Increasing the Competency of Prospective Coffee Entrepreneurs Through Experiential Training in Coffee Tourism Villages: Case Study of Young Entrepreneurs in Indonesia

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ABSTRACT

The growth of the coffee business has not been accompanied by an increase in entrepreneurship, one of the causes being a lack of competence which can hinder the development of new businesses. This research aims to understand and explore how entrepreneurs improve skills in the coffee business through experience-based training conducted at Malabar Mountain Coffee. This study provides academic and practical contributions to creating skilled entrepreneurs towards the Indonesian government's target of 1 million new young entrepreneurs. This refers to the Indonesian government's target to develop the economy and encourage the development of the business world in Indonesia. This research uses a qualitative methodology, specifically using a case study approach. Data was collected using observation and semi-structured interviews. Direct observations and interviews were carried out by established standards to answer research questions. Then the data is analysed, and an explanation of the findings obtained from this investigation is given. The research results found that all participants improved their skills through the experiential training they received. This has a very positive impact on increasing participants' competence in the form of skills in choosing the coffee they will sell later and also serving good coffee drinks to consumers.

1. INTRODUCTION

In Indonesia's economic development, Small Medium Enterprises (SMEs) occupy a strategic and important role. The proportion of SMEs is 99.99% of all national business actors or 62.9 million units, contributing around 61.07% of total GDP. One of the agribusiness commodities that has an attraction for SMEs today is coffee. Coffee products are widely regarded as popular beverages globally, with a longstanding history of sales and a continuously expanding market [1].

This can be seen from the increasing amount of Indonesian coffee consumption in the last 17 years. Increase in domestic consumption of Indonesian coffee from 0.72 kg/capita in 2008 to 1.27 kg/capita in 2013 and is predicted to be 1.5 kg/capita in 2019 [2]. Moreover, Indonesia, being ranked as the fourth largest coffee producer globally, following Brazil, Vietnam, and Colombia, has achieved a coffee production volume of around 650,000 tons annually. The majority of this production, approximately 96.2%, is contributed by the smallholder

plantation sector, while the remaining 10,000 tons is derived from the private plantation sector. The percentage contribution of the country's plantation sector is 2.3% per year, amounting to an average of 15,000 tons [3].

The increasing growth of downstream coffee businesses is influenced by changes in people's lifestyles which make coffee a daily drink, coupled with the growing trend of coffee consumption encouraging entrepreneurs to enter the MSME coffee business. However, the growth of the coffee business has not been accompanied by an increase in entrepreneurship [4]. This may be caused by a lack of financial independence and competence which can hinder the development of new businesses [5]. It should be noted that the majority of new businesses, more than 80%, fail in their first year of operation. In addition, the failure rate for small businesses in Indonesia is very high, reaching 78%. To overcome this, workshops and entrepreneurship training programs can be implemented to empower local communities and encourage the establishment of new businesses [6]. Apart from that, improving technical skills in the form of coffee business training [2], gaining a

comprehensive grasp of the quality of coffee goods, a thorough understanding of the quality of coffee products can really help entrepreneurs in making the right decisions regarding market segmentation, designing an effective marketing strategy, selecting appropriate raw materials, and identifying any hazards that need to be addressed [7].

One thing that can be done is experience-based training. In contrast to the conventional method of educating individuals, which prioritizes the acquisition of knowledge without a corresponding development of practical skills, experiential training has demonstrated efficacy in cultivating and maintaining proficient participants [8]. Entrepreneurs have the opportunity to reinforce and shape their existing knowledge and skills development while directly involved [9]. Simulation teaching has gained significant recognition and widespread implementation in various educational domains, particularly in the field of medicine, even in the most recent years [10]. In Jordan, there has been a growing recognition of the significance of experiential training as a mandatory certification prerequisite by the Accreditation and Quality Assurance Commission for Higher Education Institutions [11].

The implementation of experiential learning in the context of entrepreneurship aims to enhance the capabilities of entrepreneurs by providing them with the necessary skills and information to effectively enhance their productivity and business performance. In this educational process, individuals engage in active cognitive processes and modify their experiences as the foundation for acquiring knowledge. Individuals engage in a multifaceted process encompassing sensory perception, introspection, cognitive processing, and behavioral responses, which occur in conjunction with their interactions with the surrounding environment, commonly referred to as experiences [11]. This educational approach places emphasis on the internal cognitive processes of individuals, which involve the transformation and integration of novel and meaningful experiences into a larger conceptual framework [12].

This research focuses on understanding and exploring how entrepreneurs improve skills in the coffee business through experience-based training conducted at Malabar Mountain Coffee. This study makes two contributions in both academic and practical terms. First, creating skilled entrepreneurs towards the Indonesian government's target of 1 million new young entrepreneurs to pursue the prerequisites for becoming a developed country of 4 percent. This refers to the Indonesian government's target to develop the economy and promote business development in Indonesia. The desired new business actors are young and educated, who are expected to have complete competencies and build a strong business with the potential to grow [13]. Second, this research fills the gap in previous research by focusing on experiential learning for entrepreneurs. Previous research illustrates the importance of conventional training for entrepreneurs [7, 14], health [10, 11]. Therefore, to achieve this goal, the research questions are formulated as follows: a) What form of experiential training is in Malabar Mountain Coffee? b) How does the experience-based training at Malabar Mountain Coffee affect the competence of prospective young coffee shop entrepreneurs?

1.1 Experiential learning

Experiential training encompasses the acquisition of knowledge, abilities, competences, attitudes, and behaviors essential for proficiently executing specific activities within one's professional domain [8]. Experiential training facilitates the transition of a professional from a state of conscious competence in task execution to a state of genuine proficiency in both task execution and instruction, effectively embodying the principles of learning and teaching via practical application [15].

The experiential learning model encompasses a cyclical process comprising four distinct stages: fresh experience, reflection, creation of abstract notions, and active experimentation in novel contexts [16, 17]. The primary objective of the experiential training technique is to facilitate participants in immersing themselves in the given task, engaging with others, developing an awareness of their own emotions as well as those of others, and gaining insights into the simulation of different types of limitations, difficulties, and strategies to effectively address them [15]. Two crucial elements in experiential training are the notion of Learning Spaces and the concept of Educator's Role Profile. The learning space refers to the learning habitat that needs to be designed for an experiential learning-based curriculum. The profile of the educator's role offers a conceptual framework for the need for an educator to follow a diverse methodology in a curriculum that moves around the experiential learning cycle [17, 18].

1.2 Competency

The concept of competence was first introduced in early Roman practice to describe the attributes of the "good Roman soldier". The competency approach has been found to be effective for competitive advantage, innovation and effectiveness [19]. The competency method in human resource management involves the identification, definition, and measurement of individual variations in relation to specific job-related variables, particularly abilities that are essential for effective job performance [20].

The development of competencies can be initiated by establishing a direct connection to the objectives of the organization. It is probable that the organizational goals will also influence factors such as the levels of proficiency associated with competencies [21]. Competency development encompasses the various endeavors undertaken by organizations and individuals to uphold or enhance their functional, learning, and career-related proficiencies [22]. The competency model encompasses a comprehensive range of knowledge, skills, talents, and other attributes that are essential for achieving optimal performance within a certain job role [21].

Entrepreneurial competence is a multifaceted concept, encompassing various dimensions. Puspa Liza et al. [23] identifies opportunities, organizing, skill, strategic, relationships, commitment, and conceptual competencies as key dimensions, with gender playing a moderating role. Kwiatkowski [24] emphasizes the importance of perceiving opportunities and accessing resources, underscoring the intellectual and social dimensions of entrepreneurship. Bolzani and Luppi [25] further underscores the need for transversal competences, such as positive attitude, communication, teamwork, critical thinking, and creativity, in entrepreneurship education. Pepple and Enuoh [26] highlights the role of personal traits, leadership skills, and managerial competencies in entrepreneurial performance, advocating for training and education to enhance these competencies.

2. METHODOLOGY

This study used a qualitative methodology to facilitate researchers' comprehension of individuals' thoughts, behaviors, and verbal expressions [27]. In this particular situation, qualitative methodologies are deemed suitable due to their capacity to delve into the subjective interpretations and collective understandings associated with an individual or societal issue [28]. The chosen research design is an explanatory/exploratory case study, which serves the purpose of collecting data on an individual, social context, occurrence, or collective entity. This approach facilitates the researcher's comprehension of the distinct processes and functions associated with the subject of investigation [29], in this case are entrepreneurs who get experience training at Malabar Mountain Coffee. Case studies align with research aims and aim to explore and elucidate phenomena within a specific rural setting. They seek to understand and provide answers to research questions by examining the existing life context [30, 31].

2.1 Research sample

In the context of qualitative research, the significance of sample size was diminished as the comprehensive and intricate nature of the research was adequately addressed by one or a few samples that exemplified the qualitative genre [32]. The determination of an appropriate sample size is contingent upon several factors, including the extent of data information available, the diversity of people involved, the scope of research inquiries, the methodologies employed for data collecting, and the specific sampling strategy employed [33]. The participants were selected based on the researcher's evaluation of their capacity to offer the most interesting and comprehensive data that aligned with the researcher's objectives.

The sample selection criteria for this research were prospective young coffee shop entrepreneurs who received training at Malabar Mountain Coffee. This sample is in accordance with the needs of this research which focuses on increasing the competency of prospective coffee entrepreneurs through experiential training. The number of participants in this research was 8 participants (Table 1 and Figure 1). The process of participant selection was conducted by the researcher upon entering the field. Throughout the course of the research, the researcher deliberately selected specific individuals who were deemed suitable for providing relevant information. The process of selecting participants was contingent upon the responses provided by individuals to the screening questions administered. The identification or filtration of participants based on specific criteria is crucial for the purpose at hand. The selection of participants in this study employed a purposive sampling technique, which involved the deliberate selection of individuals based on predetermined aims and criteria established by the researcher. This approach ensured that the data collected was aligned with the specific phenomenon under investigation. The process of determining the location in Malabar Mountain Coffee was conducted with a purposive approach, focusing primarily on a limited number of training sites that have expertise in coffee growing. The study ethics application was approved by the university's study ethics office on May 31, 2023. This finding provides evidence that the participants in the study provided written consent, engaged in voluntary participation, had their anonymity protected, and were safeguarded from potential harm. The study was carried out over the period of April to June in the year 2023.

Table 1. Participant data

No.	Participant	Age	Sex
1	Participant 1	28	M
2	Participant 2	32	W
3	Participant 3	31	W
4	Participant 4	35	M
5	Participant 5	29	W
6	Participant 6	33	W
7	Participant 7	33	M
8	Participant 8	30	M

Figure 1. Participants

2.2 Data collection and analysis

The data gathering methods employed in this study encompassed participant observation and face-to-face individual interviews. Participatory observation is a data collection strategy that involves actively participating in and observing the activities of groups or individuals. The primary objective of the qualitative research interview is to elucidate the significance of the key theme within the participants' lived experiences. The primary objective during the interview was to comprehend the semantic significance of the participants' verbal expressions [33].

In order to elucidate the significance of experiential training in enhancing the proficiency of aspiring coffee shop entrepreneurs, the researchers undertook a series of observations and interviews. The study issues were addressed through the utilization of interviews and observations. Field observations were conducted, specifically focusing on the experiential training process for each participant. Meanwhile, interviews were conducted with prospective young coffee shop entrepreneurs who received experiential training at Malabar Mountain Coffee. The list of sources can be seen in Table 1. The researcher prepared interview question guidelines to help researchers focus on answering research questions when conducting interviews. Here is a guide to interview questions:

(a) Are you a coffee shop entrepreneur?

(b) What is your view on the experiential training on coffee cultivation at Malabar Mountain Coffee?

(c) Are there any positive changes from the training experience you got?

(d) Do trainers, coffee farmers, and owners of Malabar Mountain Coffee play a role in helping to improve your competency in coffee management?

To gather primary data, researchers conducted face-to-face in-depth interviews (refer to Table 2) to gain insights into the transformative process that took place within the village community. These interviews aimed to explore the socio-economic attributes of the population, the existing livelihood strategies, the community's inclination and disposition towards participation, as well as the enhancement of community competence through diverse societal elements. The researcher employed a combination of open-ended and closed-ended questions during the interview session, which spanned over a duration of more than one hour. The entirety of the interview was meticulously recorded and subsequently transcribed to facilitate content analysis.

Table 2. Qualitative data analysis

	Case Study
Transcripts mainly from	The research methodology employed in this study was conducting face-to-face in-depth interviews and making observations.
Reading, notes, and memos	Upon perusing the transcripts, the researcher proceeded to allocate preliminary codes.
Ordering	The present discourse aims to delineate and explicate descriptive categories and their corresponding subcategories.
Findings	The key findings of the study are summarized in a narrative format.

Source: [34, 35]

Furthermore, the researchers opted to lodge at a hotel in close proximity to Malabar Mountain Coffee, so facilitating the process of conducting participatory observation. The present study involved a team of four researchers who conducted observations on the process of experiential learning among a group of young entrepreneurs in the coffee shop industry. Subsequently, interviews were administered in accordance with the established standards to address the study inquiries (Table 3). Subsequently, the researchers employed the triangulation approach to examine and interpret the collected research data. Triangulation refers to the practice of validating data by cross-referencing information obtained from several sources, employing diverse methodologies, and conducting assessments at different points in time. The process of method triangulation encompasses three distinct strategies, specifically data source triangulation, inter-researcher triangulation, technical triangulation, and theoretical triangulation [27, 36-37].

The present study employed triangulation as a methodological approach, specifically focusing on the triangulation of data sources and temporal dimensions. The process of triangulating sources involves the examination of data from multiple sources that maintain a degree of interconnectedness. The researchers employed a triangulation approach to gather data, utilizing many sources of information. This involved conducting interviews with various individuals, including informants such as prospective young coffee shop entrepreneurs, trainers, proprietors of Malabar Mountain Coffee, and coffee farmers. The triangulation approach is employed through a variety of methods in order to uncover the data emanating from the data source. Researchers conducted technical triangulation by cross-referencing information and data obtained from interviews, observations, and papers or books. During the process of analysis, the researcher conducted a comprehensive examination of the interview data to determine the primary themes and categories that align with the research topic. The subsequent part provides an exposition of the findings derived from this investigation.

Table 3. Data collection methods

	Definition	Aim
Participants observations	Engagement in and scrutiny of individuals or collectives.	In order to develop a comprehensive understanding of a certain group of individuals and its customs, it is necessary to engage in a deep and immersive interaction with people within their surroundings, typically for a prolonged duration.
Face-to-face in-depth Interviews	In this study methodology, the researcher engages in a dialogue with participants, wherein the former presents inquiries and the latter respond either in person, via telephone, or through mail correspondence.	In order to obtain the participant's experiences, perceptions, ideas, and feelings, it is necessary to employ a method of elicitation.

Source: [34, 35]

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Malabar Mountain Coffee is an Arabica coffee producer located in Pangalengan, Bandung, West Java. Business activities of Malabar Mountain Coffee which was established on November 8 2012 from upstream to downstream which includes cultivation, processing and marketing activities under the trademark Malabar Mountain Coffee. A number of awards have been received by Malabar Mountain Coffee [38] which has made many prospective young coffee shop entrepreneurs study here, including researchers (Figure 2).

Figure 2. Achievements Malabar mountain coffee

Even though the scale is limited, the data source produces rich and interesting findings, the coding tree summarizes the impact of experiential training in increasing competence (Figure 3) Considering that the main aim of this research is to answer the research questions: a) What forms of experiential training exist at Malabar Mountain Coffee? b) How does experience-based training at Malabar Mountain Coffee affect the competency of prospective young coffee shop entrepreneurs?
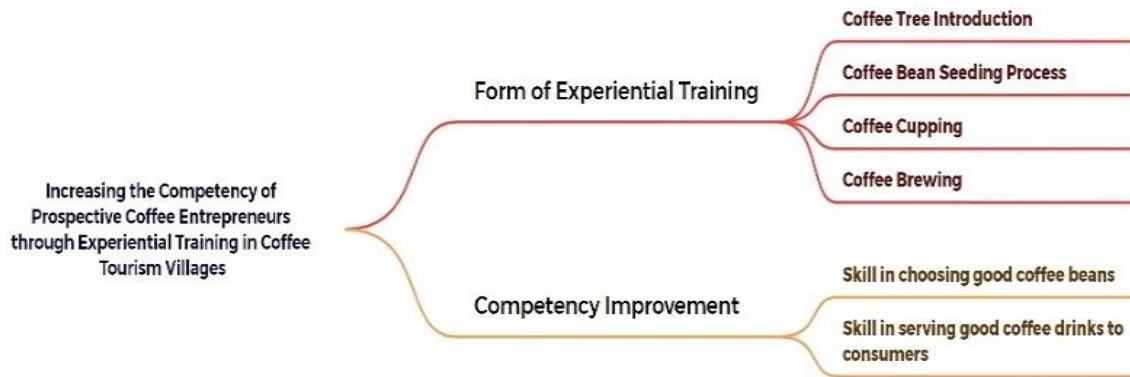
Figure 3. Coding tree diagram

3.1 Forms of experiential training

The results of interviews with participants (P1 & P3) showed that they received various types of experience training starting from the upstream planting process to the downstream, namely ready for sale. The results of interviews with other participants (P2 & P6) show that the experiential training starts with a briefing trainer before going to the coffee plantation location, then continues with observing the process of sowing coffee beans, after that, tracking directly to the coffee plantation to see coffee beans still in the tree. Then after touring the coffee plantations, participants were taught the process of observing the taste before the coffee arrived in the cups of coffee connoisseurs commonly called coffee cupping, and finally, participants were taught how to brew coffee commonly called coffee brewing (Figure 4).

Experiential training emphasizes participants' new experiences, reflection, formation of abstract concepts, and active experimentation in new situations [16, 17] which aims to enable participants to experience themselves in the task at hand, learn more about various simulations of constraints, challenges, and solutions to overcome them [15]. A range of experiential training methods exists, including internships, practicums, field exercises, apprenticeship experiences, business games, and role-playing [39]. These methods are effective in improving behavior support skills in early educators, and in professional development, particularly in the workplace [40].

Figure 4. The overall process of experiential training. Top left (Coffee Bean Seeding Process), Top right (Coffee Beans), Bottom left (Coffee cupping), Bottom right (Coffee brewing)

One of the key distinctions between the experiential and conventional methods of instruction pertains to how the "trainee" is positioned as the focal point of the training process. The function of the trainer (as seen in Figure 4) includes the provision of direction, help, and inspiration to foster motivation among trainees and elicit their innate drive to acquire knowledge [10]. This theory is also justified by the answer of one participant (P8), that the trainer provides tips and tricks if there are problems related to coffee and motivates them to get up if there are problems encountered in their business. Participating in training programs under the supervision of seasoned trainers affords individuals the chance to cultivate and refine the essential information and skills required for engaging in direct patient care [11, 41]. Apart from that, the entire experiential training process obtained by participants at Malabar Mountain Coffee if related to the form of experiential training is included in apprenticeship experiences where students work together with experienced professionals to learn practically about their field [40].

3.2 Competency improvement

The results of the interviews with the participants (P4 & P5) showed that the experiential training they had had a very positive impact on increasing the competence of the participants in the form of skills in choosing the type of coffee they would sell later (Figure 5). Not only that, another participant (P7) explained that participants could independently observe the taste before the coffee arrived in the cup by filling out cupping forms and scoresheets (Figure 6). From the observation results, it is also in line with the interview results that there is an increase in the participants' ability to choose quality coffee and serve coffee that can be enjoyed by consumers. The results of the participant interviews are in line with the research conducted by Fallucco et al., that experiential training resulted in significant skills improvement [42]. Experiential training effectively simulates real life [43] for competency development [22]. Scenario simulation in experiential training is very beneficial for trainees, to acquire knowledge, attitudes, and skills [8, 10]. The form of training that participants received was in the form of coffee bean seeding process, coffee beans, coffee cupping, and coffee brewing (Figure 4) in line with one of the dimensions of increasing competency, namely technical skills [23] in supporting the abilities of prospective young coffee shop entrepreneurs. The results of this research are to fill the gap in previous research regarding the importance of conventional training for entrepreneurship. Apart from

conventional training, experiential training is one type of training that can be used as an option besides conventional training to increase competency for entrepreneurs [7, 14].

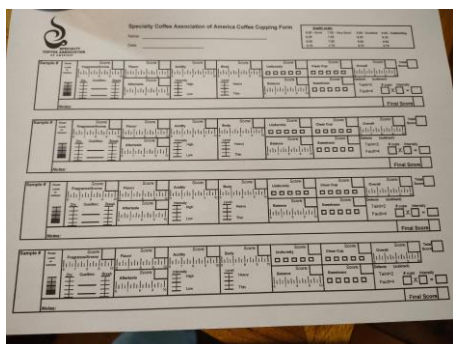**Figure 5.** Selection of various types of coffee beans

Figure 6. Cupping forms and scoresheets

4. CONCLUSION

Experiential learning-based training as an effort to develop the capabilities of entrepreneurs needs to be carried out to equip them with the skills and knowledge to increase their productivity and business. The idea arose from simulation teaching which has been widely practiced in medical education. Therefore, this study analyzes the relationship between experiential training and increased competence of prospective young coffee shop entrepreneurs. The results of the study show that prospective young coffee shop entrepreneurs gain positive skills from the results of the experiential training. This research has an impact on the policies of the local government and regional education offices to broadly facilitate experiential training in increasing entrepreneur competencies towards the Indonesian government's target of 1 million new young entrepreneurs.

This qualitative research has limitations because it only focuses on the training experience gained at Malabar Mountain Coffee and the number of participants is small. It is hoped that future research can be refined by conducting it in many coffee training places, longitudinally tracking the long-term effects of experiential training, comparing the similarities and differences of different training methods, increasing the number of participants, and being able to use a quantitative approach.

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