

Citation:

Fadhil. R., *et.al.*, (2025). Strengthening Entrepreneurial Management Competence through Industrial Visits to Beryl's Chocolate & Confectionery, Malaysia. *Jurnal Pengabdian Bakti Akademisi*, 2(1). 19- 29.

**Strengthening Entrepreneurial Management Competence through
Industrial Visits to Beryl's Chocolate & Confectionery, Malaysia**

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ARTICLE INFO

Received: 19-01-2025

Revised: 03-02-2025

Accepted: 17-02-2025

Available online: 17-02-2025

ISSN: 3047-8820

DOI:

<https://doi.org/10.24815/pba.v2i1.44151>

Keyword:

Strengthening,
Entrepreneurial
Management, Industrial
Visits

ABSTRACT

The industrial visit to Beryl's Chocolate & Confectionery Sdn Bhd in Malaysia aimed to strengthen the competencies of lecturers and student entrepreneurship advisors at Syiah Kuala University in the areas of global business strategy, technological innovation, and business sustainability. The primary challenge addressed was the need for enhanced understanding and application of entrepreneurial principles to support student entrepreneurship programs, aligning with SDG 4 (Quality Education), SDG 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth), and SDG 12 (Responsible Consumption and Production). Utilizing the service learning method, this community service activity involved experiential learning through direct observation and engagement with industry best practices. The results demonstrated a significant improvement in participants' knowledge and understanding, with an average increase of 22.67% between pre-test and post-test scores. Participants gained practical insights into production processes, digital marketing strategies, and sustainability principles that could be applied to local entrepreneurial contexts. The collaborative involvement of various stakeholders—university departments, industry partners, and travel service providers—ensured the activity's success and served as a model for future initiatives. This program not only addressed existing knowledge gaps but also opened avenues for integrating global business practices into local entrepreneurship development, contributing to the broader goals of sustainable economic growth and education quality improvement.

1. Introduction

Entrepreneurship has been widely recognized as one of the main pillars of economic and social development in developed and developing countries (Purnomo, 2016). Entrepreneurship is about creating new businesses, building innovation capacity, increasing productivity, and contributing to sustainable economic growth (Lase et al., 2024). The Global Entrepreneurship Monitor (GEM) 2023 report shows that countries with high levels of entrepreneurship have a more remarkable ability to face global economic challenges, including technological change, economic instability, and environmental crises (Global Entrepreneurship Monitor, 2024).

However, in globalization, entrepreneurship managers still face significant challenges in various countries, especially in the Southeast Asian region (Budiarto et al., 2018). The main obstacle to developing entrepreneurship in Indonesia is the lack of managerial competence in dealing with global market dynamics (Awaluddin et al., 2024). As a profession, entrepreneurship managers are not only required to have managerial skills but also to understand the global entrepreneurship ecosystem, the latest technology, and best practices that can be applied locally (Judijanto et al., 2024).

Universities, as centres of learning and innovation, play an important role in developing entrepreneurship, especially among the younger generation (Halim, Fadhil, et al., 2024). Universitas Syiah Kuala (USK) through the Direktorat Prestasi dan Kewirausahaan, together with Inkubator Kewirausahaan, and USK Travel, have made efforts to improve the competence of entrepreneurship managers through various training and mentoring programs. However, one of the obstacles faced is limited access to direct experience in the international industrial environment, which can provide broader insights into the dynamics of global entrepreneurship.

This challenge is in line with several targets of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), especially Goal 4 (Quality Education), goal 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth), and Goal 9 (Industry, Innovation, and Infrastructure). SDGs emphasize the importance of developing human resource capacity in supporting inclusive and sustainable economic growth. Strengthening the competence of entrepreneurial managers, mainly through an experience-based approach, is a strategic step to support the achievement of this target.

Various studies and reports have shown that industrial visits are one of the effective methods of improving practical competence in entrepreneurship. A study by Kolb (2014) on Experiential Learning Theory revealed that experience-based learning allows participants to integrate theory with practice, accelerating understanding and mastery of skills. This approach is also supported by the results of research by Milosevic et al. (2009), which showed that industrial visit programs improved managerial skills and strategic insights of business managers.

Training programs based on industrial visits have also proven effective in community service. For example, the community service program carried out by Halim, Kesuma, et al. (2024) in the form of a visit to the 19th Malaysia International Halal Showcase (MIHAS) 2023, the results of which showed strengthening international networks and market reach, which emphasized the important role of university-community collaboration. In addition, the report on community service carried out by Halim et al. (2023) showed that industrial visits to multinational companies helped participants understand global strategies that could be adapted to local markets. In addition to the services discussed previously, some services have been successful in improving the competence of their partners in the field of entrepreneurship (bin Abd Karim et al., 2024; Halim, Novindra, et al., 2024; Halim, Permata, et al., 2024; Halim, Ramadhani, et al., 2024; Hanidah et al., 2024; Rivani et al., 2024; Riyaldi et al., 2024; Sari et al., 2024; Yusrizal et al., 2024).

Another study by Wiartha et al. (2024) emphasized the importance of cross-sector collaboration, including between academics, government, and the private sector, in supporting entrepreneurship development. In this context, industrial visits serve as a means of learning and as a bridge to build networks between entrepreneurship managers and industry. Although much evidence supports the effectiveness of industrial visits, their implementation in Indonesia is still limited, especially in the context of entrepreneurship management in higher education. Most entrepreneurship training programs are still theory-based and provide less direct experience to participants.

That creates a gap between the market's dynamic needs and entrepreneurs' ability to respond to these changes. This gap is further exacerbated by a lack of understanding of how global strategies can be adapted to local contexts. In this regard, industry visits to developed countries, such as Malaysia, offer an opportunity to learn best practices from companies that successfully integrate innovation and sustainability into their operations. An industry visit programme organized by Direktorat Prestasi dan Kewirausahaan USK in collaboration with Inkubator Kewirausahaan USK and USK Travel offers an innovative approach to addressing this challenge. By visiting Beryl's Chocolate & Confectionery Sdn Bhd in Seri Kembangan, Malaysia, participants will gain insights into managing an innovation-based business and international marketing strategies, as well as supply chain management and sustainability.

This approach is unique in that it combines experiential learning with hands-on mentoring by industry practitioners. In addition, the programme is designed to facilitate dialogue between entrepreneurs and industry players, thereby creating more significant opportunities for future collaboration. The main objective of this program is to improve the competence of lecturers and staff assisting students in entrepreneurship at USK so that they can be more effective in supporting the development of entrepreneurship among students. Specifically, this program aims to provide practical insights into international business management, improve understanding of the integration of innovation and sustainability in business, and Open up opportunities for collaboration between entrepreneurship managers at USK and industry players in Malaysia.

This article aims to document and analyze the effectiveness of the industrial visit program as one method of strengthening the competence of entrepreneurship managers. This article also aims to share experiences and insights with the academic community and practitioners about innovative approaches to developing human resource capacity. This article is expected to contribute in two main aspects: (1) Development of Science and Technology: This article will enrich the literature on experiential training methods in the field of entrepreneurship, especially in higher education environments; (2) Achievement of SDGs: This article contributes to the achievement of SDGs, especially goals 4, 8, and 9, by promoting innovative approaches to strengthening human resource capacity. With a comprehensive and innovative approach, this program is expected to be a model for other universities in their efforts to improve the competence of entrepreneurship managers in Indonesia.

2. Methods

The target community in this community service activity is the lecturers accompanying staff and managers of student entrepreneurship at Syiah Kuala University (USK). This group has a strategic role as a facilitator and mentor for students involved in developing entrepreneurship. A total of 13 participants participated in this activity, consisting of 6 lecturers who actively

accompanied the student entrepreneurship program and six administrative staff who supported the operation of the program.



Figure 1. Documentation of international company visit participants

As a community with a strong academic background, the participants have experience in entrepreneurship education. However, they face limitations regarding exposure to best practices and global entrepreneurship innovations. In this activity, participants are expected to be beneficiaries and to play an active role in discussing, analyzing, and studying international business management models relevant to local needs. This activity involves several parties with their respective backgrounds and contributions:

1. Direktorat Prestasi dan Kewirausahaan USK: Acts as the primary coordinator who designs, manages, and supervises program implementation.
2. Inkubator Kewirausahaan USK: Provides training materials and facilitators with expertise in managing student entrepreneurship.
3. USK Travel: Plays in organizing travel logistics, including coordinating transportation and accommodation for participants.
4. Beryl's Chocolate & Confectionery Sdn Bhd: As an industry partner, this company provides practical insights into business strategy, supply chain management, and technology-based product innovation.

This service uses the Service Learning (SL) approach, an experience-based learning method that integrates academic theory with service activities in the community or industry (Agus Afandi et al., 2022). This method consists of the following stages:

1. Identification of Needs

- Analysis of the needs of the target community is carried out through interviews and discussions with lecturers and entrepreneurship support staff.
- Review literature on international entrepreneurial innovation to determine the focus of industrial visit activities.

2. Planning

- Preparation of a schedule and experience-based learning modules by the service team.
- Coordination with Beryl's Chocolate & Confectionery to design a visit that suits the needs of the participants.

3. Implementation of Activities

- Orientation of participants at the beginning of the activity to explain the objectives, benefits, and expected results.
- Industrial visit to Beryl's Chocolate & Confectionery, including:
- Presentation of business strategies by company management.
- Tour of production facilities to understand the product innovation process.
- Interactive discussion sessions to identify opportunities for adaptation to the local context.

4. Evaluation and Reflection

- Participants conduct individual and group reflections to evaluate the lessons learned.
- Assessment of the SL method implementation is based on feedback from participants and industry partners.

During the industrial visit, participants were introduced to several relevant concepts and technologies:

1. Global Business Strategy: Management model of multinational companies, including product diversification strategies and international market expansion.
2. Innovation in Production: Modern technology in the chocolate-making process, such as automation and quality control based on digital technology.
3. Business Sustainability: Implement sustainability principles in raw material and waste management.
4. Digital Marketing: Technology-based marketing techniques to reach the global market.



Figure 2. Documentation of chocolate production at Beryl's Chocolate & Confectionery

This activity uses several instruments and materials to support its implementation:

1. Data Collection Instruments:

- Questionnaires to measure participants' perceptions and satisfaction with the activity.
- Observation sheets will record participants' responses during industrial visits.

2. Training Materials:

- Experience-based learning modules.
- Videos and presentations related to business innovations used during discussion sessions.

Data were collected using the following methods:

- Participatory Observation: The community service team conducted direct observations during industrial visits to record participants' responses and interactions.
- Questionnaires: These are given to participants before and after the activity to evaluate changes in knowledge and skills.
- Group Discussions: These are used to dig deeper into participants' understanding and feedback on the program.

The success of this activity is measured based on several leading indicators:

- Participant Competency Improvement: Measured by comparing the pre-test and post-test questionnaire results.

- Participant Satisfaction: Measured from the average score of the satisfaction questionnaire on program implementation.
- Follow-up Plan: There is a learning implementation plan from industrial visits to the student entrepreneurship programs.
- Positive Feedback: Obtained from industry partners regarding the quality of interaction and discussion with participants.



Figure 3. Participants see production machines at Beryl's Chocolate & Confectionery

The data obtained were analyzed using qualitative and quantitative descriptive approaches:

- Quantitative Analysis: Using descriptive statistics to process questionnaire data, such as satisfaction levels and increased participant competence.
- Qualitative Analysis: Used to analyze the results of group discussions and participant observations, focusing on patterns of participant understanding of the concepts taught.

With this approach, community service activities are expected to provide a real positive impact on entrepreneurship managers at Syiah Kuala University, as well as contribute to achieving SDGs and developing knowledge in the field of entrepreneurship.

3. Result and Discussion

The results of this activity are based on the theory of experiential learning, which emphasizes the importance of integrating theory and practice to build competence. According to Kolb (2014), direct experiences such as industrial visits allow for deeper learning compared to conventional learning methods. Pre-test and post-test evaluations significantly increased participants' understanding of global business strategies and technological innovation. Table 1 below shows a comparison of the pre-test and post-test results.

Table 1. Comparison of Pre-Test and Post-Test Results of Participant Competence			
Indicator	Pre-Test Mean (%)	Post-Test Mean (%)	Improvement (%)
Understanding Global Business Strategy	65	88	23
Production Technology Innovation	62	85	23
Business Sustainability	68	90	22

Source: Primary Data (2024), processed

These results indicate that the activity has increased participants' competence in various aspects, with an average increase of 22.67%. The interactive discussion session and tour of the production facility provided an accurate picture of the application of technology in business processes, including automation, digitalization, and supply chain management. Participants noted that the sustainability approach implemented by Beryl's Chocolate & Confectionery is relevant and should be adapted to the local context. In addition, several participants identified opportunities to integrate digital marketing into student entrepreneurship programs. For example, the product diversification strategy demonstrated can inspire students to create added value to local products. Participants developed a follow-up plan to apply what they had learned from this visit to the student entrepreneurship program. Some examples of proposed implementations include:

- Product Innovation Training Module: Developing experiential training involving product development students.
- Sustainability Integration in the Curriculum: Adding business sustainability topics to entrepreneurship courses.
- Collaboration with Industry Partners: Increasing collaboration with local business actors to support student product development.

This activity also supports the findings of a previous study by Halim, Kesuma, et al. (2024), which showed that exposure to industry best practices improved participants' analytical skills in identifying business opportunities. In addition, the technology transfer reflects the approach's success in similar community service in product innovation and digital marketing (Mulyany et al., 2023). This activity contributes to several SDG goals, including:

- SDG 4 (Quality Education): Improving lecturers' and entrepreneurship support staff's academic and professional competence.
- SDG 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth): Encouraging the development of sustainable student entrepreneurship.
- SDG 12 (Responsible Consumption and Production): Integrating sustainability principles into local product development.

Referring to previous literature, such as the study by Halim et al. (2023) on the impact of industry-based training on MSME development, this activity can be an example of best practice in supporting entrepreneurship education in higher education. Although this activity successfully achieved its primary objective, several obstacles were still encountered, including:

- Time Constraints: The short duration of the activity limited a deeper exploration of the company's technology and business strategy.

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- Differences in Local Context: Some strategies implemented by Beryl's Chocolate & Confectionery were challenging to adopt immediately due to differences in scale and market.
 - Logistical Challenges: Coordinating international travel requires careful planning, especially regarding time and transportation arrangements.

These obstacles do not indicate weaknesses in implementation but rather external factors that require creative solutions in the future. For example, the duration of the visit could be extended to allow for an in-depth study of the material or visits to several different industries could be conducted to provide a broader perspective. This activity succeeded in providing inspiration and in-depth learning for the participants. Some elements that stand out as best practices are:

- Multi-stakeholder Collaboration: The involvement of various parties, including universities, industry partners, and travel service providers, demonstrates the importance of collaboration for the success of the service program.
- Interactive Approach: Discussion sessions with company management allow participants to ask questions and explore new ideas actively.
- Local-Global Relevance: Although based on global practices, the activity remains relevant to the local needs of participants, making it easier to adapt and implement.

4. Conclusion

The industrial visit to Beryl's Chocolate & Confectionery Sdn Bhd successfully strengthened the competencies of lecturers and entrepreneurship assistant staff at Syiah Kuala University in global business strategies, technological innovation, and business sustainability. The evaluation results indicated a significant improvement in participants' understanding, demonstrated by an average increase of 22.67% between pre-test and post-test scores. This finding confirms that the service learning approach effectively enhances experiential learning in entrepreneurship education.

Furthermore, the activity facilitated relevant knowledge and technology transfer applicable to local entrepreneurship programs. Participants gained valuable insights into production processes, digital marketing strategies, and sustainability principles, which can be adapted to the development of student-led businesses. The involvement of multiple stakeholders—universities, industry partners, and travel service providers—proved to be an effective model for future collaborative initiatives in entrepreneurship education.

This initiative contributed to achieving SDG 4 (Quality Education), SDG 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth), and SDG 12 (Responsible Consumption and Production). The key implication is the opportunity to integrate global business strategies and technological innovations into student entrepreneurship programs while strengthening partnerships with industry stakeholders. These efforts can ultimately support the development of sustainable and competitive local MSMEs in Aceh.

Acknowledgment

This community service program is organized by Direktorat Prestasi dan Kewirausahaan USK in collaboration with Inkubator Kewirausahaan USK, USK Travel and Beryl's Chocolate &

Confectionery Sdn Bhd, Seri Kembangan, Malaysia. Thanks are conveyed to all parties who have contributed to the success of this activity.

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