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The Role Of Experiential Learning In Entrepreneurship Education In Developing Entrepreneurial Competencies Among UINSI Samarinda Students

Wahdatun Nisa
UIN Sultan Aji Muhammad Idris Samarinda, Indonesia
Norvadewi
UIN Sultan Aji Muhammad Idris Samarinda, Indonesia

Corresponding Author: *Wahdatunnisa@uinsi.ac.id*

Abstract

This study examines the role of experiential learning in entrepreneurship education in developing entrepreneurial competencies among students at Universitas Islam Negeri Sultan Aji Muhammad Idris (UINSI) Samarinda. A qualitative case study approach was employed, focusing on a six-member student project group within an entrepreneurship course. Data were obtained through field observation and documentary analysis, including learning plans, reflection journals, business model records, product portfolios, transaction reports, and lecturer feedback. The data were analyzed thematically using the four stages of experiential learning: concrete experience, reflective observation, abstract conceptualization, and active experimentation. The findings reveal that experiential learning facilitated the practical application of entrepreneurial knowledge through product development, customer interaction, reflection, and business strategy improvement. Marketing, teamwork, and initiative emerged as prominent competencies, while financial management and business risk assessment remained comparatively limited. Lecturer guidance and structured reflection supported the integration of practical experiences with entrepreneurial decision-making. However, competency development varied according to learning activities and student participation. The study concludes that experiential learning provides meaningful opportunities for developing entrepreneurial competencies when supported by systematic reflection, instructional guidance, and comprehensive assessment.

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Keywords: Entrepreneurial Competencies; Entrepreneurship Education; Experiential Learning; Higher Education; Qualitative Research.

INTRODUCTION

Entrepreneurship education has become an essential component of higher education as universities seek to prepare graduates with the knowledge, skills, and capabilities required to respond to economic challenges and emerging business opportunities. Beyond encouraging students to establish businesses, entrepreneurship education is increasingly expected to cultivate entrepreneurial competencies that enable individuals to recognize opportunities, generate innovative ideas, mobilize resources, and make decisions in uncertain environments. Morris et al. (2013) emphasized that entrepreneurship education should facilitate the development of entrepreneurial competencies through meaningful learning experiences and practical engagement. Similarly, Nabi et al. (2017) highlighted the importance of pedagogical approaches in shaping entrepreneurial learning outcomes, particularly those related to entrepreneurial knowledge, skills, and behavior. However, the development of entrepreneurial competencies requires more than theoretical instruction because students must also understand how entrepreneurial knowledge can be applied to actual business situations. Consequently, learning approaches that connect conceptual understanding with practical experience have become increasingly relevant in university entrepreneurship education.

Experiential learning represents a pedagogical approach that positions direct experience as a fundamental component of the learning process. Kolb (1984) conceptualized experiential learning as a continuous cycle involving four interconnected stages: concrete experience, reflective observation, abstract conceptualization, and active experimentation. Concrete experience provides opportunities for learners to participate directly in meaningful activities, while reflective observation encourages them to critically examine their experiences and identify important lessons. Abstract conceptualization involves connecting these reflections with theoretical principles, whereas active experimentation enables learners to apply their newly developed understanding in subsequent situations. In entrepreneurship education, these stages can be implemented through business projects, product development, market observation, customer interaction, business simulations, and entrepreneurial evaluations. Through these activities, students encounter practical challenges that require them to analyze problems, formulate strategies, and evaluate the consequences of their decisions. Experiential learning

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therefore provides a theoretical foundation for understanding how entrepreneurial competencies may develop through the interaction between experience, reflection, conceptual understanding, and practical action.

Entrepreneurial competencies encompass a multidimensional set of abilities that support individuals in identifying, developing, and implementing entrepreneurial opportunities. Bacigalupo et al. (2016), through the Entrepreneurship Competence Framework (EntreComp), identified three principal competence areas: ideas and opportunities, resources, and into action. These areas encompass the capacity to identify opportunities, demonstrate creativity, mobilize resources, manage uncertainty, collaborate with others, and transform entrepreneurial ideas into meaningful outcomes. Within the university context, entrepreneurial competencies may be demonstrated through students' abilities to design business plans, develop products, communicate with customers, formulate marketing strategies, manage basic financial resources, and solve practical business problems. Nevertheless, entrepreneurial competence development does not necessarily occur uniformly across these dimensions. Students who demonstrate effective communication and teamwork may still experience difficulties in financial planning, risk assessment, or business decision-making. Iqbal et al. (2022) demonstrated that the relationship between entrepreneurship education and entrepreneurial competencies involves different curricular and environmental components, suggesting that competence development should be understood within the broader learning context rather than treated as an automatic consequence of participation in entrepreneurship courses.

Previous empirical studies have demonstrated the potential contribution of experience-based entrepreneurship education while also revealing variations in learning outcomes. Silveyra-León et al. (2023) reported improvements in entrepreneurial competencies following students' participation in entrepreneurship challenges involving practical business activities. Similarly, Silitonga et al. (2024) found that business simulation games supported the development of cognitive and non-cognitive entrepreneurial competencies among undergraduate students. However, Abd Rahim et al. (2022) demonstrated that experiential learning and case study immersion produced different outcomes depending on the competencies being examined, particularly entrepreneurial self-efficacy and opportunity recognition. These findings suggest that the relationship between experiential learning and entrepreneurial development is influenced by the nature of learning activities, the characteristics of students, and the educational environment. Although previous studies have provided valuable quantitative evidence

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concerning entrepreneurial learning outcomes, understanding how students experience practical learning activities, interpret business challenges, and develop competencies through reflection and experimentation requires closer examination of the learning process itself.

An important issue in entrepreneurship education research concerns the need to understand the processes through which educational experiences contribute to entrepreneurial competence development. Nabi et al. (2017) identified limitations in existing research, particularly the frequent emphasis on short-term learning outcomes and insufficient descriptions of the pedagogical practices underlying those outcomes. Such limitations indicate the importance of examining not only the competencies students demonstrate but also the learning experiences through which these competencies emerge. From a qualitative perspective, entrepreneurial competence development can be explored by examining students' participation in business activities, their responses to practical difficulties, their interpretation of feedback, and the strategies they formulate to improve entrepreneurial performance. This perspective is particularly relevant because experiential learning involves interactions among individual experiences, reflective processes, conceptual understanding, and the surrounding learning environment. A qualitative investigation can therefore provide a more detailed understanding of how experiential learning is implemented, how students engage with each learning stage, and what contextual circumstances facilitate or constrain the development of entrepreneurial competencies.

Universitas Islam Negeri Sultan Aji Muhammad Idris (UINSI) Samarinda provides a relevant educational setting for investigating experiential learning within university entrepreneurship education. The documented entrepreneurship learning activities at the institution include business planning, product development, direct interaction with potential customers, marketing practice, reflection, and product improvement. Field observation and documentary records describe how students participating in an entrepreneurial project encountered practical business challenges, evaluated customer responses, and modified aspects of their products and marketing strategies. The available documentation also illustrates differences in students' demonstrated entrepreneurial abilities, particularly in communication, teamwork, marketing, and financial management. These experiences indicate that entrepreneurship learning involves interconnected cognitive, practical, and interpersonal processes that may not be adequately understood through the assessment of learning outcomes alone. Furthermore, students' previous experiences, access to learning resources, group interactions, and opportunities for

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experimentation may influence how they interpret and respond to entrepreneurial challenges. Investigating these experiences within the institutional context of UINSI Samarinda is therefore important for understanding the role of experiential learning in entrepreneurial competence development.

Despite the relevance of experiential learning to entrepreneurship education, further contextual understanding is needed regarding how its learning stages are implemented and experienced by university students. In particular, the relationships between practical business experiences, reflective activities, conceptual understanding, experimentation, and observable entrepreneurial competencies require detailed exploration. Addressing this concern, the present study aims to explore the role of experiential learning in developing entrepreneurial competencies among students at UINSI Samarinda through a qualitative case-study approach. The investigation focuses on how students engage in entrepreneurial learning activities, how they interpret and respond to practical business experiences, how entrepreneurial competencies are manifested during these activities, and what factors support or constrain their development. The study is guided by Kolb's experiential learning theory and the broader conceptualization of entrepreneurial competence. By examining the learning process within its actual educational context, this research seeks to contribute a contextual understanding of experiential entrepreneurship education and provide practical insights for designing learning activities that support entrepreneurial competence development in Indonesian higher education institutions.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study employed a qualitative approach with a case study design to explore the role of experiential learning in developing entrepreneurial competencies among students at Universitas Islam Negeri Sultan Aji Muhammad Idris (UINSI) Samarinda, Indonesia. The case study approach was selected because it enables an in-depth examination of educational experiences, learning processes, and contextual factors within a specific setting (Rashid et al., 2019). The research was conducted in an entrepreneurship course identified as KW-01 during the first semester of the 2026/2027 academic year. The documented class consisted of 30 students, while the investigation focused on a six-member entrepreneurial project group designated as K03. The group participated in entrepreneurial activities involving business planning, product development, customer interaction, marketing, and product evaluation. These activities provided a context for exploring how practical experiences contributed to students' understanding and

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demonstration of entrepreneurial competencies. The investigation emphasized the interpretation of learning experiences and entrepreneurial practices within the observed case rather than statistical generalization to the broader student population.

Data were collected through structured field observation and documentary analysis. Field observation was conducted on October 21, 2026, from 09:00 to 11:00 Central Indonesia Time, focusing on students' participation in entrepreneurial activities, reflective discussions, responses to customer feedback, and practical business decisions. The observation framework incorporated four experiential learning stages: concrete experience, reflective observation, abstract conceptualization, and active experimentation. These stages were used to examine the progression of learning from direct participation to reflection, conceptual understanding, and subsequent practical action, consistent with contemporary applications of experiential learning in higher education (Chiu, 2019). Entrepreneurial competencies were explored through observable behaviors related to opportunity recognition, creativity, business planning, marketing, financial management, decision-making, communication, teamwork, initiative, and problem-solving. Documentary analysis involved educational and project records covering October 7–21, 2026, including curriculum documents, course plans, project guidelines, assessment rubrics, reflective journals, Business Model Canvas documents, product portfolios, financial records, and presentation feedback. These materials were examined to obtain contextual information and identify evidence supporting the interpretation of observed entrepreneurial learning activities.

Data were interpreted using a thematic analysis approach informed by Braun and Clarke (2022). The analytical procedure involved familiarization with the collected material, identification of meaningful information, initial coding, development and refinement of themes, and interpretation of patterns across the observation and documentary records. The four experiential learning stages served as initial analytical categories, while additional themes were identified from the documented entrepreneurial activities and contextual observations. The analysis focused on practical entrepreneurial engagement, reflective learning, application of business knowledge, experimentation and product improvement, manifestations of entrepreneurial competencies, and factors supporting or constraining the learning process. Findings from the observation records were compared with the documentary evidence to examine consistency between learning activities and demonstrated entrepreneurial practices. This comparison supported the credibility of the interpretation by connecting field observations

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with available educational and project records. The analysis emphasized contextual meanings and observable learning processes without conducting statistical hypothesis testing or making causal claims. The findings were interpreted within the boundaries of the documented case to provide an in-depth understanding of experiential learning in entrepreneurship education at UINSI Samarinda.

RESEARCH RESULTS

The qualitative analysis identified four interconnected themes concerning the implementation of experiential learning in entrepreneurship education at UINSI Samarinda: the enactment of an experience-based learning cycle, the translation of reflection into business decisions, the uneven manifestation of entrepreneurial competencies, and the influence of instructional and contextual conditions. These themes emerged from field observations and a review of curriculum documents, project guidelines, reflection journals, business model records, product portfolios, transaction notes, and lecturer feedback. The analysis focused on project group K03, comprising six students from entrepreneurship class KW-01, which had 30 enrolled students. The observed activity took place on October 21, 2026, while the documentary materials covered project activities conducted between October 7 and 21, 2026.

Implementation of the Experiential Learning Cycle

The findings indicate that experiential learning was incorporated into the entrepreneurship course through a structured business project involving product development, market interaction, reflection, conceptual adjustment, and repeated experimentation. Group K03 developed a ginger–lemongrass beverage and used the product as the basis for exploring customer needs, communicating product value, calculating basic costs, and responding to market feedback. The course syllabus and project guidelines established a learning sequence that required students to formulate a business model, conduct two rounds of product offerings, document customer responses, and evaluate their decisions. This design provided an instructional structure within which practical experience could be connected to entrepreneurial knowledge.

During the concrete experience stage, students presented beverage samples and interacted with prospective buyers. Three group members took turns communicating with visitors, while other members were responsible for packaging and transaction records. This

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division of tasks allowed the group to undertake several business functions during the same activity. However, participation was not identical across members. The observed learning experience therefore represented a collective project process rather than evidence that every student acquired the same competencies.

Reflective observation was evident when the group reviewed the limitations of its initial offering. The students identified insufficient product-label information and overly general promotional messages as problems that may have affected customer understanding. Four of the six members contributed verbally to the concluding discussion, while the lecturer encouraged the group to document customer responses more systematically. The reflection journals dated October 14 and 21 also recorded criticisms concerning packaging information and the group's proposed improvements. These findings demonstrate that reflection was embedded in the project activities, although the level and form of individual participation varied.

The abstract conceptualization stage was reflected in revisions to the group's Business Model Canvas. The October 21 version provided a clearer customer segment and emphasized product practicality and easily understood ingredient information. Students connected customer comments to the concepts of customer needs, value proposition, segmentation, and cost considerations. Rather than abandoning the initial business idea, they retained the selling price of IDR 12,000 and adjusted the way the product was presented. This process illustrates how practical observations were translated into more explicit business reasoning.

Active experimentation occurred when the students revised the product label, adjusted packaging presentation, modified their promotional explanation, and offered the beverage to another group of visitors. The documented revisions are important because they indicate that reflection generated observable changes in the group's business practices. The four stages were therefore identifiable within a single project episode, although the available evidence does not establish that every participant completed the learning cycle to the same degree.

Table 1 summarizes the relationship between the four experiential learning stages, the activities documented during the project, and the entrepreneurial competencies manifested through those activities.

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Table 1. Evidence-Based Mapping of Experiential Learning Stages and Entrepreneurial Competencies

Experiential learning stage	Documented learning activity	Manifestation of entrepreneurial competency	Evidence
Concrete experience	Developing and offering ginger–lemongrass beverages; communicating with visitors; recording transactions	Customer interaction, opportunity recognition, basic selling practices, teamwork	Observation LO-K03-01; D03, D07, D08
Reflective observation	Identifying unclear labeling and generic promotional messages; discussing visitor feedback	Critical reflection, problem identification, communication, decision evaluation	Observation LO-K03-01; D05, D09
Abstract conceptualization	Refining customer segmentation and value proposition in the Business Model Canvas; considering selling price and costs	Business planning, strategic reasoning, opportunity evaluation	Observation LO-K03-01; D02, D06, D08
Active experimentation	Revising packaging and promotional communication; conducting another product offering	Adaptability, initiative, marketing, problem-solving	Observation LO-K03-01; D05, D07, D09

Note. D01–D11 refer to the documentary review codes. The mapping is an analytical interpretation of documented activities, not a statistical test of relationships between variables.

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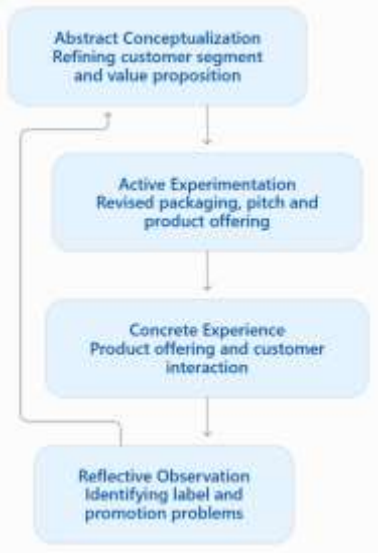


Figure 1. Analytical Reconstruction of the Experiential Learning Cycle in Group K03

Note: The figure reconstructs the learning sequence supported by the observation record and documents D03, D05–D09. The feedback loop represents the experiential learning framework; it does not imply that additional undocumented cycles occurred.

Manifestation of Entrepreneurial Competencies

The observation record suggests that the practical project provided opportunities for students to demonstrate multiple entrepreneurial competencies. However, these competencies were not manifested equally. Marketing, teamwork, and initiative received the highest recorded observational scores, whereas financial management received the lowest. Opportunity identification, creativity, business planning, decision-making, communication, and problem-solving occupied an intermediate position in the observation rubric.

Marketing competence was particularly visible during direct engagement with prospective buyers. Students explained the product, responded to price-related questions, and recorded visitor feedback. Their promotional communication was subsequently modified to address weaknesses identified during the earlier offering. These activities provide behavioral evidence of an ability to engage in basic customer-oriented marketing. Nevertheless, the observation does not establish proficiency in more advanced marketing functions, such as systematic market segmentation, customer retention, or long-term campaign evaluation.

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Teamwork was another prominent competency. The six group members divided responsibilities across production, customer interaction, transaction recording, and documentation. The observation also identified initiative when two members independently proposed improvements to the product display and label. These actions indicate that students were able to coordinate tasks and respond to immediate operational challenges without relying entirely on direct instructions.

Financial management represented a comparatively less developed dimension. The group estimated ingredient and packaging costs at approximately IDR 7,200 per unit during the initial offering and IDR 6,900 per unit in the subsequent offering. However, the calculations excluded labor costs. The group also recognized the possibility of unsold inventory without developing a detailed estimate of associated losses. Consequently, the available evidence supports the presence of elementary cost awareness but not comprehensive financial planning or risk assessment.

Communication and problem-solving were visible but remained incomplete in specific respects. Students could explain the beverage's basic characteristics and respond to feedback, yet questions concerning product shelf life still required lecturer guidance. Similarly, the group addressed labeling problems but did not document a comprehensive assessment of product durability or inventory-related risk. These limitations demonstrate that participation in practical business activities generated observable learning opportunities without ensuring uniformly advanced competence across entrepreneurial domains.

Table 2 presents the ten competency indicators recorded during the observation. The scores are retained as descriptive field evidence and are not treated as individual-level measurements or inferential research variables.

Table 2. Observed Entrepreneurial Competency Profile of Group K03

Entrepreneurial competency	Recorded score	Main behavioral evidence
Opportunity identification	3	Identified potential demand for a practical warm beverage
Creativity	3	Proposed improvements to ingredient labeling and packaging

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Business planning	3	Described customer targets, suppliers, resources, and sales channels
Marketing	4	Tested promotional explanations and recorded customer feedback
Financial management	2	Estimated ingredient and packaging costs but omitted labor
Decision-making and risk awareness	3	Retained selling price while adjusting presentation; risk calculations remained limited
Communication	3	Presented product benefits but required guidance on shelf-life questions
Teamwork	4	Distributed production, sales, transaction, and documentation responsibilities
Initiative and persistence	4	Proposed display and labeling improvements without direct instruction
Problem-solving	3	Modified labels and service procedures in response to criticism

Note. Scores reproduce the field observation record (LO-K03-01). They describe one group during one observed activity and should not be interpreted as validated measurements of all UINSI Samarinda students. The scoring scale is ordinal.

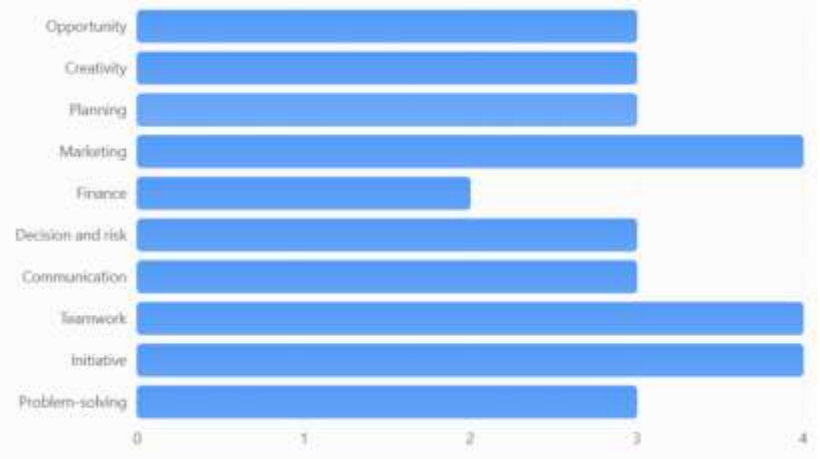


Figure 2. Descriptive Profile of Entrepreneurial Competencies Observed in Group K03

Note. The visualization displays the original observational rubric scores. It is not a statistical comparison of student-level competencies or evidence of a treatment effect.

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Documented Changes Across Two Product-Offering Stages

The project portfolio and transaction records provided descriptive evidence of changes between the initial and subsequent product offerings. During the first stage, the group recorded 9 purchases among 20 visitors. During the second stage, it recorded 14 purchases among another 20 visitors. These figures correspond to observed purchase proportions of 45% and 70%, respectively. Because the two stages involved different visitors and other relevant conditions were not controlled, the 25-percentage-point difference cannot be attributed specifically to experiential learning, packaging revisions, or promotional changes.

The practical significance of the comparison lies primarily in the students' engagement with feedback and decision-making. The group documented an initial business problem, modified its offering, collected additional responses, and compared the outcomes. These activities demonstrate an iterative approach to entrepreneurial practice. The records therefore provide stronger evidence of a learning process than of a measurable improvement in business performance attributable to a particular intervention.

The cost records similarly show an adjustment in estimated ingredient and packaging expenses, from approximately IDR 7,200 to IDR 6,900 per unit. This difference reflects a documented change in the group's recorded direct costs, but it does not establish improved profitability because labor expenses and other possible operational costs were not included. The distinction is essential when evaluating entrepreneurial competencies: the ability to record transactions is not equivalent to the ability to determine full production costs or business viability.

Table 3. Descriptive Comparison of the Two Documented Product-Offering Stages

Indicator	Initial offering	Subsequent offering	Interpretation
Visitors recorded	20	20	Different visitor groups
Purchases recorded	9	14	Descriptive transaction counts
Observed purchase proportion	45%	70%	Difference of 25 percentage points; no causal inference
Selling price per unit	IDR 12,000	IDR 12,000	Price retained

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Recorded ingredient and packaging cost per unit	Approximately IDR 7,200	Approximately IDR 6,900	Labor and other costs excluded
Packaging and promotional presentation	Earlier version	Revised version	Documented adaptation following feedback
Full profitability assessment	Unavailable	Unavailable	Insufficient cost information

Source: Project portfolio D07, cost and transaction records D08, reflection journal D05, and field observation LO-K03-01.

Instructional Support and Contextual Constraints

The implementation of experiential learning was supported by explicit project instructions, lecturer feedback, and access to basic resources. The course documents required students to engage in practical business activities rather than rely exclusively on classroom explanations. During the observed session, the lecturer asked the group to justify its pricing decisions, demonstrate a record of product changes, and account for costs that had not yet been included. Such guidance encouraged students to connect experience with evaluation and conceptual reasoning.

At the same time, several contextual conditions limited the learning process. The project was conducted with limited capital contributed by group members, and the period available for market testing was short. Participation also differed across tasks, with some students contributing more actively to discussion and others concentrating on production or transactions. These observations suggest that the learning opportunities provided by a group project may not translate into equivalent individual experiences.

The documentary review identified curriculum documents, a course syllabus, project guidelines, assessment rubrics, reflection journals, business model records, product portfolios, transaction records, and lecturer feedback. However, a separate entrepreneurship incubation report was not available, and the record of standardized pre- and post-competency assessments had not been examined. Accordingly, the available evidence supports an analysis of project-based entrepreneurial learning within the course but does not justify claims about formal incubation outcomes or measured changes in students' competencies over time.

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Taken together, the results indicate that experiential learning was enacted through a recognizable sequence of entrepreneurial activities in group K03. Its clearest manifestations were iterative problem-solving, customer-oriented marketing, collaborative task execution, and student initiative. The findings also reveal competency gaps in comprehensive costing and business risk assessment, illustrating that practical participation alone is insufficient to ensure balanced entrepreneurial competence.

DISCUSSION

The findings suggest that experiential learning played a meaningful instructional role in making entrepreneurial competencies observable through authentic business activities at UINSI Samarinda. Rather than demonstrating a statistically measured effect, the case illustrates how practical engagement, guided reflection, business reasoning, and repeated experimentation can be organized into a coherent entrepreneurship education process. This interpretation is consistent with the experiential learning cycle discussed by Chiu (2019), which emphasizes the transformation of experience into learning through reflection, conceptualization, and action. In the present case, the educational significance of product testing was not confined to the act of selling a beverage. It also involved identifying a problem, reconsidering assumptions about customers, revising a business proposition, and implementing an alternative course of action.

A central finding is the importance of connecting practical experience to structured reflection. The students' initial product offering exposed weaknesses in labeling and promotional communication. These experiences became educationally meaningful when the group examined the feedback and translated it into specific changes. The reflection journals and revised Business Model Canvas indicate that students did not merely repeat the selling activity; they used information from the earlier offering to reconsider how the product should be positioned. This finding supports the view that entrepreneurship education benefits from pedagogical arrangements that connect practical assignments with explicit learning objectives and feedback. Iqbal et al. (2022) similarly highlighted the importance of the entrepreneurial curriculum and learning environment in the development of student competencies. The present findings extend this discussion by illustrating how those curricular elements can be enacted through observable project decisions in a specific university setting.

The documented project also supports the relevance of learning through entrepreneurial action. Silveyra-León et al. (2023) reported improvements in entrepreneurial competencies

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following a structured entrepreneurship challenge involving undergraduate students. Likewise, Suharto et al. (2025) found that project-based learning and student involvement were associated with entrepreneurial competence in economics education. The UINSI Samarinda case is consistent with the practical orientation emphasized in these studies, particularly in opportunity recognition, marketing, teamwork, and problem-solving. Nevertheless, the methodological distinction must be maintained. Whereas those studies employed quantitative assessments of educational outcomes, the present investigation identifies competency manifestations through qualitative observation and documentary evidence. It therefore explains how particular competencies appeared during a learning episode without estimating their magnitude of development.

An important contribution of the present case is the recognition that experiential learning may support different competencies to different degrees. Marketing, teamwork, and initiative were the most prominent behaviors in the observation record, while financial management remained less developed. This pattern can be understood in relation to the tasks students were required to perform. Selling a product and responding to visitors created immediate opportunities to practice communication, coordination, and adaptation. By contrast, comprehensive financial management required knowledge and procedures beyond the recording of basic ingredient and packaging costs. The exclusion of labor expenses and the absence of detailed inventory-risk calculations indicate that authentic business experience does not automatically produce an equally comprehensive understanding of all business functions.

This interpretation is relevant to the findings of Abd Rahim et al. (2022), who demonstrated that the effectiveness of entrepreneurship pedagogies varies according to the learning outcomes being targeted. Their study suggested that experiential learning and case-based approaches can contribute differently to entrepreneurial self-efficacy and opportunity recognition. The implication for the present case is that educators should not assume that a single practical project will develop every entrepreneurial competency equally. Instead, learning activities and assessment requirements should be deliberately matched to the competencies they are intended to cultivate. For example, a market-testing project can be complemented by structured exercises on full-cost calculation, pricing justification, inventory risk, and basic cash-flow planning.

The relationship between feedback and entrepreneurial adaptation is another noteworthy finding. Group K03 revised its product presentation after identifying weaknesses

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during the initial offering. The subsequent activity recorded a higher proportion of purchases, although the difference cannot be causally attributed to the revisions. From a qualitative educational perspective, the significant observation is that students engaged in an evidence-informed decision process: they gathered feedback, identified problems, made adjustments, and evaluated subsequent information. Comparable principles are evident in research on business simulation games, which emphasizes the potential of active decision-making environments to support entrepreneurial competencies (Silitonga et al., 2024). However, simulation-based and real-product learning environments differ in their resources, risks, and forms of interaction. The relevance of this comparison lies in the shared educational emphasis on decisions and feedback, not in an assumption that both approaches produce identical outcomes.

The findings also draw attention to the role of the lecturer as a facilitator of experiential learning. The instructor did not simply evaluate whether the students had completed their product offering. The observed guidance directed attention toward the reasoning behind business decisions, the documentation of changes, and the limitations of cost calculations. This instructional role appears important because experience alone may leave misconceptions unexamined. By requiring students to justify their decisions, the lecturer helped connect operational activities with conceptual understanding. This aligns with Chiu's (2019) argument that experiential learning benefits from an intentionally designed educational process. It also resonates with Mahfud et al. (2025), whose findings emphasized the relevance of entrepreneurship education and lecturer-related factors in shaping entrepreneurial learning outcomes and intentions. Although the present study did not examine entrepreneurial intentions, it illustrates the practical instructional support through which entrepreneurial learning was organized.

Another issue concerns the distribution of learning opportunities within group-based entrepreneurship projects. All six members of K03 participated in the observed activity, but their involvement was differentiated by task. Four members were more prominent in discussion, while others concentrated on production and transaction recording. Such division of labor can facilitate efficient project execution and expose students to collaborative business operations. At the same time, it may restrict individual opportunities to practice certain skills. A student responsible primarily for production, for example, may have fewer opportunities to develop customer-facing communication than a student assigned to promotion. Therefore, group-level achievements should not be interpreted as proof of equivalent individual competency development.

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This observation has direct implications for entrepreneurship course design. A more comprehensive experiential learning strategy would incorporate role rotation, individual reflection records, and assessments that distinguish collective project performance from individual learning achievements. Requiring each student to participate in customer interaction, business planning, cost analysis, and evaluation would provide broader opportunities for competency development. Such practices could also make the relationship between learning activities and individual outcomes more transparent.

The results further suggest that the quality of entrepreneurial learning should not be judged solely by immediate commercial performance. The recorded change from 9 to 14 purchases provides useful contextual information, but its educational value is primarily descriptive because the two offerings involved different visitors. Focusing exclusively on transaction counts could obscure important learning outcomes, including students' ability to analyze feedback, identify operational weaknesses, and justify business decisions. A more appropriate assessment framework would examine both business artifacts and the reasoning processes reflected in them. These artifacts could include successive Business Model Canvas versions, customer-feedback logs, revised product prototypes, pricing calculations, and individual reflective accounts.

For UINSI Samarinda, the findings support the continued integration of structured experiential activities into entrepreneurship education, provided that practical assignments are accompanied by reflection, conceptual guidance, and competency-specific assessment. The existing project format already contains important elements of this approach. Its potential could be strengthened by requiring complete cost accounting, documenting risk-mitigation decisions, rotating responsibilities among group members, and monitoring competency development across multiple project cycles. These improvements would allow entrepreneurship education to address not only students' willingness to participate in business activities but also the depth and breadth of their entrepreneurial judgment.

The study contributes a context-specific account of how experiential learning is enacted in entrepreneurship education within an Indonesian Islamic university. Its principal contribution is explanatory rather than causal: it identifies the learning activities through which entrepreneurial competencies became visible and the contextual conditions that shaped those manifestations. The case shows that experience, reflection, and experimentation can create opportunities for entrepreneurial learning, while also demonstrating that competence

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development remains uneven and dependent on task design, instructional support, and individual participation.

These interpretations should be considered in light of the study's boundaries. The observation focused on one six-member project group within a larger entrepreneurship class, and the available documents did not include verified individual pre- and post-assessments. The two rounds of product offerings were not conducted under controlled conditions, and the observation scores were descriptive rather than inferential measures. Consequently, the findings should not be generalized to all UINSI Samarinda students or interpreted as evidence of a causal effect of experiential learning. Future qualitative investigations could examine multiple project groups, include complete interview transcripts and longitudinal observations, and compare individual learning experiences across different entrepreneurship activities. Such work would help clarify which experiential learning arrangements most consistently support particular entrepreneurial competencies.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that experiential learning plays an important role in facilitating the development of entrepreneurial competencies through practical entrepreneurship education at UINSI Samarinda. The findings demonstrate that students' engagement in business projects provides opportunities to integrate theoretical knowledge with practical experience through concrete activities, reflective observation, abstract conceptualization, and active experimentation. These interconnected learning processes were evident in product development, customer interaction, business planning, evaluation of market feedback, and subsequent improvements to business strategies. The observed activities particularly supported the manifestation of marketing, teamwork, initiative, communication, and problem-solving competencies, indicating the educational value of integrating authentic entrepreneurial experiences into university learning.

Nevertheless, the development of entrepreneurial competencies was not uniform across the observed dimensions. Financial management and business risk assessment remained comparatively limited, highlighting the need for more comprehensive instructional guidance and competency-specific evaluation. The findings suggest that experiential learning should be supported by structured reflection, lecturer feedback, equitable participation, and systematic documentation of business decisions. As a qualitative case study involving one student project

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group, this research provides contextual evidence of how experiential learning facilitates entrepreneurial competency development rather than establishing a statistically measurable causal effect. Future studies should involve multiple student groups and longitudinal observations to provide a more comprehensive understanding of experiential learning implementation across different entrepreneurship education contexts.

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