation, emphasizing the importance of fostering a society that is inclusive, progressive, and sustainable. MADANI, which stands for "Masyarakat Madani" or "Civil Society," aims to cultivate a holistic approach to development that integrates economic growth with social equity and environmental sustainability. This initiative is particularly relevant in the context of enhancing creativity and entrepreneurship skills among the youth, especially within tertiary institutions. By promoting a culture of innovation and creativity, Malaysia MADANI seeks to prepare students not only to thrive in a competitive global economy but also to contribute positively to their communities and the nation at large. In this context, the organization of arts and crafts pop-up events within tertiary institutions serves as a practical application of the MADANI principles. These events provide a platform for students to engage in creative expression while simultaneously.

The Malaysia MADANI initiative, introduced by Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim in January 2023, embodies a vision aimed at fostering a civil society characterized by inclusivity, sustainability, and progress. The term "MADANI" itself is an acronym that encapsulates six core values: Sustainability, Prosperity, Innovation, Respect, Trust, and Care and Compassion. These values are intended to guide the socio-economic and political landscape of Malaysia, promoting harmonious coexistence among its diverse population while addressing contemporary challenges (Aziz, 2024; Lateh, 2024; Hashim, 2024).

The six frameworks of the Malaysia MADANI initiative can be understood as follows:

1. **Sustainability:** The sustainability framework underscores the vital role of sustainable development practices that balance economic growth with environmental preservation. It advocates for policies aimed at protecting natural resources and promoting long-term ecological health, ensuring that future generations inherit a viable and thriving planet (Lateh, 2024).
2. **Ihsan:** This framework prioritizes economic inclusivity and the equitable distribution of wealth, striving to create opportunities for all Malaysians, particularly marginalized communities, to actively participate in the economy and benefit from its growth. Central to this objective is the promotion of entrepreneurship and innovation as key drivers of economic progress (Abidin, 2024).
3. **Welfare:** At the heart of the MADANI vision is the promotion of innovation across all sectors. This framework emphasizes the significance of creative problem-solving and the adoption of emerging technologies to enhance productivity and global competitiveness. By fostering a culture of innovation, Malaysia aims to position itself as a global leader in various industries (Lateh, 2024).
4. **Respectfully:** The respect framework highlights the importance of mutual respect among Malaysia's diverse ethnic and religious communities. It advocates for social cohesion and understanding, encouraging citizens to appreciate cultural differences and collaborate towards common goals. This framework seeks to foster unity and harmony within the nation (Lateh, 2024).
5. **Confidence:** Trust is a cornerstone of the MADANI framework, essential for building strong relationships between the government and its citizens. This framework emphasizes the need for transparency, accountability, and good governance, all of which are crucial for strengthening public confidence in governmental institutions and policies (Lateh, 2024).

6. **Creativity:** The creativity framework places a significant emphasis on social welfare systems that cater to the needs of vulnerable and disadvantaged populations. It encourages a culture of empathy and community support, ensuring that all citizens have access to essential services and opportunities for personal development (Hashim, 2024).

To effectively integrate creativity within the Malaysia MADANI framework in tertiary institutions, especially through arts and crafts pop-up events, it is essential to foster empowerment, innovation, and inclusivity. Empowering students through creative problem-solving workshops stimulates entrepreneurial thinking and boosts self-efficacy, while cultivating conducive learning environments—such as interactive spaces that encourage collaboration—further fuels creativity and idea exchange. The integration of technology, including digital design and marketing tools, not only provides students with opportunities for self-expression but also equips them with the practical skills necessary for success in today's economy. By embracing diversity, pop-up events can draw on a wide range of perspectives, enriching the creative process and fostering a culture of innovation. Additionally, implementing structured feedback and assessment mechanisms, such as the Creativity Fostering Teacher Behaviour Index, ensures reflection and continuous growth. Finally, nurturing a culture of lifelong learning, where experimentation and learning from failure are actively encouraged, aligns with the MADANI framework's focus on innovation, resilience, and entrepreneurship, ultimately preparing students for success in both creative and entrepreneurial pursuits.

Arts and crafts pop-up events are temporary exhibitions or marketplaces where students and artists display and sell their handmade creations, such as crafts, artwork, and designs. Typically held in high-traffic public areas, these events facilitate direct interaction between creators and their audiences. In the context of tertiary institutions, such events are particularly valuable, offering students a hands-on platform to organize and execute creative projects. They provide an opportunity to apply artistic skills while simultaneously honing entrepreneurial abilities such as marketing, product development, and customer engagement. Furthermore, arts and crafts pop-up events align with the Malaysia MADANI framework's emphasis on fostering creativity, innovation, and inclusivity. These events serve not only as a creative outlet but also as a bridge to real-world business experience, helping students cultivate both creative and entrepreneurial capacities within an inclusive and innovative environment.

Literature Review

The integration of creativity within the Malaysia MADANI framework presents a transformative opportunity for tertiary institutions to nurture students' entrepreneurial skills through arts and crafts pop-up events. This literature review draws on existing research on creativity in education, focusing specifically on the ways in which such events foster an innovative culture among students. Creativity has increasingly been recognized as a critical driver of educational and economic development, particularly within higher education. Samaniego (2024) underscores the value of creative thinking as a dynamic skill set that can be cultivated through deliberate educational practices. Creativity's capacity to enhance problem-solving abilities across diverse fields is fundamental to its role in higher education, aligning closely with the Malaysia MADANI framework's emphasis on fostering creativity as a core value essential for national development.

The cultivation of creative problem-solving among students is central to empowering them with the entrepreneurial mindset necessary to succeed in today's complex and ever-evolving economic landscape. Hassan et al. (2021) stress the importance of establishing an

entrepreneurial culture that actively encourages students to engage in innovative behaviors. Arts and crafts pop-up events serve as effective platforms for students to experiment with their ideas, thereby refining their creative capabilities and honing the practical skills necessary to face real-world challenges. By embracing the MADANI values of innovation, sustainability, and empowerment, these events contribute to the development of a generation of students who are both entrepreneurial and adaptable.

The creation of conducive learning environments—both physical and psychological—plays a critical role in enhancing creativity. Liu (2023) explores how innovative teaching methods not only stimulate teachers' creative thinking but also profoundly influence students' capacity for creative expression. Within the context of pop-up events, organizers can design interactive and supportive spaces that facilitate collaboration, experimentation, and exchange of ideas—an approach that aligns with the MADANI framework's focus on creating environments that foster inclusivity and innovation. These settings are essential for helping students to unlock their creative potential, allowing them to engage in meaningful, collaborative work while contributing to the broader goals of national development.

Technological integration also plays an increasingly important role in enhancing creativity. The use of AI tools, such as ChatGPT, to provide personalized feedback can augment creative processes, supporting students in refining their ideas and improving their work (Liu, 2023). Incorporating technology into arts and crafts pop-up events further empowers students with the modern tools required to navigate the digital landscape and develop entrepreneurial skills. This integration of technology is aligned with the MADANI framework's emphasis on fostering innovation and preparing students for the challenges of an increasingly technology-driven world.

Moreover, the MADANI framework emphasizes inclusivity, highlighting the importance of diverse perspectives in the creative process. Research consistently shows that diverse teams are more innovative, as they bring varied experiences and viewpoints to problem-solving (Hassan et al., 2021). By encouraging students from diverse backgrounds to participate in pop-up events, organizers can create a rich exchange of ideas that enhances the overall creative output, thereby aligning with the MADANI framework's core principles. Diversity not only enriches the events but also catalyzes the development of innovative solutions that reflect the multicultural fabric of Malaysia.

The role of effective assessment and feedback mechanisms is pivotal in advancing students' creative capabilities. Tools like the Creativity Fostering Teacher Behavior Index (CFTIndex) can offer valuable insights into the learning environment's ability to support creativity (Samaniego, 2024). Implementing structured feedback sessions in pop-up events enables students to reflect on their creative processes and outcomes, fostering a growth mindset essential for both creativity and entrepreneurship. Encouraging continuous learning and iterative experimentation is crucial for developing resilience and adaptability—traits that are indispensable for entrepreneurial success (Hassan et al., 2021). By creating a safe environment for students to explore new ideas and learn from their mistakes, organizers can instill the MADANI value of innovation and encourage students to push boundaries and explore new possibilities.

Arts and crafts pop-up events in tertiary institutions provide a practical platform for students to showcase their creativity and develop essential entrepreneurial skills. These temporary events,

held in public spaces or university campuses, allow students to display and sell their handmade crafts, art pieces, and creative projects. The benefits are manifold: these events offer students a real-world context in which to apply their creative ideas, develop business acumen through marketing and sales, and engage with a broader community of peers, mentors, and potential customers. In addition, these events foster a culture of innovation, self-expression, and confidence-building, empowering students to experiment with new concepts and approaches in their work.

However, organizing arts and crafts pop-up events also presents several challenges. Limited resources, such as financial constraints and inadequate materials, may impede students' ability to bring their creative ideas to fruition. Additionally, planning and coordinating such events requires a diverse set of logistical skills, including marketing, event promotion, customer engagement, and financial management. Attracting sufficient foot traffic and ensuring a diverse audience can be difficult, especially for events that rely on community engagement. Moreover, students may face challenges in appropriately pricing their work and managing the financial aspects of the event, such as budgeting and sales tracking. Despite these challenges, arts and crafts pop-up events provide invaluable learning opportunities, allowing students to refine their entrepreneurial skills while engaging with the broader community and gaining practical experience in the creative industries.

In conclusion, arts and crafts pop-up events offer a compelling mechanism for fostering creativity and entrepreneurship among tertiary students, while simultaneously contributing to the broader objectives of the Malaysia MADANI framework. These events provide a dynamic platform for students to apply and develop their creative skills in a real-world context, enhancing their entrepreneurial capabilities and preparing them for the challenges of a rapidly changing world. However, the challenges of limited resources, event coordination, and financial management must be addressed to fully maximize the potential benefits of such initiatives. By overcoming these challenges and continuing to nurture creativity and innovation within the educational system, tertiary institutions can help cultivate a new generation of entrepreneurs who are well-equipped to drive Malaysia's future growth and development.

Research Objectives

1. To investigate how arts and crafts pop-up events at universities contribute to nurture creativity in alignment with the Malaysia MADANI.
2. To explore the challenges faced by tertiary students in organizing arts and crafts pop-up events in alignment with the goals of the Malaysia MADANI.

Research Questions

1. How do arts and crafts pop-up events at universities contribute to nurturing creativity and innovation in alignment with the Malaysia MADANI?
2. What challenges do tertiary students face when organizing arts and crafts pop-up events and in alignment with the Malaysia MADANI?

Methodology

In this qualitative study, semi-structured interviews were employed to gather in-depth insights from public university students who have experience organizing events at their institutions. The respondents, all second-year students who have successfully organized events at their respective universities, were selected to provide focused perspectives on the challenges and experiences associated with event management. The semi-structured format was chosen for its

flexibility, allowing for both structured guidance and the freedom to explore participants' personal experiences and views on event organization.

To ensure that key themes of creativity and entrepreneurship were thoroughly explored, eight carefully crafted questions were developed to encourage rich, meaningful responses. This method not only allowed for a deeper understanding of the students' motivations, challenges, and learning outcomes but also created a space for participants to share their unique narratives in a comfortable setting. The flexibility of the semi-structured approach facilitated follow-up questions, allowing the researcher to probe deeper into emerging themes and nuanced details in the participants' responses. This approach aligns with recognized qualitative research methodologies, providing a comprehensive framework for investigating complex topics like creativity in event organization. The interview questions are as follows:

Questionnaires

1. Can you describe your experience organizing arts and crafts pop-up events at your university?
2. How do you believe these events contribute to fostering creativity among participants?
3. In what ways do arts and crafts pop-up events help develop entrepreneurial skills in students?
4. Can you discuss any specific challenges you face when organizing these events and how you address them?
5. What strategies do you use to engage the community and encourage participation in arts and crafts pop-up events?
6. Can you provide examples of how these events have supported local artisans and promoted local craftsmanship?
7. How do collaborative experiences during these events enhance the learning and skill development of participants/students?
8. What support structures or resources do you believe are essential for the success of arts and crafts pop-up events in tertiary institutions?

Findings and Discussions

Table 1: Demographic findings

Demographics	Respondent A	Respondent B
Gender	Female	Male
Age	18-25	18-25
Event organizing experience	Yes	Yes
Duration of study	Semester 4	Semester 4
Types of an event	Charity event	Entrepreneurial expo
Role in the event	Event organizer	Event organizer

Based on the findings, a comprehensive framework for fostering creativity and entrepreneurship through arts and crafts pop-up events can be developed. This framework would serve as a guide for students to refine their craft, enhance their entrepreneurial skills, and actively engage with their audience. The following components of the framework outline the key stages:

Research Objective 1

To investigate how arts and crafts pop-up events at universities contribute to nurture creativity in alignment with the Malaysia MADANI.

1. Experience
2. Creative Craftsmanship and Product Development
3. Entrepreneurship Skills and Talent Development
4. Sharpening Social and Entrepreneurial Skills

The first research objective seeks to explore the multifaceted contributions of arts and crafts pop-up events in fostering creativity among tertiary students, particularly within the context of the Malaysia MADANI framework. This investigation focuses on four key areas. First, the experiential learning opportunities provided by arts and crafts pop-up events allow students to engage in hands-on activities that stimulate their creative thinking. Fan and Cai (2020) argue that a creative learning environment significantly enhances student creativity through mechanisms like goal orientation and knowledge sharing. Through participation in these events, students not only develop their creative abilities but also align with the MADANI framework's emphasis on innovation. Second, these events serve as platforms for students to develop their creative craftsmanship and product design skills. Matraeva et al. (2020) stress the importance of a comprehensive approach to creativity development in higher education. By creating unique products, students refine their artistic skills and gain insight into the complexities of product development, which are crucial for entrepreneurial success.

Third, arts and crafts pop-up events offer students opportunities to cultivate essential entrepreneurship skills such as marketing, sales, and business planning. While Suprpto's study focuses on cultural education, it highlights the significance of educational interventions that spark curiosity and nurture creativity, indirectly supporting the development of entrepreneurship skills. These events equip students with the tools needed for future entrepreneurial endeavours, aligning with the MADANI framework's focus on economic empowerment. Lastly, participation in collaborative arts and crafts events enhances students' social and entrepreneurial competencies. Zubalii (2024) emphasizes that developing active personality traits, such as independence and organization, is critical for fostering creativity. Through teamwork and interactions with peers and mentors, students not only refine their social skills but also improve their entrepreneurial abilities, contributing to a more vibrant and innovative community.

In summary, this research objective aims to provide valuable insights into how arts and crafts pop-up events at universities can nurture creativity in alignment with the Malaysia MADANI framework. By examining the experiences, craftsmanship, entrepreneurship skills, and social competencies developed through these events, the study underscores the significant role of creative initiatives in promoting an innovative and inclusive educational environment.

Research Objective 2

To explore the challenges faced by tertiary students in organizing arts and crafts pop-up events in alignment with the goals of the Malaysia MADANI.

1. Engagement with a Diverse Audience
2. Digital Marketing via Social Media Platforms
3. Introducing Products and Expanding Market Reach
4. Feedback and Reflective Evaluation

Arts and crafts pop-up events organized by tertiary students offer an excellent opportunity to nurture creativity and entrepreneurial skills in alignment with the Malaysia MADANI framework. However, students face several challenges in this process, which can be categorized into four key areas. First, engaging a diverse audience is a primary challenge. Attracting participants from various backgrounds is essential to foster a rich exchange of ideas and creativity. Yet, many students struggle to understand the preferences and interests of different demographic groups, which can hinder their outreach efforts.

According to Shi et al. (2020), fostering creativity and entrepreneurial intention requires a nuanced understanding of the target audience, a skill that students may lack due to limited experience in market research and audience engagement strategies. Second, digital marketing via social media platforms presents another obstacle. While these platforms offer vast potential for outreach, students often lack the skills to create engaging content that resonates with their audience. Effective marketing strategies are vital for event success, and students must develop digital marketing skills to effectively communicate their event's value proposition. Third, introducing products and expanding market reach can be particularly difficult for students. While students may have innovative ideas, they often lack the business acumen necessary to navigate the complexities of product launch, pricing strategies, distribution channels, and customer feedback mechanisms. Collaboration and strategic marketing are key to enhancing the visibility of their products, and students would benefit from mentorship in these areas.

Finally, feedback and reflective evaluation post-event are often neglected. Constructive feedback is essential for continuous improvement, but many students find it difficult to gather and analyze feedback effectively. This lack of reflective practice can hinder their ability to learn from their experiences and make adjustments for future events. Encouraging students to adopt reflective evaluation will enhance their creative and entrepreneurial capabilities. In summary, while arts and crafts pop-up events provide valuable opportunities for student growth, addressing these challenges through targeted support can help students overcome obstacles and maximize their creative potential.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the integration of arts and crafts pop-up events within tertiary institutions presents a valuable opportunity for fostering creativity and entrepreneurship, aligning with the Malaysia MADANI framework's emphasis on innovation, empowerment, and inclusivity. This research, based on semi-structured interviews with students who have organized such events, provides key insights into how these experiences help develop students' creative problem-solving skills, adaptability, and entrepreneurial mindset. The findings emphasize the significance of supportive learning environments, diverse perspectives, technological integration, and feedback mechanisms in cultivating a culture of creativity.

These events not only enhance students' current skill sets but also prepare them for future entrepreneurial pursuits, contributing significantly to their personal and professional growth. To further expand on these findings and capture broader trends, adopting a quantitative research approach would be valuable. Gathering a larger volume of data through surveys or structured questionnaires would allow researchers to identify patterns across diverse populations, specifically focusing on areas such as creativity development, entrepreneurial outcomes, social skills improvement, and digital marketing proficiency.

Utilizing statistical techniques, universities can discern correlations and trends that highlight the effectiveness of these events in nurturing these skills. Based on these insights, practical recommendations for universities include incorporating creativity-focused courses or workshops into the curriculum, organizing regular pop-up events to provide continuous opportunities for students to showcase their work, and offering mentorship programs to help students refine their entrepreneurial abilities. Such initiatives would support students in both their creative endeavours and entrepreneurial journeys, while reinforcing the importance of hands-on learning in preparing them for future career success.

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