

EXPLORING ENTREPRENEURIAL MINDSET DEVELOPMENT THROUGH AGRIBUSINESS TOURISM FIELD TRIPS IN LAWANG

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to increase the knowledge of STIE Indonesia Malang students about plant cultivation in honey picking tours and provide experiential learning through agribusiness tourism field trips. This entrepreneurial activity aims to bridge the gap between classroom theory and real-world practice. This study uses a qualitative descriptive approach method with a case study design, this study involved STIE Indonesia Malang students who participated in educational visits to two destinations in Lawang, East Java, specifically at Graha Wiyata Outbound Psychology and Flora Education and Honey Picking Tours. Data were collected through in-depth interviews, participant observation, focus group discussions (FGDs), and documentation analysis. The findings show that direct exposure given to several speakers to the agribusiness ecosystem has succeeded in increasing entrepreneurial awareness, creativity, resilience, and opportunity recognition abilities in STIE Indonesia Malang students. It is hoped that with this research, students can master agribusiness management and flora cultivation techniques, while in Honey Picking Tours they explore value-added product diversification and innovation in the use of local

resources. The implication of this experiential learning process is that it effectively encourages a shift in students' mindset from being job seekers to being job creators based on local potential based entrepreneurship. The study concludes that agribusiness tourism-based experiential learning can serve as an effective pedagogical strategy for strengthening entrepreneurship education in higher education by integrating practical engagement, reflective learning, and real-world business exposure.

Keywords: *Experiential Learning; Agribusiness Tourism; Entrepreneurship Education; Entrepreneurial Mindset; Educational Tourism*

INTRODUCTION

This study aims to increase the knowledge of STIE Indonesia Malang students about plant cultivation in honey picking tours and provide experiential learning through agribusiness tourism field trips. This entrepreneurial activity aims to bridge the gap between classroom theory and real-world practice. This study uses a qualitative descriptive approach method with a case study design, this study involved STIE Indonesia Malang students who participated in educational visits to two destinations in Lawang, East Java, specifically at Graha Wiyata Outbound Psychology and Flora Education and Honey Picking Tours.

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Entrepreneurship education plays a crucial role in higher education institutions as a strategic indicator for preparing graduates to face global economic uncertainty and the dynamics of a

competitive job market. Universities are now required not only to produce job seekers but also to produce graduates with adaptive entrepreneurial competencies capable of creating innovative business opportunities (Neck & Greene, 2011). Entrepreneurship education in many universities is still dominated by a traditional classroom-based approach that emphasizes theoretical mastery over practical experience. As a result, a competency gap emerges, with students only cognitively understanding business concepts but struggling and lacking confidence when faced with real-world problems such as risk management, real-world market dynamics, and recognizing real-world opportunities.

With the advent of conventional learning, experiential learning has emerged as a primary alternative to addressing emerging problems. Through direct involvement, critical reflection, and interaction with business actors, entrepreneurship education transforms into a meaningful and authentic learning process (Fayolle et al., 2008; Gibb, 2002). Referring to Kolb's (1984) theory, knowledge is built through the transformation of experiences that integrate observation, participation, and reflection. An entrepreneurial mindset cannot be simply imitated but must be developed by students through direct field experience (Krueger, 2007; Rae, 2007). One form of experiential learning that is beginning to be integrated into higher education is educational tourism, which involves field trips to the agribusiness sector. This sector offers a unique ecosystem that simultaneously exposes students to agricultural production systems,

business management, environmental sustainability, and local economic empowerment.

Although research on experiential learning in entrepreneurship is extensive, there remains a significant research gap. Most previous research has focused solely on the practice of creating business plans in the classroom or internships at large companies (Kuratko, 2005; Morris et al., 2013). Rarely has anyone examined how agribusiness tourism can serve as a direct learning platform for students, especially in Indonesia, an agricultural country. Furthermore, previous research typically only measures "entrepreneurial interest" through quantitative questionnaires. They miss the in-depth story of how students' mindsets shift from simply seeking work to wanting to create jobs after seeing the potential of their region.

This research urgently needs to connect students with local agribusiness tourism, such as Graha Wiyata, which focuses on ornamental plants and teamwork, and Lawang Honey Picking Tourism, which focuses on product innovation and sustainable business. University curricula need to begin utilizing regional potential as a source of innovation, so that students are not limited to digital or urban businesses that require significant capital. Agribusiness tourism presents real-world risks, such as crop failure or weather changes, that cannot be learned in the classroom. Furthermore, students can understand how to deal with these experiences.

RESEARCH METHOD

This research used a qualitative approach with a descriptive case study design to delve deeper into students' entrepreneurial learning experiences (Yin, 2018). The research locations were two agribusiness tourism destinations located on Jalan Indrokilo Selatan, Bedali Village, Lawang District, Malang Regency, East Java. The two locations are Graha Wiyata Outbound Psychology and Flora Education, which focuses on ornamental plant agribusiness management, and Wisata Petik Madu Lawang, which focuses on beekeeping and local

product innovation. These locations were selected based on their characteristics, which make them potential natural centers for students.

The informants in this study were selected using a purposive sampling technique to ensure the data obtained was truly rich and relevant to the objectives. The key informants consisted of 20 final-year students at the Indonesian Institute of Economics (STIE) Malang who were taking the Entrepreneurship course and participated in all field trips. In addition, this study also involved supporting informants to strengthen the data. These included two lecturers in the Entrepreneurship course who designed learning achievement indicators and supervised the experiential learning process, two assistant lecturers who helped supervise and coordinate the nature field trip, and two managers from each tourist destination who provided business materials on flora and beekeeping directly in the field.

The data collection process was conducted directly by the researchers through four complementary methods. First, semi-structured interviews were conducted face-to-face with students after the visit. Using a relaxed but focused question guide, these 30–45-minute interviews were recorded to determine how students' mindsets changed after seeing a real-life business. Second, the researchers conducted participant observation by going directly into the field to observe students' enthusiasm and interactions while practicing plant propagation techniques and harvesting honey. Third, focus group discussions (FGDs) were held with students to stimulate critical conversations about how to address agribusiness risks. Finally, supporting documents such as lesson plans (RPS), visit reports, and activity photos were collected.

After all the data was collected, the analysis process was carried out using the interactive model from Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña (2014). This analysis began with data reduction, which involved filtering and removing unimportant information from the interview transcripts. Next, the data was

presented in the form of sentence expositions or narrative text to facilitate readability. The final stage was drawing conclusions based on the patterns found. To ensure the authenticity and validity of the data, the researchers used source triangulation techniques, which involved comparing the stories of students, lecturers, and administrators, and technical triangulation, which involved matching the interview results with observation notes. The researchers also conducted member checking, which involved reconfirming the interview transcripts with informants to avoid misinterpretations.

RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Based on the thematic analysis process, the researchers identified two major themes related to entrepreneurship learning experiences during agribusiness tourism activities, namely: (1) experiential learning through agribusiness tourism activities, and (2) the development of an entrepreneurial mindset through experiential engagement.

Theme 1: Experiential Learning Through Agribusiness Tourism Activities

The findings demonstrate that agribusiness tourism activities provided meaningful experiential learning opportunities for students. Direct interaction with business practitioners and real agribusiness environments allowed students to understand entrepreneurial concepts beyond classroom-based theories (Zhang et al., 2014). At Graha Wiyata Outbound Psychology and Flora Education, students learned various ornamental plant cultivation and propagation techniques, including grafting and air layering. Students were actively involved in observing and practicing plant propagation, and their progress was periodically monitored to assess plant growth and plant maintenance.

One participant explained:

"During the field trip, I realized that entrepreneurship is not only about selling products, but

also about creating experiences and educational value for visitors."

Another student stated:

"Previously, I only understood entrepreneurship from classroom theories. However, after directly observing the agribusiness activities, I became more aware of how local resources can become business opportunities."



Figure 1: Students Practicing Plant Propagation and Ornamental Plant Cultivation During Agribusiness Field Trips in Lawang. (Source: Authors' Documentation, 2026)

Students also explored the agribusiness management aspects of ornamental plant businesses, including production management, customer segmentation, pricing strategies, and product commercialization. These experiences helped students understand that agribusiness entrepreneurship requires not only technical agricultural knowledge but also innovation and business management capabilities. Meanwhile, at Honey Harvest Tourism (Petik Madu Lawang), students explored the ecosystem of honey bee cultivation and honey-based agribusiness. Students learned about different types of bees, honey production systems, colony management, and business sustainability practices. Hands-on learning activities included holding bees, observing queen bee breeding practices, harvesting honey directly from hives, and tasting freshly harvested honey. In addition, students observed how honeycomb waste materials were transformed into value-added products such as beeswax. This activity introduced students to the concepts of product diversification, sustainability, and circular-economy practices in agribusiness entrepreneurship (Chankrajang & Muttarak, 2017).

Theme 2: Development of Entrepreneurial Mindset Through Agribusiness Tourism Experiences

Entrepreneurial Awareness and Creativity

The field trip activities conducted at agribusiness tourism destinations in Lawang significantly contributed to the development of students' entrepreneurial mindset. The learning process was not limited to theoretical exposure but involved direct engagement with real entrepreneurial ecosystems, practical activities, and interaction with business practitioners. Through experiential learning, students observed how local resources could be transformed into sustainable business opportunities through creativity, innovation, and effective management strategies (Neck et al., 2011).

The students' reflective experiences during agribusiness tourism activities also demonstrate the constructivist nature of entrepreneurial learning, where entrepreneurial understanding is gradually formed through critical developmental experiences, reflective interpretation, and contextual engagement (Krueger, 2007).

In addition, the integration of sustainability values and local resource utilization during agribusiness tourism activities reflects broader discussions in tourism studies regarding environmentally oriented creativity and sustainable tourism practices (Pongsakornrungrungsilp et al., 2022).

At Graha Wiyata Outbound Psychology and Flora Education, students learned that ornamental plant cultivation is not merely an agricultural activity but also part of a broader agribusiness ecosystem that combines education, tourism, environmental awareness, and entrepreneurship. Students practiced various plant propagation methods, such as grafting and air layering, while simultaneously observing how these techniques create economic value. Direct involvement in propagation practices helped students understand that business opportunities can emerge from relatively simple local resources when supported by

innovation and strategic market positioning. Students also observed how agribusiness operators packaged educational activities into attractive tourism experiences, thereby integrating services, products, and educational value into a single business model.

Similarly, at Wisata Petik Madu Lawang, students gained practical insights into honey bee cultivation and the development of honey-based businesses. The activities enabled students to understand that entrepreneurship involves continuous adaptation, experimentation, and sustainability management. Students directly interacted with bee colonies, participated in honey harvesting, observed queen bee breeding practices, and learned how waste materials from honeycombs could be transformed into value-added products, such as beeswax. These experiences broadened students' perspectives on product diversification and the importance of maximizing business potential in every production process.



Figure 2: Students Practicing Honey Bee Cultivation and Honey Harvesting Activities During Agribusiness Tourism Field Trips in Lawang. (Source: Authors' Documentation, 2026)

Reflective Learning and Opportunity Recognition

The field observations and discussions with practitioners also strengthened students' understanding of entrepreneurial risk and resilience. Students realized that agribusiness sectors are highly dependent on environmental conditions, seasonal changes, and ecosystem sustainability (Handayati et

al., 2020). Through practitioners' explanations regarding production failures, climate-related challenges, and fluctuating market demand, students developed a more realistic understanding of business uncertainty. Rather than perceiving risk as a barrier, students began to view challenges as part of entrepreneurial learning and adaptation processes. This experiential understanding contributed to the development of resilience, persistence, and problem-solving orientation among students.

One student reflected:

"I learned that running a business is not always easy because environmental conditions and production risks can affect the business. However, the business owners showed us how innovation and persistence are important to survive."

Another participant mentioned:

"The field activities changed my perspective. I started thinking that entrepreneurship can begin from small local potential around us, not necessarily from large-scale businesses."

Another important finding was the shift in students' perspectives regarding career orientation and opportunity recognition. Before participating in the field trips, several students tended to associate higher education primarily with formal employment opportunities. However, after directly observing local agribusiness practices, students began to recognize that entrepreneurship could emerge from local potential, creativity, and community-based resources. The integration of tourism, education, agriculture, and product innovation inspired students to consider new entrepreneurial opportunities closely connected to regional characteristics and local wisdom.

Furthermore, the experiential learning activities encouraged students' reflective learning. Direct interaction with entrepreneurs and participation in practical activities allowed students to critically compare classroom theories with real-world business realities. Students became more

aware that entrepreneurship is not solely about financial profit but also involves innovation, sustainability, adaptability, teamwork, and long-term business vision. The learning experiences also stimulated students' confidence and entrepreneurial awareness, as they witnessed practical examples of how small-scale local businesses could survive, grow, and generate economic value through creativity and innovation.

The findings indicate that field-based entrepreneurship education enables students to move beyond passive theoretical learning toward a more reflective, practice-oriented understanding of entrepreneurship. This supports the argument of Neck (2011), who emphasized that entrepreneurship education should focus on entrepreneurial practice, uncertainty management, and experiential engagement rather than solely on business planning and theoretical instruction (Mezirow, 1997).

These findings are consistent with previous studies suggesting that experiential entrepreneurship education strengthens entrepreneurial self-efficacy, creativity, resilience, and opportunity recognition among students. The integration of agribusiness, tourism, and educational activities also reflects the concept of contextual entrepreneurship learning, in which students learn directly from authentic entrepreneurial ecosystems (Tuan, 2019). The findings also indicate that agribusiness tourism activities provide students with opportunities to develop reflective and adaptive entrepreneurial thinking. Students were encouraged to reinterpret local resources as potential business opportunities while also understanding sustainability and environmental responsibility in entrepreneurial practices.

Overall, the agribusiness tourism experiences demonstrated that experiential learning can become an effective approach in entrepreneurship education (Benzaken et al., 2024). Through direct participation, observation, and reflection, students developed broader entrepreneurial insights and a stronger understanding of how to create business

opportunities from local resources and practical innovation. These findings support the experiential learning theory proposed by David A. Kolb, particularly in the stages of concrete experience and reflective observation. Students transformed direct experiences gained during field activities into entrepreneurial understanding and practical awareness. The findings also strengthen the argument that entrepreneurship education becomes more effective when students actively interact with authentic business environments rather than relying solely on classroom-based theoretical instruction.

The findings also align with transformative learning theory proposed by Mezirow (1997), which explains that learning occurs through reflective interpretation of direct experiences. Through agribusiness tourism activities, students reconstructed their perspectives regarding entrepreneurship, local business opportunities, and sustainability-oriented innovation.

CONCLUSION

Agribusiness tourism-based experiential learning demonstrated a meaningful contribution to the development of an entrepreneurial mindset among university students. Through direct involvement in ornamental plant cultivation and honey bee agribusiness, students gained broader insights into creativity, resilience, and innovation, as well as the ability to recognize opportunities in real-world business environments. The field trip activities enabled students to understand entrepreneurship not merely as a theoretical concept but as a practical, reflective learning process closely connected to local resources and sustainability practices.

The integration of educational tourism, agribusiness practices, and experiential learning also helped bridge the gap between classroom-based entrepreneurship education and real-world entrepreneurial experiences. By interacting directly with practitioners and participating in authentic business activities, students developed greater entrepreneurial awareness, adaptive thinking, and

practical business understanding. These experiences encouraged students to reinterpret local potential as a source of entrepreneurial opportunity rather than solely focusing on conventional employment pathways.

In addition, the findings highlight that agribusiness tourism can function as an experiential entrepreneurship learning ecosystem within higher education contexts. The combination of tourism, education, agriculture, and local business innovation created a contextual learning environment that strengthened reflective learning and entrepreneurial engagement among students.

Therefore, higher education institutions are encouraged to integrate more field-based and experiential learning approaches into entrepreneurship education curricula. Such learning models may provide students with more meaningful exposure to entrepreneurship while simultaneously supporting the development of innovation-oriented, locally grounded entrepreneurial perspectives. Future research may examine the long-term impact of experiential entrepreneurship learning on students' entrepreneurial intentions and business-creation behavior.

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