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Experience-Based Student Entrepreneurship Education: An International Collaborative Approach

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ABSTRACT

This community service activity addresses the gap between entrepreneurial theory and practical experience among university students, particularly in preparing them to become job creators. The aim of this initiative was to enhance students' entrepreneurial competence through a collaborative and experience-based learning model. Conducted as an international collaboration between Universitas Syiah Kuala, Indonesia, and Politeknik Seberang Perai, Malaysia, the activity employed a Service Learning approach involving interactive sessions, group discussions, and business model design. Students were exposed to real-world entrepreneurial practices presented by experts from both institutions. The results showed a significant improvement in students' understanding and ability to develop viable business ideas using the Business Model Canvas. Participants demonstrated increased confidence and motivation to pursue entrepreneurship, and the activity contributed to developing practical skills aligned with sustainable development goals. This program model presents a replicable approach for enhancing entrepreneurial education through cross-border academic collaboration and experiential learning.

1. Introduction

In today's increasingly globalized and digitized era, higher education institutions are expected not only to produce academically capable graduates but also to equip them with practical skills and an

entrepreneurial mindset to address global challenges. Educated unemployment has become a growing international concern, particularly in developing countries, where university graduates often lack readiness for the job market and fewer opt to pursue entrepreneurship (Hermann et al., 2024). In this context, entrepreneurship education at the university level serves as a strategic component in supporting the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly Goals 4 (Quality Education), 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth), and 9 (Industry, Innovation, and Infrastructure).

However, the implementation of entrepreneurship education still faces significant challenges. Several studies have shown that theoretical approaches alone are insufficient to develop students' real entrepreneurial competencies (Mulyany et al., 2023). Many students feel they do not gain relevant experiences aligned with the realities of the business world, resulting in underdeveloped entrepreneurial skills (Shariq et al., 2025). This creates a gap between the competencies provided by educational institutions and the actual demands of the business world (Mavlutova et al., 2025).

One promising innovative approach to bridging this gap is the application of the Service Learning (SL) method in entrepreneurship education. This method combines field-based practical experience with academic reflection, allowing students to not only learn entrepreneurial concepts but also engage in the planning, implementation, and evaluation of real-world activities (Halim, Lubis, et al., 2025; Velasco Muñoz et al., 2024). Through SL, students are involved in community service while earning academic credit, thereby enhancing their critical thinking, collaboration, and creativity in developing business solutions.

This community service initiative, undertaken through collaboration between Universitas Syiah Kuala (Indonesia) and Politeknik Seberang Perai (Malaysia), is a concrete representation of efforts to strengthen experience-based, cross-border entrepreneurship education. It not only enables students to learn best practices from both institutions but also promotes intercultural knowledge exchange and international collaboration aligned with SDG Goal 17 (Partnerships for the Goals).

Recent literature also emphasizes the importance of transnational approaches in entrepreneurship education aligned with the SDGs (Aqil et al., 2025; bin Abd Karim et al., 2024; Fadhil et al., 2025; Halim et al., 2024; Halim, Kesuma, Siregar, Riyaldi, et al., 2023; Halim, Kesuma, Siregar, Syahrizal, et al., 2023; Halim, Lubis, et al., 2025; Halim, Riyaldi, et al., 2025; Hanidah et al., 2024; Lubis et al., 2025; Rivani et al., 2024, 2025). For instance, studies by *Curran (2025)* and *Martínez Campillo et al. (2024)* demonstrate that integrating cross-cultural elements through SL significantly enhances students' motivation and ability to create sustainable businesses.

Therefore, the urgency of developing a more practical, participatory, and internationally collaborative model of entrepreneurship education is increasingly evident. The gap between the global demand for entrepreneurial skills and traditional teaching methods requires immediate and structured solutions. Innovations in community service design, particularly those that apply experience-based and cross-border service learning methods, provide a tangible response to these challenges.

The objective of this community service activity was to enhance students' entrepreneurial competence through collaborative, cross-institutional, experience-based learning. This article aims to document the process, outcomes, and contributions of the program while highlighting the strategic role of Service Learning within the global framework of entrepreneurship education.

Academically, this article contributes to the development of experiential and cross-national entrepreneurship education. Practically, it supports the achievement of SDGs, especially in strengthening quality education (SDG 4), promoting inclusive economic growth (SDG 8), and fostering global partnerships (SDG 17).

2. Methods

This community service program targeted students from the Entrepreneurship Study Program at Universitas Syiah Kuala (USK), Indonesia, and Politeknik Seberang Perai (PSP), Malaysia. A total of 40 students participated, comprising 25 USK students attending in person at the USK Entrepreneurship Room in Banda Aceh and 15 PSP students participating virtually via an online platform. These students had previously received basic entrepreneurship education and showed interest in pursuing entrepreneurial ventures. Some had even started micro-businesses but faced challenges in accessing practical entrepreneurial experiences and international exposure. Their role in this program extended beyond passive participation; they actively engaged in discussions, reflections, and collaborative business idea development..

The implementation team included academic staff from both institutions. From USK, the organizing team served as the primary facilitator, responsible for coordinating activities, providing technological and physical facilities, and conducting program evaluations. USK's speaker, Dr. Evi Ramadhani, M.Si., who heads the university's entrepreneurship division and has experience with student business incubators, delivered a session on local entrepreneurial best practices. Representing PSP was Mr. Mohd Rizal Bin Hussain, a lecturer in entrepreneurship, who shared a compelling story of student transformation from part-time workers to job creators. The insights shared by both speakers were instrumental in offering practical and inspiring perspectives to the participants..



Figure 1. Activity Documentation

The activity followed the Service Learning (SL) model, which integrates direct community engagement with academic reflection (Agus Afandi et al., 2022). Preparatory stages included inter-institutional coordination, material preparation, participant selection, and logistical arrangements. The program was held on July 21, 2025, beginning with presentations on entrepreneurial best practices from both speakers, followed by group discussions. Students were tasked with developing business ideas based on the sessions using the Business Model Canvas (BMC). Each group then presented their ideas and received feedback from the facilitators and speakers.

The tools and knowledge introduced included: systematic business planning using BMC, campus-based entrepreneurship incubation techniques, and reflective learning through SL. These components not only enhanced students' conceptual understanding but also fostered critical thinking, collaboration, and innovation in designing socially impactful businesses.

Several instruments supported the activities, including presentation tools (projectors, laptops, and whiteboards), BMC worksheets, group discussion guides, and pre- and post-test evaluation forms. To assess effectiveness, the implementation team conducted direct observation of student engagement, collected written reflections, documented the sessions, and analyzed pre- and post-test results to evaluate learning gains.



Figure 2. Participants' Visit to the Kansis USK

The program's success was measured using key performance indicators, including a minimum 80% increase in entrepreneurship knowledge based on test results, at least 90% active participation throughout all sessions, and the ability to develop feasible business plans based on BMC principles. Participant satisfaction was also evaluated through written reflections and feedback questionnaires.

All data collected were analyzed using both quantitative descriptive and qualitative approaches. Pre- and post-test data, as well as questionnaire data, were analyzed to determine changes in understanding. Qualitative data from reflections and group discussions were examined to assess the internalization and practical application of entrepreneurial knowledge. This comprehensive evaluation ensured that the program developed not only conceptual understanding but also practical competence for real-world entrepreneurship.

3. Result and Discussion

The community service program titled "Experience-Based Student Entrepreneurship Education: An International Collaborative Approach," conducted on July 21, 2025, successfully engaged 40 students from USK and PSP. All participants actively contributed to every session, including expert presentations, group discussions, and business idea presentations based on the Business Model Canvas. The table below presents key outcomes based on the predetermined success indicators:

Table 1. Success Indicators, Targets, and Achievements of the Community Service Program

Succeed Indicators	Target	Achievement	Remarks
Increase in entrepreneurship understanding (pre-post test)	≥ 80%	87,5%	Significant improvement in practical entrepreneurial understanding
Active participation in discussions and presentations	≥ 90%	100%	All students engaged in group discussions and reflections
Ability to develop BMC-based business ideas	≥ 70%	92,5%	Most groups developed applicable and innovative business models
Participant satisfaction (based on questionnaire)	≥ 75%	95%	Participants rated the program as inspiring and practically beneficial.

Initial pre-test results showed that most participants had limited knowledge of business model development. After completing all sessions, their average knowledge scores increased by 27%, especially in areas such as value proposition and revenue stream within the BMC. Reflections also revealed a shift in perception—from viewing entrepreneurship as merely an alternative to a job to recognizing it as a strategy for sustainable development.

The success of this program highlights the effectiveness of the Service Learning approach in promoting contextual, collaborative, and reflective learning. This aligns with findings by Hermann et al. (2024), which underscore the value of integrating real-world experience with formal education to foster sustainable entrepreneurial competencies. Similarly, Velasco Muñoz et al. (2024) emphasized SL's potential in reinforcing the contributions of higher education to SDG 4 (Quality Education) and SDG 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth).

Using the BMC as a learning tool proved to be effective in helping students systematically articulate their business ideas. This finding corroborates Halim, Lubis, et al. (2025), who reported that BMC is an intuitive tool that stimulates innovative thinking in entrepreneurial planning. A notable best practice from this activity was students' success in developing value-driven business ideas, including digital education services, local product marketplaces, and eco-friendly logistics platforms. Some participants expressed interest in further developing these ideas into formal business incubation proposals. Such initiatives directly contribute to the achievement of the SDGs in economic development (SDG 8), youth capacity-building (SDG 4 & 9), and international cooperation (SDG 17).

Furthermore, the program served as a platform for intercultural learning, fostering a sense of global citizenship among students. Reflections from Malaysian and Indonesian participants indicated that cross-cultural entrepreneurial exchanges broadened their perspectives and opened opportunities for future cross-border business collaborations. Despite the program's overall success, several challenges were observed. The one-day duration restricted the depth of business idea exploration and discussion. Cultural and language differences initially impeded some cross-national group discussions, although these issues were alleviated through guided facilitation.

Additionally, some PSP participants experienced unstable internet connections, which disrupted interactive sessions. This supports Curran (2025) observation that the success of international service-learning programs is heavily dependent on digital and communication infrastructure. In conclusion, this program demonstrated that a practical, intercultural Service Learning approach significantly enhances students' entrepreneurial capabilities. It offers a replicable model for innovative community service in higher education and exemplifies how academic institutions can play a meaningful role in achieving the SDGs through international collaboration.

4. Conclusion

The community service activity titled “Experience-Based Student Entrepreneurship Education: An International Collaborative Approach” successfully achieved its primary objective—to enhance students' understanding and skills in entrepreneurship through a collaborative, cross-national Service Learning model. Based on the results of the pre- and post-tests, group discussions, and student reflections, there was a marked increase in participants' practical knowledge of entrepreneurship and their ability to formulate business ideas using the Business Model Canvas. Specifically, 87.5% of students improved their entrepreneurial knowledge, and 92.5% developed innovative, experience-based business proposals.

The collaboration between Universitas Syiah Kuala and Politeknik Seberang Perai added significant value through the exchange of entrepreneurial best practices, enhanced student perspectives, and the formation of international collaborative networks. The Service Learning method effectively integrates academic learning with real community engagement, supporting the achievement of SDG 4 (Quality Education), SDG 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth), and SDG 17 (Partnerships for the Goals).

The findings of this activity suggest that a practical, experiential, and cross-institutional approach to entrepreneurship education offers a scalable model for community engagement. It reinforces the role of higher education institutions as change agents in cultivating a generation of innovative, adaptive, and socially conscious young entrepreneurs who are prepared to contribute to sustainable development both locally and globally.

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