

**ST. GEORGE'S EXPERIENTIAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP
EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMME (SEEP)**

SHARIFAH AFFIFAH BT. SYED ABBAS

SMK Perempuan St. George

(St. George's Girls' School)

Jalan Macalister

Penang, Malaysia

ABSTRACT

The purpose of carrying out the SGGS Experiential Entrepreneurship Education Programme (SEEP) was to enable a quality teaching and learning process to be enhanced and incorporated through effective and innovative advancements particularly in the teaching and learning of Living Skills and Mathematics at the lower secondary and Economics, Mathematics, Accounts and Business Management at the higher level. One of the motivating factors that complement this aspiration is the Educational Development Plan itself whereby students' holistic development to meet the challenges of globalization for the real world preceded academic achievements and paper qualifications. As SGGS has the advantage of high-achiever student population, this programme was deemed suitable, enterprising and stimulating for both SGGS teachers and students. Transformation was seen as a timely opportunity to advance in line with the vision and mission of the school to become an exceptional institution of education in the ASEAN region. Thus, a long term sustainable education programme based on experiential learning was initiated with teachers being the main mentor for the experiential entrepreneurship education programme and involvement of the private sector is also deemed important. As a result, students became more eloquent through student-based activities and took charge of event management and planning. Under the tourism plan, visitors from Sarawak and MGS Singapore were all hosted by students. It was gratifying to see them make the presentation with such good confidence in public speaking. Their training in the tourism sector was also put into practice. They skillfully organized tours and guided visitors from Singapore and Thailand during the Heritage Tour. All these contributed to the achievement of projected social skill outcomes of the SEEP. SGGS Experiential Entrepreneurship Education Programme (SEEP) proved to set a new paradigm shift in the process of teaching and learning particular subjects. As such, it is our hope that this programme will be further escalated into other areas of teaching and student development. We take great pride in being the sole school in northern region to have

its own cafeteria that is totally manned by students and independently generating its own income. Teaching as a continuous process has been further enhanced with the implementation of this SEEP and we believe that superior teachers and excellent future leaders can be churned out from our own custom-made SGGS Experiential Entrepreneurship Education Programme (SEEP). We believe the government's intention of producing graduates capable of taking up the challenge of being an entrepreneur is right here in SGGS and we will work consistently to achieve this.

BACKGROUND

SGGS Experiential Entrepreneurship Education Programme (SEEP) originated with the optimism that a quality teaching-learning process can be further enhanced, given the skill utilization opportunity and a challenging environment. It works together with SCELLS (School Cooperative in Enhancing Learning and Living Skills). St. George's Girls' school has upheld its premiership and now celebrating its 125 years aspires to leapfrog into a new dimension of education beyond excellence by instilling effective and innovative advancements particularly in the teaching and learning of Living Skills and Mathematics at the lower secondary and Economics, Mathematics, Accounts and Business Management at the higher level. One of the motivating factors that complement this aspiration is the Educational Development Plan itself whereby students' holistic development to meet the challenges of globalization for the real world preceded academic achievements and paper qualifications.

As SGGS has the advantage of high-achiever student population, this programme was deemed suitable, enterprising and stimulating for both SGGS teachers and students. Transformation was seen as a timely opportunity to advance in line with the vision and mission of the school to become an exceptional institution of education in the ASEAN region.

Thus, a long term sustainable education programme based on experiential learning was initiated with teachers being the main mentor for the experiential entrepreneurship education programme and involvement of the private sector is also deemed important.

SEEP RATIONALE:

The SEEP was initiated with several rationales complementing the schools vision and mission.

1. To further equip the teachers with advanced experiential learning skills so as to educate the students in a real-life environment particularly for Living Skills, Economics, Mathematics, Business Management and Accounts.

2. To disseminate a varied teaching and learning methodology to enhance students' holistic development and potentials based on experiential learning in the appropriate subjects.
3. To provide an avenue for the teachers to share the best practices and lessons learned in implementing experiential learning through the subjects.
4. To develop a real-life experiential opportunity for students to acquire knowledge and skills related to entrepreneurship education.
5. To prepare and develop basic interpersonal capabilities and proficiency, particularly self-confidence, creativity, communication and persuasive skills through experiential learning for the real working world.
6. To promote networking and partnership at national and international level in line with the SGGS school mission.

The preliminary planning rooted two phases of implementation; that are;

Phase 1 (2007 – 2009) that encompasses the cafeteria project, student cooperative, e-tourism, and Young Entrepreneurs.

Phase 2 (2010 – 2012) will expand the project with new business venture, that is; the operation of the cybercafé, agriculture project-chilly fertigation and fish rearing, "Farming of cat fish".

2. CONCEPTUALIZATION AND DESIGN

THE FRAMEWORK

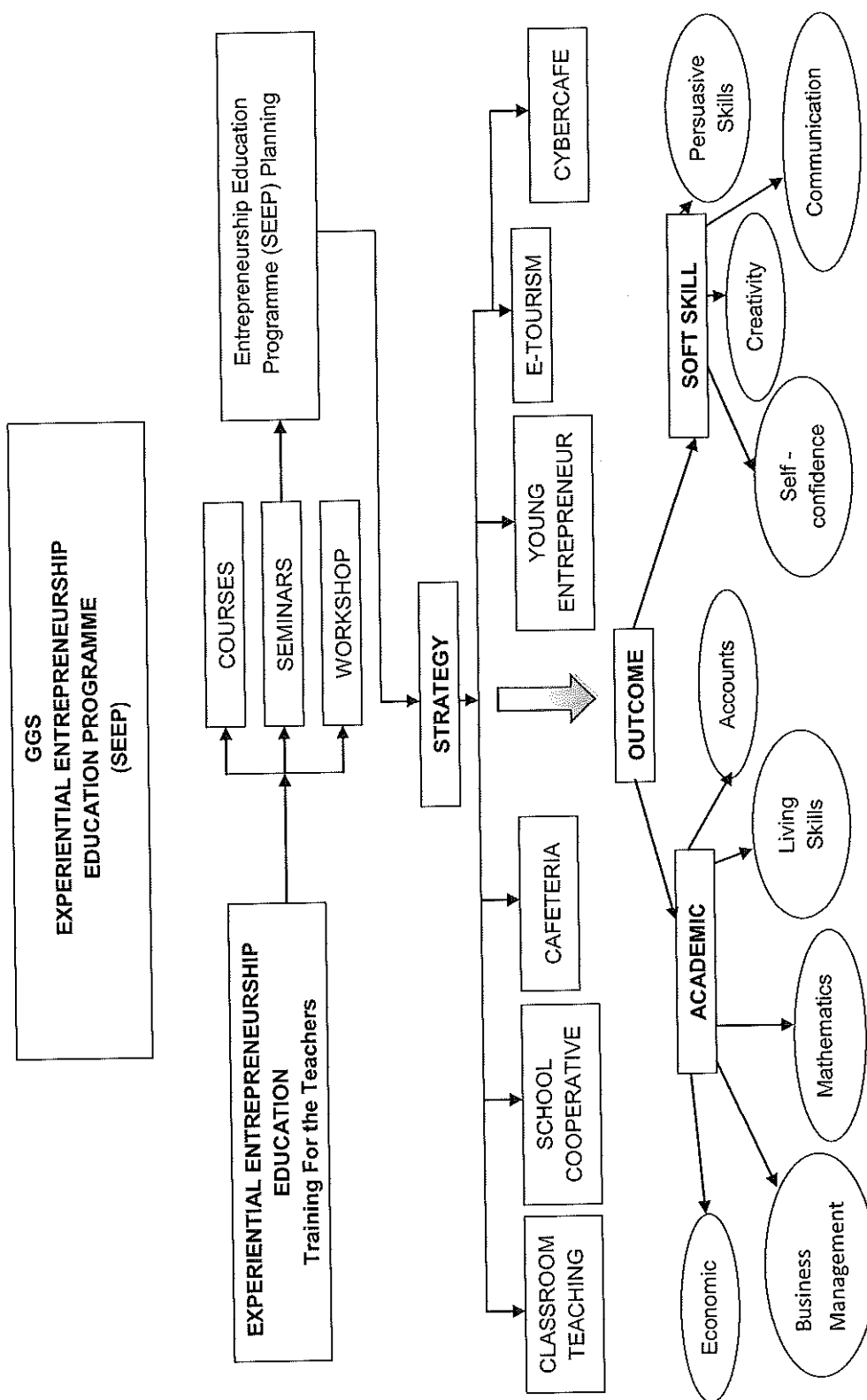


Figure 1 : The framework of GGS SEEP programme

The conception of this programme can be summarized as below:

Step 1:

Entrepreneurship Education for the Teachers

The SEEP was disseminated to the students via experiential learning. Teachers as facilitators were equipped with the various entrepreneurship skills i.e basic entrepreneurship knowledge and social cum soft skill pertinent to the implementation of entrepreneurship education. This was made possible through in-house trainings, seminars, workshops and other relevant programmes which were seen beneficial to the SEEP. These trainings were conducted by experts from various organizations, particularly from Cooperative Commission, higher learning institutions and corporate bodies.

Step 2:

SGGS Entrepreneurship Education Programme (SEEP) Planning

The respective teachers who attended the various programmes formed a committee to implement a comprehensive SEEP. At this level, it was decided that several strategies would be adopted to implement the SEEP. The main focus of the SEEP will be the academic element and the non-academic element.

Step 3:

SEEP Strategy Implementation

The strategies projected included the School Cooperative, Young Entrepreneur, E-Tourism, SGGS Cafeteria, Chilly Project, Cybercafe and Fish Project. Some of these projects were already implemented before 2006; however under this SEEP programme, the projects were given a new facelift. Particular emphasis was given to the School Cafeteria whereby it was identified as a core project which enables the experiential learning in an everyday setting.

Step 4: Strategy Outcome

The strategy outcome is seen in twofold; i.e.: from the academic dissemination and also from the social cum soft skill dissemination. Teachers from the accounting, mathematics and business studies will be able to incorporate the experiential learning in their teaching process. Students on the other hand will be able to acquire the social cum soft skill through the experiential learning that they are acquiring in the SEEP projects carried out.

MODUS OPERANDI OF SEEP

In all the strategies planned, experiential education is incorporated for all the projects proposed. For example, the School Co-operative Organisation is re-structured as a business organisation with extensive use of IT software to monitor stock /inventory and the use of UBS Accounting System for preparing audited Annual Reports. In regards to the Co-operative Education, teachers exposed business skills and presentation skills to students. One good example was the National Co-operative Convention in Kuala Lumpur which enabled the students to gain first hand experience to promote the co-operative's own products. Teachers also encouraged students to utilize their business skills at an international level through the internet. This was implemented by teachers after organizing various courses, training and development workshops on Professional Management with the collaboration of other organisations such as ANGKASA (National Co-operative Organisation of Malaysia). Other attempts include:

- 3-day Entrepreneurship Workshop in collaboration with INTI International College, Penang.
- 1-day Seminar on Managing Co-operative Efficiently and Effectively.
- 4-days Business of Tourism & Hospitality Training in collaboration with SEGI College.
- 4-days Tourism Program in collaboration with Sentral Technology College.
- 5-days UBS and Accounting Workshop in collaboration with INTI International College, Penang.
- The teachers also collaborated with 'Specialist Loh Guan Lye Hospital Cooperative' to provide in-depth knowledge on ways to improve and market the co-operative's products.

IMPACT AND ACHIEVEMENTS

The SEEP has set the precedent to transform the teaching and learning process from the conventional method to the contemporary teaching method whereby the learning outcomes benefit directly to the students' cause. The role of the teacher has scaled up to a superior level in which they inspire their students to go to greater heights beyond the confinement of the classroom setting. Teachers become the mentor and facilitator and monitor student's involvement and progress in all aspects. Teaching becomes a student-centered activity and teacher-dependence is reduced. Students are given the autonomy to plan, decide, manage and be accountable for all actions and decisions made.

In relation to SEEP impact, a number of great achievement are already visible although the programme has just proceeded into the 2nd phase of implementation. These include:

- * 100 % of the school population is member of the School Cooperative and more than half of the student population are actively involved
- * The School Co-operative has contributed in cash and the kind to orphan students for scholarship and fee financing.
- * Cash contribution was extended to needy students. All students who will be sitting for their major examinations are also given free stationery to be used during the exam by the School Cooperative.
- * The school also extended their social responsibility to the community by sponsoring spastic children, donating a sum of RM 500 to the Buddhist Tzu-Chi Merits Society of Malaysia besides contributing for the victims of the China Earthquake and Myanmar Cyclone.
- * In 2008, the SGGS community had given out a donation amounting to RM12981.80 to both internal and external organizations.
- * Apart from that, the teachers have also empowered the students to be self-reliant and have financial independence to sponsor future activities.
- * Through all these programmes, the students have also put aside RM51000 as special welfare and school activity fund. Through all these activities, students are taught the meaning of compassion, and the moral of helping their less fortunate counterparts.

Achievements:

The training and exposure given to the teachers and students were invaluable. Some of the achievements are as follows:

- * In July 2008, St.George's Girls' School received second placing in the 'Best Product' category in the State Cooperative Competition.
- * St.George's Girls' School was awarded a 5-star rating by the Penang Cooperative Body (ANGKASA) from 2006-2009
- * In June 2008, we were awarded the best Cooperative Society in Penang, and was subsequently ranked to be amongst the top 30 at national level.
- * Under our Co-operative Tourism program, we obtained third placing for our National Tourism Carnival in Perak held on August 1, 2009.
- * In the National Entrepreneur Convention the school cooperation was the 1st runner-up and the teacher and student also received awards, 1st and 2nd runner-up respectively.
- * The school cooperative movement has been benchmarked by others.

Intangible Benefits:

Students became more eloquent. Student-based activities were held to enable student involvement. Power point presentations were all prepared for visitors and students took charge of event management and planning. Under the tourism plan, visitors from Sarawak

and MGS Singapore were all hosted by students. It was gratifying to see them make the presentation with such good confidence in public speaking. Their training in the tourism sector was also put into practice. Students visit from Thailand and Singapore was also handled by SGGs students. They skillfully organized tours and guided our visitors during the Heritage Tour. All these contributed to the achievement of projected social skill outcomes of the SEEP.

Most importantly, the various authorities that visited our school throughout the years were very impressed with the standard set by the school in bringing total transformation in the teaching and learning of Economics, Mathematics, Living Skills and Accounts. The school was recognized for its accelerated programmes for future advancement. Hence the Malaysian Ministry of Education has selected St. George's Girls School as a Cluster School in 2008. The school took great pride in achieving this result. Following that the school has managed to further enhance the development of the cooperation and in 2010 we are honoured to be among the top 20 schools of the country attaining the prestigious High Performance School award.

SUSTAINABILITY, PROBLEMS, LESSONS LEARNED, POTENTIAL FOR REPLICABILITY & FUTURE PLANS

Sustainability:

From the annual turnover (Figure 2), we have seen consistent growth over the last 5 years, though in 2008, there was a dip due to recession and inflation. However, in 2009, as of July, the year-to-date sales were already touching RM310 thousand. This is attributed to the construction of a new cafeteria which is totally run by students. Hence, we expect this project to be a sustainable one, with anticipated yearly growth.

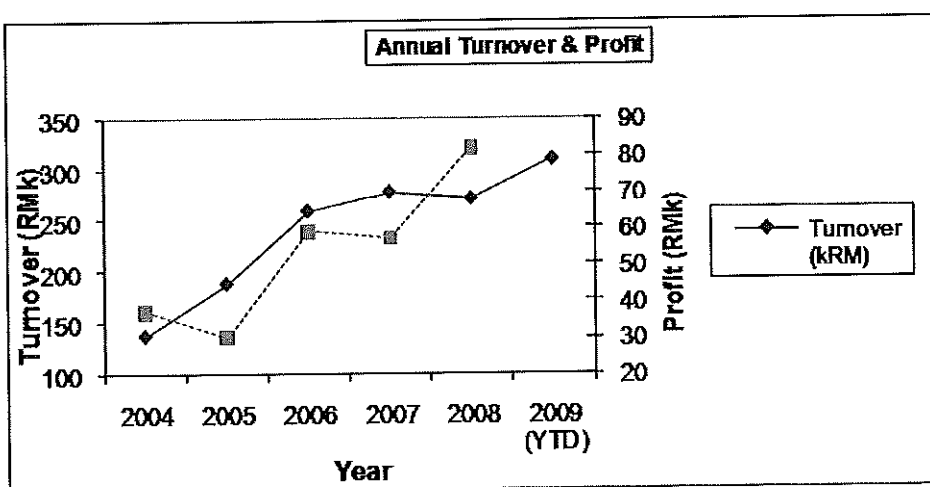


Figure 2 : Annual Turnover & Profit

Problems and Lessons Learnt:

Bringing a change from the conventional method of teaching proved to be tedious as many alterations had to be adopted from time to time. However, the main concerns included financial constraints, lack of manpower and resources. Future Projects must take into consideration of having the available contacts and resources so that easier networking is achievable. Training of teachers and students should also be a continuous process.

The future projects is aimed at increasing the turnover, while at the same time, exposing the students to other types of business. The next project involves a project known as 'Chilly Fertigation'. This involves the cultivation of 1000 chilly plants using drip irrigation method. With this, the students will gain some agricultural experience, and of course, the usual experience in sales and marketing as we will then need to sell the harvested chillies. However, one challenge foreseen is the availability of manpower in operating the project on a day-to-day basis particularly during the school holidays.

A second project involves the farming of Cat Fish, which is a popular local fish. This diversification will provide students with some 'fisheries' exposure. All in all, our aim, other than to increase turnover, is to give wider exposure to our students. In this project, the need to maintain a well managed pond is important. As such due consideration will be given to this challenge.

CONCLUSION

SGGS Experiential Entrepreneurship Education Programme (SEEP) proved to set a new paradigm shift in the process of teaching and learning particular subjects. As such, it is our hope that this programme will be further escalated into other areas of teaching and student development. We take great pride in being the sole school in the northern region to have its own cafeteria that is totally manned by students and independently generating its own income. Teaching as a continuous process has been further enhanced with the implementation of this SEEP and we believe that superior teachers and excellent future leaders can be churned out from our own custom-made SGGS Experiential Entrepreneurship Education Programme (SEEP).

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"A Sharing of Experience Session"