



## Experiential Learning Model on Entrepreneurship Subject to Improve Students' Soft Skills

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### Abstract

This research aims to improve students' soft skills on entrepreneurship subject by using experiential learning model. It was expected that the learning model could upgrade students' soft skills which were indicated by the higher confidence, result and job oriented, being courageous to take risks, leadership, originality, and future-oriented. It was a class action research using Kemmis and Mc Tagart's design model. The research was conducted for two cycles. The subject of the study was economics education students in the year of 2015/2016. Findings show that the experiential learning model could improve students' soft skills. The research showed that there is increased at the dimension of confidence by 52.1%, result-oriented by 22.9%, being courageous to take risks by 10.4%, leadership by 12.5%, originality by 10.4%, and future-oriented by 18.8%. It could be concluded that the experiential learning model is effective model to improve students' soft skills on entrepreneurship subject. Dimension of confidence has the highest rise. Students' soft skills are shaped through the continuous stimulus when they get involved at the implementation.

### How to Cite

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## INTRODUCTION

One of the problems in the learning Indonesia is one of the largest populated countries which is struggling to combat the big issues, especially on education. The biggest issue was the number of educated unemployment was actually greater than the uneducated unemployment. Based on BPS or Statistics Data Central Agency on August 2015 showed that the Unemployment Rate on August 2015 was 6.18 %; it increased than the Unemployment Rate on February 2015 was only 5.81 % and on August 2014 was only 5.94 %. The active populations were still dominated by those who got elementary education and the unemployment rate was dominated by the university graduates (undergraduate).

Hendrizal (2015) said that there were three factors which influenced the educated unemployment; i.e. cultural barriers, the quality and relevance of the curriculum, and labor market. These problems were solved with many approaches, such as link and match at the new era and competency-based curriculum and KKNi. Those approaches were the bridges to link the gap between industry and the world of work. However, these efforts did not show the good result since the level of educated unemployment was high. Therefore, it needs other efforts to complement those strategies.

The government through the ministry of education has done a variety ways to decrease the high number of unemployed educated in Indonesia; such as by applying entrepreneurial curriculum. The government expected that the efforts created job-creators, not job-seekers. They got entrepreneurship education to prepare human resources for being the entrepreneurs. And consequently; students could have their strengths, independent, and competitive.

The number of entrepreneurs in Indonesia was only 1.6 % of the total population in Indonesia. In fact, the ideal number of entrepreneurs was minimum 2% of the population of a country. The productive and innovative entrepreneurs in Indonesia was only 0.2-0.3 %, it was different with Malaysia for 2.1 %, Korea for 4.4 %, China for 10 %, Japan for 10 %, and the United States for 12 % (tribunnews.com, 11 November 2015). It was the background to increase the entrepreneurship by launching the entrepreneurship program for both the public and for students.

One of the government's efforts to rise the entrepreneurial spirit was to include entrepreneurship materials in various levels of education, including on higher education. Higher education

had the important role to create and shape the new entrepreneurs. Zimmerer (2009) stated that the factors which drove the growth of entrepreneurship in a country lied on the role of universities through the implementation of entrepreneurship education. The university was responsible for educating and providing entrepreneurial skills to the graduates and provide motivation to choose entrepreneurs as their career.

Yohnson (2003) stated that the university needs to implement concrete entrepreneurial learning patterns based on empirical inputs to equip students with the significant knowledge to encourage students on entrepreneurship. Then, the problem was what type of concrete learning approaches which could improve the graduates' competence, could improve the prosperity and the recognition, could participate actively and critically to face reality. Graduates' skills and competencies would be an analysis knife as the solution of the problems.

The challenge faced by universities was to prepare the qualified and marketable Indonesians so it was not marginalized in the single market current. The development of entrepreneurship education curriculum was an alternative way to create the graduates who had the entrepreneurial spirit.

Vesper and McMullan (1987) stated that the importance of entrepreneurship education and entrepreneurial experience implementation. Theoretically; it was believed that education and entrepreneurial experiences could improve one's potential to become the entrepreneur. Some studies showed that the results supported the statement. The learning activities on entrepreneurship subject were introducing the theories of entrepreneurship and entrepreneurial field practices. By doing all these activities, students were expected to encourage students become entrepreneurs after they graduated.

In fact, there were many criticisms given to entrepreneurship lectures at universities, such as: the material presentation which emphasized on the theories and cognitive aspects, it was not the contextual learning, lack of entrepreneurship practice activities, lack of facilities and infrastructure to train entrepreneurial skills as the business incubator. Koesworo and Triwijayanti (2006) found that the implementation of the study was not effective because the subject did not include the business experiences, through field trips or guest lectures for students to get closer to the real world of entrepreneurial environment. Although it was minimized by the assignment in groups for interviewing the entrepreneurs.

Then, entrepreneurship subject did not teach students until the achievement of soft skills. One of the main problems in the quality of our graduates was the lack of soft skills so students were difficult to develop.

Mulyono (2011) stated that "soft skills were the complement of hard skills. These skills were parts of a person's intelligence quotient, and were often used to obtain a particular job or position". Sailah (2008), defined soft skills were the skills of a person who related to other people (and also related to himself).

Then; the attributes of soft skills were shared values, motivations, behaviors, habits, character and attitude. These attributes of soft skills were different from one person to another person which influenced by the habit to think, to say, to act and to behave. However, these attributes could be changed if the people wanted to change the way of familiarizing themselves with new things. From the various definitions, it can be formulated that essentially, soft skills were the abilities which were inherent in a person, but they can be developed to the maximum and they were required in the world of work as the complement of hard skills.

The existence of hard skills and soft skills should be balanced, in line, and in one direction or we could call soft skills aspect. These abilities could also be called by non technical abilities which certainly had the same importance as academic ability.

Elfindri, et. al. (2011), defined soft skills were the skills and life skills, either for themselves, for group or community, or to the God. By having these soft skills, it made someone exist in the community. The skills were communication skills, emotional skills, language skills, group skills, ethics and morals, manners and spiritual skills. Elfindri et al. (2011) said that soft skills were all properties which made the function of hard skills operate. Soft skills could also determine the use direction of hard skills in education world.

Some soft skills which were absolutely owned by students as the main capital for entrepreneurship were: belief, independence, individuality, optimism, always trying to achieve, profit-oriented, perseverance and fortitude, having the strong determination, hard-working, energetic and having initiative, having the ability to take risks and loving the challenge. Furthermore; they should behave as the leaders, could get along with others and were glad to get suggestions and constructive criticism, having innovation and creativity, flexible, versatile and having extensive bu-

ness network. They should have the perception and perspective on the future-oriented. Thus; the development of soft skills needed the real experience in the field.

To achieve those purposes, it needed student-centered learning model, it was the learning process which more emphasized on reasoning abilities, giving direct experience for students learning through experiential learning model. Experiential learning theory (ELT), which later became the basis of learning experiential learning model, was developed by David Kolb in the early 1980s. This model emphasized a holistic model of learning in the learning process. In experiential learning, the experience had the central role in the learning process. This emphasis was the difference of ELT from other learning theories. The term "experiential" here was to distinguish between cognitive learning theory which tended to emphasize on cognitive. And it was also different with the behavior learning theory which eliminated the roles of subjective experience in the learning process.

Experiential learning could be defined as the act to achieve something based on the experience which was continuously changing to improve the effectiveness of the learning outcome itself. The purpose of this model was to influence students in three ways, i.e.; 1) changing the students' cognitive structure, 2) changing attitudes, and 3) expanding the skills which already existed. These three elements were interrelated and affected the whole, not separately, because if one element was missing, the two other elements would not be effective. The learning process of experiential learning was an activity to formulate an action, to test, to assess the results and to obtain feedback or reflection, to transform and to redefine an action based on the principles which must be understood and followed.

Experiential learning emphasized on the strong desire of students themselves to succeed in learning. Motivation was based also on the selected objectives and methods of learning. The desire to succeed could increase students' responsibility on their learning behavior and they would able to control the behavior.

The experiential learning model gave students opportunity to decide what their focus of the experience, what skills they wanted to develop, and how they made the concept from what they have experienced it. It was different from traditional learning approach which students were passive listeners and only the lecturers who controlled the learning process without involving any students.

Learning through experience (experiential learning) referred to the process of learning which involved students directly to the issue or the materials. Based on the concept of learning through experience, all life activities experienced by the individual is a learning tool which could create science.

According to Kolb (2001), he defined that experiential learning was a learning process which the knowledge was created through the experience transformation. Then, Atherton (2013), stated that in the context of experience-based learning was a process which students' experiences were reflected in depth and from here, it came new understanding or learning process.

From the above definitions, it could be concluded that experiential learning model was a process of knowledge constructing through the experience transformation. The model referred to the learning process which involved students directly to the issue or the materials. Thus; the experiential learning model used students' new experiences and reactions to build their understanding and to transfer knowledge, skills, and attitudes.

The steps of experiential learning model were concrete experience, reflective observation, abstract conceptualization, and active experimentation. By implementing the steps of experiential learning model properly, then students would be actively involved in the learning activities. It was expected that experiential learning approach could increase students' entrepreneurial learning soft skills.

Based on the description above, the questions of the study were: (1) How was the implementation of experiential learning model on entrepreneurship subject in improving students' soft skills? (2) Could the implementation of experiential learning model improve students' soft skills? (3) What were the factors which support and hinder the implementation of experiential learning model on entrepreneurship subject?

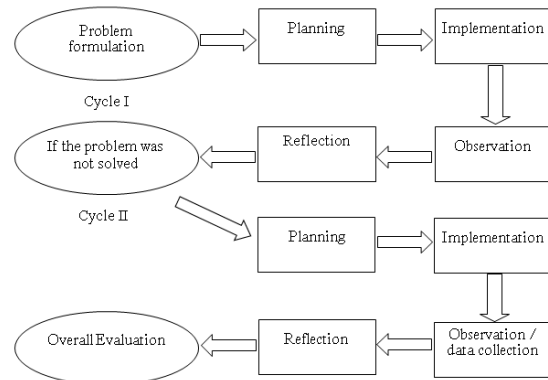
## METHODS

It was a classroom action research. It was conducted based on the study designed by Kemmis and Mc Tagart's model in Aqib (2007) which can be seen Figure 1.

The study was conducted with 2 cycles. The evaluation result on the first cycle was not finished, so it was repaired on the second cycle. The reflection on the first cycle was done to determine the correction steps on the second cycle.

It began with the preliminary action to find

problems then it continued with planning, action, observation, and reflection. The study was conducted on 2 cycles. If the result of the first cycle did not complete, it would be repaired on the second cycle. Reflection on the first cycle was done to determine the corrective action on the second cycle. The stages of the research were conducted on the preliminary and implementation activities.



**Figure 1.** The Research Design

Preliminary activities were intended to prepare the research. On preliminary research, there were several activities, i.e. the permittance, observation and managing the research schedule. The main activity was observation. After observing, the collected data were in the form of field notes of each meeting on entrepreneurship subject. It was primarily focused on students' soft skills. All data of the preliminary activity were used to prepare for the next cycle.

The next activity was the implementation. The implementation activity was done twice, the first cycle and the second cycle. On each cycle, it would be divided into two activities, i.e. planning and action implementation activities.

The planning activities included: making the lesson plan, making the job description; i.e. field visits and case studies, making the preparation guidelines, developing students' evaluation tool. The activities were determined to know the changes which happened on students before and after using the experiential learning model.

The evaluation tool was in the form of a rubric assessment which accommodated the elements of students' soft skills on entrepreneurship subject. It was descriptive rubric to describe students' activities during the observation period.

After doing the planning stages, the researchers would make the initial activity, the main activity and the closing activity. At the initial activity, the lecturer used experiential learning model. The lecturers would explain the material in one semester. Then, the lecturer also made students

in groups to have field activity to make observations. There were two meetings for delivering the materials of ideas and business opportunities and creativity and innovation.

The main activities were activities which the lecturer delivered the material using experiential learning model. In this study, the form of materials delivery was different with the usual learning. The lecturer emphasized on how students were ready to analyze the phenomena around the society on entrepreneurship. Furthermore, students should observe the entrepreneurial potential which existed in the environment. The output of this activity was students made the scientific paper based on their observations.

At the end of the learning, the lecturer explained the benefits of learning and collecting the assignment.

At the learning activity, the researchers conducted the observation. The implementation of observation involved several parties; i.e. the lecturer, the researchers, and colleagues. The observation was done based on the observation sheets. The observers investigate students' activities during the learning process, and whether the learning process was suitable to the lesson plan or not. Then, the collected data were analyzed to know students' activeness, the lecturer's activity and the learning process.

The observation result, students' evaluation, and field notes then were analyzed, described, and concluded at the reflection stage. The purpose of reflection was to determine the success of the learning process using the experiential learning model. The researchers and the observers analyzed the results of actions on cycle I and II to consider the cycle or not.

Cycle II was the improvement of the first cycle if the first action was not successful. In general, the implementation on the second cycle was equal to the implementation on the first cycle, but it paid more attention to the things which did not reach on the cycle I. It was done to achieve the expected objectives.

The research was conducted on the fourth semester students of economics education study program. It was chosen because the researchers did their daily teaching activities here. The study was conducted to improve the learning on the even semester in the academic year of 2016/2017. The research was conducted in two cycles, there were two meetings of each cycle.

The classroom action research was done through two cycles; each cycle consisted of planning, action, observation and reflection. Through these cycles, it was expected to improve students'

soft skills with experiential learning model. The subjects of the research were economics education students in 2015/2016 on entrepreneurship subject.

The investigated variables of the research were economics education students in 2015/2016 (input variable), using experiential learning model (process variable), improving students' soft skills on entrepreneurship subject (output variable).

The data were quantitative and qualitative data. Qualitative data were obtained and analyzed in the form of words; such as the result of interview with students, the result of the lecturer's observation, and the results of field notes. Then; quantitative data were data obtained from the calculation of the figures. The quantitative data were in the form of the observation result of students' activities and students' test results after following study using experiential learning model.

The data sources were from the economics education students in 2015/2016 to know how much improvement of students' soft skills after using experiential learning model.

The data were collected by observation. Observation technique was collecting data by observing the research object. In this study, there were three observers, i.e. the head of the research team and two researchers as his team. The process observation was made with reference to the observation guidelines which had been developed.

Furthermore, the data were also obtained through tests. Although the purpose of experiential learning model was to improve students' soft skills but the learning outcomes in the form of material mastery was also noteworthy. The test was used to determine students' learning outcomes.

Furthermore; it used also interview. Interview was in free guided interview type which the interview was just based on the outline of the required things. The results of the interview got the information on the learning model used by the lecturer, students' learning results, the constraints of entrepreneurial learning implementation, students' response on experiential learning model.

Beside that, it used also field notes. It was used to obtain information on activities which were not covered in the guidelines of observation. The researchers did this action.

The data were analyzed to draw conclusions. The collected data which were analyzed were the observation result of the lecturer, and students, the result of interviews, the results of field notes, and the results of students' evalua-

tions. They were analyzed in the form of description.

The instruments of the study were: 1) the data collection instrument, i.e the observation sheet, interview, field notes sheet, students' test sheet; 2) The analysis guidance instrument; i.e. descriptive rubrics soft skills.

The indicator of the performance was a criteria used to know the success rate of the research activities of the class action research to enhance or improve the teaching and learning process in the classroom.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### The Implementation of the Research

The implementation process included several stages of the research; i.e. the preparation and the implementation of the action. The preparation stage were making the lesson plan on the cycle 1 and cycle 2, preparing the material which would be presented on the cycle 1 and cycle 2, creating the evaluation tool and describing the jobs for each researcher.

The lesson plan emphasized on the purpose of learning; it was how students were able to read the entrepreneurial opportunities based on their situation analysis in the surrounding environment so it produced an entrepreneurial idea. Then, students were able to make their creativity to generate ideas of entrepreneurship and innovation based on the market needs. In addition, the evaluation tool was in the form of an assessment rubric that accommodate elements of students soft skills on entrepreneurship subject. Descriptive rubrics were created to describe students' activities during the observation period.

Then; the assignment for students was analyzing the business opportunities to explore students' knowledge based on the observation which had been made in a certain place. Next, the lecturer also gave the case study done by asking questions; such as: the trend of people's needs, the supporting resources of the business place, the business success belief, the potential business place and innovation which could be done. Giving the assignment was done to explore students' understanding on the business environment, and how they could analyze and and innovate the ideas.

Before implementing the experiential learning model, the researchers observed to determine the initial condition of economics education students in 2015/2016 on entrepreneurship subject. The results of preliminary observation made by the research team using the same scoring rubric used for cycle I and II could be seen on Table 1.

ric used for cycle I and II could be seen on Table 1.

**Table 1.** The Students' Data at the Initial Condition

Dimensions	Criteria in percent (%)		
	Very good	Good	Bad
Confidence	22.9 %	31.2 %	45.8 %
Task and result oriented	20.8 %	16.6 %	62.5 %
Being courageous to take risks	18.7 %	16.6 %	64.6 %
Leadership	16.6 %	8.3 %	75 %
Originality	16.6 %	22.9 %	60.4 %
Future oriented	16.6 %	27 %	56.3 %

Source: The processed primary data

From the data above, it showed that students' soft skills which could be students' basis to have an entrepreneurial spirit was still low and below the expectation. It could be seen from the low level on students' confidence, on leadership, on originality, on future oriented and other dimensions. Through experiential learning model, it was expected that their soft skills went up.

Improving students' soft skills was important, it was confirmed by Utaminingsih (2011) which stated that soft skills played the important role in achieving the career and influenced on self-development. Then; the findings showed that economics education students were interested on entrepreneurship. It could be seen from students' enthusiasm in learning and even some students had their own entrepreneurship outside the university.

Giving the learning materials using the experiential learning model on entrepreneurial learning was expected to be appropriate. It was in line with Prasetyo's opinion (2011), he stated that entrepreneurship education and training should pay attention and emphasized on various important aspects related to entrepreneurship itself. The important aspects which supported the success and failure of a learning process on entrepreneurship education were; learning objectives, learning materials, teaching methods, facilitators and evaluation format.

Based on the semester lesson plan, then the implementation on the first cycle made in the second and third meetings. It was done because the first meeting was used to compare the conditions of students' soft skills in acquiring entrepre-

neurial material between using the lecturing and using the experiential learning model.

From the cycle I, there was improvement of students' soft skills education in 2015/2016 for 48 students. It could be seen that students were more active than before and they felt more confident to express their opinions. The result of observation also showed the improvement, as the following Table 2.

**Table 2.** The Data of Students'condition on the Cycle I

Dimensions	Criteria in percent (%)		
	Very good	Good	Bad
Confidence	37.5 %	41.6 %	20.8 %
Task and result oriented	31.2 %	27.1 %	41.6 %
Being courageous to take risks	25 %	31.6 %	43.7 %
Leadership	29.2 %	20.8 %	50 %
Originality	22.9 %	31.3 %	45.8 %
Future oriented	27 %	41.6 %	31.3 %

Source: the processed primary data

From the table above shows an increase in the dimensions measured in this study after using experiential learning model learning. However, this improvement it is still can be driven in case of habituation in the model of experiential learning, because students' soft skills can be increased through habituation. to prove it, the study continued into the second cycle.

The implementation steps on the second cycle were similar to the cycle I. The difference was only on the materials provided ; it was about creativity and innovation.

The second cycle was done in meeting 3 and meeting 4. The results of experiential learning model with creativity and innovation materials showed that students' soft skills improved

accordance with the criteria established by the researchers. The improvements could be seen in the Table 3.

Here is the table which compares the increasing soft skills in percent from the initial condition until cycle II (Table 4).

**Table 3.** The Data of Students'condition Cycle II

Dimensions	Criteria in percent (%)		
	Very good	Good	Bad
Confidence	75 %	18.7 %	6.2 %
Task and result oriented	43.7 %	45.8 %	10.4 %
Being courageous to take risks	29.1 %	33.3 %	37.5 %
Leadership	29.1 %	58.3 %	12.5 %
Originality	27 %	62.5 %	10.4 %
Future oriented	35.4 %	62.5 %	22.9 %

Source: The processed primary data

Based on the table above, it could be seen the increase of dimensions on confidence (52.1%), task and result oriented (22.9%), being courageous to take risks (10.4%), leadership (12.5%), originality (10.4%), and future oriented (18.8%). From these results, the dimension of confidence had the highest percentage.

The dimension of confidence experienced the most significant improvement, it was not only from the rubric done by peers, but it was also obtained from the observation of the class presentation. Students' confidence increased when it compared before implementing the experiential learning model. Many students were active in asking questions and responding them. Then, the dimension of task-oriented also showed improvement. It was proven by the efforts of each team to perform well. Next, the dimension of being cou-

**Table 4.** Recapitulation of the Observation Result

Dimensions	Very good			Good			Bad		
	IC	CI	CII	IC	CI	CII	IC	CI	CII
Confidence	22.9	37.5	75	31.2	41.6	18,7	45.8	20.8	6.2
Task and result oriented	20.8	31.2	43.7	16.6	27.1	45,8	62.5	41.6	10.4
Being courageous to take risks	18.7	25	29.1	16.6	31.6	33,3	64.6	43.7	37.5
Leadership	16.6	29.2	29.1	8.3	20.8	58,3	75	50	12.5
Originality	16.6	22.9	27	22.9	31.3	62,5	60.4	45.8	10.4
Future oriented	16.6	27	35.4	27	41.6	62,5	56.3	31.3	22.9

Notes: IC = Initial Condition; CI = Cycle I; C2= Cycle II



rageous to take risks was seen from students' decisions to perform the tasks appropriately based on their ability.

The increase on the dimension of leadership could be seen from student's role as the head of the group who led the team well by directing and dividing up the jobs for each member of the group. Next, the increase on the dimension of originality could be seen from the selected title of each team which had the novelty value and the originality. The ideas were different among the groups. Furthermore, on the dimension of future oriented, it could be seen that students did the jobs and thought of the things faced in the future.

Based on the study, experiential learning model was effective in improving students' soft skills through entrepreneurial learning. It was in line with Prasetyo's opinion (2011), he explained that entrepreneurship training with experiential learning model was suitable applied in adult learning.

In principle, entrepreneurship subject emphasized on how students' attitude changed after attending the subjects. The attitude changes were about the passion and interest in entrepreneurship. It was in line with the concept of entrepreneurship itself, i.e. entrepreneurship was the behavior attitude. Setiarini (2013) described that entrepreneurship was an attitude, a spirit and an ability to create something new which was extremely valuable and useful for themselves and others. For the success of entrepreneurial learning, it was measured from the change of students' attitude and character.

Based on the view above, the results of this study explained that experiential learning model was proven to improve students' attitudes on their confidence, being courageous to take risks, and leadership. It was in line with Setiarini's research (2013). She said that the business plan as the implementation of entrepreneurial learning gave the positive impact to explore students' entrepreneurial spirit and attitude. From these two studies, it showed the importance of the positive attitude changes as the output of entrepreneurial learning.

The positive attitude change as the effect of experiential learning model was also supported by the learning character which developed students' experience. Sato and Han (2016) found that experiential learning basically combined students' experience through various activities and strengthening the teacher's learning materials. Another finding from Munif (2009) described that the important aspect of experiential learning

model was also able to improve students' learning outcomes.

## CONCLUSION

Based on the results above, it can be concluded that experiential learning model was effective to improve students' soft skills on entrepreneurship subject. It can be seen from the data presented that there were increases on the dimensions of soft skills. The dimension of confidence increased significantly compared to before implementing the experiential learning models. It was proven from the increase of the number of students who expressed their opinions in the classroom. The factor which affected the formation of students' soft skills was conditioned stimulus continuously. It was proven by the significant increase from the first cycle to the second cycle. Students experienced the increased soft skills when they were fully involved on the implementation.

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