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# Character Education and Entrepreneurship in the Young Generation: A Case Study of Vanilla Cultivation in Letkole Village

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## Abstrak

**Purpose** – Pendidikan karakter dan kewirausahaan merupakan komponen penting dalam menciptakan generasi yang tangguh dan mampu bersaing di dunia global. Generasi muda memiliki peran penting salah satunya dalam pembangunan pertanian di Indonesia, pertanian dapat menjadi wadah dalam pengembangan karakter yang nantinya dapat berpengaruh ada pembentukan kepribadian warga negara muda. Tujuan dari penelitian ini adalah untuk mengkaji bagaimana proses pembudidayaan vanili dapat digunakan sebagai media pendidikan karakter dan kewirausahaan pada generasi muda di Desa Letkole.

**Methodology/Design/Approach** – Dalam penelitian ini peneliti menggunakan 5 narasumber yang memasuki usia yakni 19-24 tahun, untuk nantinya di lakukan pengkajian lebih dalam berkaitan dengan bahan yang ingin di teliti, penelitian ini menggunakan metode kualitatif yaitu dengan dokumentasi, observasi, dan wawancara sebagai sumber perolehan data.

**Findings** – Hasil penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa pembudidayaan vanili tidak hanya memberikan manfaat ekonomi tetapi juga berfungsi sebagai media yang efektif bagi pendidikan karakter dan kewirausahaan pada generasi muda Hal ini dapat berkontribusi pada pembangunan masyarakat yang lebih mandiri dan produktif.

**Keywords:** *Kewirausahaan, disiplin, vanila, generasi muda.*

## Abstract

**Purpose** – Character education and entrepreneurship are important components in creating a generation that is resilient and able to compete in the global world. The young generation has an important role, one of which is in the development of agriculture in Indonesia, agriculture can be a forum for character development which can later influence the formation of the personality of young citizens. The purpose of this study is to examine how the vanilla cultivation process can be used as a medium for character and entrepreneurship education in the young generation in Letkole Village.

**Methodology/Design/Approach** – In this study, the researcher uses 5 sources that enter the age, namely 19-24 years old, to later conduct a deeper study related to the material to be researched, this study uses qualitative methods, namely documentation, observation, and interviews as sources of data acquisition.

**Findings** – The results of this study show that vanilla cultivation not only provides economic benefits but also functions as an effective medium for character education and entrepreneurship in the younger generation.

**Keywords:** *Entrepreneurship, discipline, vanilla, young generation.*

## Introduction

Character education and entrepreneurship in the younger generation are important components in creating a strong generation that can compete globally. The younger generation has an important role in Indonesia's agricultural development. They help improve the productivity and welfare of farmers by implementing new technologies and more efficient agricultural methods (Firdaus, M.2023). Factors such as education level, access to resources, and economic incentives play an important role in attracting the younger generation's interest to participate in the agricultural sector through education and marketing skills. With the proper support, the younger generation can contribute significantly to improving agricultural welfare (Koesrin, DA 2023).

On the other hand, one of the serious problems currently facing the Indonesian agricultural industry is the increasing number of unproductive old and young farmers (Farmia, 2020; Salamah et al., 2021). According to data from the Central Statistics Agency (2021), 19.18% of the Indonesian workforce works in the agricultural sector; this percentage is lower than workers in the industrial and service sectors, which are 25.02% and 55.80%, respectively. In conclusion, the ease of college graduates to work is around 3.18% in the agricultural sector and 11.53% in the industrial and service sectors. According to the Indonesian Farmers Association (HKTI), the decline in the number of agricultural employees and workers is due to the increasing apathy of the younger generation towards education in the agricultural sector (Gulo et al., 2018). This problem must be addressed because the younger generation does not want to work in the agricultural industry. One of the reasons is the younger generation's lack of character, education, and entrepreneurship. This generation's lack of innovation and entrepreneurial spirit hurts business productivity and welfare (Nuryaman, H. 2023). In addition, research shows that the lack of discipline in the younger generation results in a lack of commitment to carrying out tasks effectively. This is related to decreased productivity and quality of results (Makabori, Y. 2019).

Located in the province of East Nusa Tenggara, Indonesia, Letkole Village, South Amfoang, is an area that has several natural resources, one of which is vanilla cultivation. Vanilla is one of the commodities that has a high selling value both domestically and abroad, thus providing economic benefits for consumers in the long term (Endang N. 2012). According to Ruhnayat (2003), vanilla is usually used as the main ingredient and component of perfume because it can provide a very subtle aroma. The vanilla program in Letkole Village is one of the natural potentials that the younger generation should develop to create prosperity because, according to the approach taken at the beginning, researchers saw a lack of participation from the younger generation; thus, vanilla functions as a guide to teaching the importance character education and entrepreneurship in the younger generation, in addition to improving the economic welfare of the community in general. This is related to the theory of habits put forward by BF Skinner. Through his theory of positive and negative effects, he explains that discipline can be developed through habits in agricultural activities. This process encourages positive behavior when they see the results of successful work in the form of harvests, which encourages them to continue practicing self-discipline. Conversely, failure to care for plants provides negative feedback that encourages them to learn from their mistakes and improve their self-discipline so that, from involvement in the cultivation process, from planting to processing and marketing, it is hoped that the next generation can develop character and entrepreneurial spirit.

In addition, entrepreneurship is an important aspect of the agricultural sector. According to the theory put forward by David Mc Clelland, who explains the theory of competency that supports the development of skills and entrepreneurship through education and training of attitudes that foster creativity, innovation, risk-taking ability, and tenacity in overcoming obstacles in the context of vanilla culture, then the entrepreneurial character can also be supported by the development of vanilla products based on sound principles, such as vanilla extract, vanilla-based food and beverages, and handicraft products.

Several previous studies also support this. According to Mukti, GW (2023), developing business acumen and disciplined character can be associated with diligent individuals who

strongly desire to become business owners. Farmers have much potential because they generally can accept criticism, dare to accept criticism, analyze their potential or strengths, always focus on the process and results, are flexible to change, continue to innovate with their own needs, and are willing to learn and work constructively with others. In addition, according to Giono (A. 2019), applying discipline and entrepreneurship in agricultural activities, such as plant care schedules, proper use of fertilizers, and development of new products, not only improves the quality of agricultural products but also reduces the risk of crop failure. People who are disciplined and follow entrepreneurship are more adaptable to environmental changes and have more stable results. This is also supported by research (Hermawan, A. 2018), which states that entrepreneurship and discipline in agricultural management, such as good planning, constant maintenance, and product innovation, are essential in increasing productivity and efficiency in agriculture, and this directly contributes to the economic growth of farmers and the community. According to research conducted by the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI), farmers who implement disciplined agricultural practices, such as crop rotation, proper fertilizer use, and efficient air circulation, can increase their agricultural productivity. The study also shows that increased productivity directly impacts increasing farmers' incomes.

Thus, this study examines how the vanilla cultivation process in Letkole Village can effectively provide character education and entrepreneurship to the younger generation. Thus, this research is expected to contribute to developing character education and entrepreneurship models based on agricultural activities, which can be adapted in other regions with similar potential.

## **Method**

This research is a descriptive study using a qualitative approach. The data collected in this study were obtained using the snowball sampling technique. According to Sugiyono (2020), snowball sampling is a technique that involves calculating the number of initial samples and then analyzing them. The data collection methods include documentation, observation, and interviews. This study aims to understand how character education and entrepreneurship in the younger generation can then be used to analyze how the vanilla cultivation process can encourage youth entrepreneurship. This research was conducted in Letkole, South Amfoang, an area in East Nusa Tenggara, in August 2024.

The selection of the research location was done intentionally (purposive). The location was chosen because some communities have the same livelihood, namely vanilla farmers, which began forming in 2002. Of course, this condition is in line with the research to be conducted by the researcher because the title of the researcher is more directed at describing something. The researcher conducted the research by making Letkole village the research location; in this study, the researcher chose five people, namely one from each family member representing five families who make vanilla plants their main source of income. The informants were selected because five informants were considered sufficient if the data obtained was adequate. The subjects in this study were the young generation entering adolescence, namely 19-24 years old. The summary of the data obtained in this study used the snowball sampling technique. In this case, the researcher collected secondary data using data that other parties, such as video and photo recordings, survey reports, and statistical data, had collected. The data analysis technique used in this study is the Miles and Huberman model, which includes data selection, data presentation, and conclusions.

## **Findings and discussion**

Based on the results of data analysis conducted by researchers, the following are the results or focus of the research summarized from Letkole village, southwest South Amfoang, NTT:

### **1. Background of Vanilla Cultivation in Letkole Village**

Based on the results of the researcher's interview with several residents of Letkole village, they conveyed some information about vanilla cultivation in the village. They explained that Letkole

village is in the Amfoang Barat Daya area, NTT. In 2002, a resident named Melkias Baitanu first became acquainted with the Vanilla plant in Letkole Village, located around the Amfoang Barat Daya sub-district. He first became acquainted with the vanilla plant in Alor Regency in 2002. On that occasion, Melkias Baitanu conveyed the results of his observations on the growth of vanilla. He brought thirty vanilla cuttings as a gift to the people of Letkole Village, especially in Biane. Of the thirty samples tested, only five managed to grow. However, with very high confidence and a strong will to develop vanilla plants, the Letkole community, especially in Biane Village, currently has 19 members of the vanilla group who are members of Melkias Baitanu's footsteps. In 2017, the Biane community managed to get money from the sale of vanilla, amounting to Rp32 million per year. The Letkole Village Government has inaugurated the village as a vanilla village.

In the process of planting vanilla, there is one unique process, namely the marriage process, the marriage in question is when the flowers that appear during vanilla planting must be split, and the female pistils are taken to be inserted into the male buds in this process must also be done at a particular time, of course this kind of thing is not widely known by the community, even until now only the majority of the Biane village community knows about the process, the very promising vanilla turnover makes some specific communities directly sell vanilla to the city.



Figure 1: Vanilla Fruit  
Source: Research Document



Figure 2: Vanilla Plant Saplings  
Source: Research Document

### Challenges and Obstacles

Researchers found several internal and external factors that hindered character development and entrepreneurship in the younger generation. In Letkole village. One of the reasons is that many people only want to receive the results of vanilla cultivation and sell them directly without wanting to cultivate them themselves. This is also supported by the response of one of the young generation, namely AN:

*"There are many people there who, because they have tried to get married but it did not happen, they immediately do not want it anymore and in the end only want to accept it directly from the Biane village community to sell it directly."*

This is also by what was conveyed by one of the residents, namely AG:

*"Yes, most of the young people there also do not know how to marry and market their vanilla, they also choose to look for work outside, even though if they could just manage it, the profits would be huge."*

GR continued by saying:

*"But indeed, many people say that if you want to mate a flower, it can only be done at night because usually, the flowers bloom at night, but that is it; people are also too lazy to bother; they only want to accept something ready to be sold."*

According to the responses, the lack of understanding of entrepreneurial attitudes and good character education makes the younger generation look for jobs that can provide a definite income. This is by the statement from KHN:

*"There, if you want to say that the parents of each head of the family must have land for cultivating vanilla, but because there are no people who want to continue, many use it for regular farming because they also have children, many of whom prefer to migrate to get a more secure job."*

Of course, some of the responses above are obstacles and a means for...character education and entrepreneurship in the younger generation. This is considered important because several issues that have been conveyed make character education and entrepreneurship an answer to the problems faced; thus, if we observe that vanilla cultivation is managed well through the importance of entrepreneurship development, then many people will be able to get more benefits than what can be obtained. Of course, this is in line with the objectives of this study.

### 3. The Importance of Character Education and Entrepreneurship

Character education is important not only in formal education but also in the agricultural sector. In vanilla cultivation, there are several important aspects of character formation, namely:

- a. To ensure high-quality vanilla products through various media, the younger generation must commit to quality, which involves a deep understanding of proper agricultural techniques, such as manual pollination, pest control, and harvesting at the right time.
- b. Adaptability and innovation are important characteristics because farmers must adapt to changes in climate and market conditions and adopt new technologies to increase efficiency and production results.
- c. Persistence and dedication are essential, considering that vanilla cultivation requires constant attention and often takes years to produce a significant harvest.
- d. Work ethics and sustainability must also be considered, where farmers must manage land and natural resources responsibly to ensure environmental and long-term sustainability. These characteristics allow vanilla farmers to achieve sustainable success and contribute positively to the local and global economy.

Based on several efforts made, it is hoped that the younger generation will be able to develop character in agriculture by continuing to develop vanilla as a source of income that has a reasonably high selling value. Based on data from the World Agriculture Organization (FAO), in 2023, the export value of vanilla reached around 538.2 million USD, with an average price of 148,785 USD per ton for uncrushed vanilla. Thus, vanilla is not just an ordinary plant; it has a reasonably high selling value even internationally. This is also in line with research conducted by Milhatul Rojaba (2020). The study's findings showed that the competitiveness of Indonesian vanilla commodities in the international market has high competitiveness. As mentioned above, one of the characteristics of vanilla is its very strong aroma, which can be used as perfume, cakes, or even aromatherapy candles. In vanilla cultivation, following established procedures, maintaining the cleanliness of the planting area, and adhering to the plant care schedule are important. Through this habituation, the younger generation can learn how to manage time, respect the law, and accept the tasks given. According to Kollo (2023), Through youth socialization activities, the community learns how important it is to form good character in the social context of society from one generation to the next by considering each person's role in the group.

In addition, entrepreneurship has an important role in the agricultural sector, including creativity, innovation, risk-taking ability, and resilience in facing challenges. Talking about entrepreneurship is the process of creating something new by using time and resources allocated to risk and capital and gaining personal profits and savings. In the context of vanilla cultivation, in the early stages, the lack of community understanding of vanilla management made them focus more on selling vanilla to urban areas without making other plans to develop entrepreneurship, the lack of knowledge and understanding made many people focus their results on something that they considered profitable and was widely done by the surrounding community.

Thus, based on the results of the analysis, the younger generation is expected to be able to think creatively in overcoming the obstacles that arise, based on several previous interviews with several young people from Letkole village, many young people already have cellphones and Letkole village is also one of the villages that has a pretty good network coverage as initial capital in utilizing technology, there are several things that can be obtained from the development of technology in building an entrepreneurial attitude starting from helping to optimize various

cultivation processes such as pruning, plant maintenance, and pest control, With technology, farmers can more easily market their products through online platforms, e-commerce and technology enables the development of new products that can increase the added value of vanilla, such as vanilla-based products that are more innovative and attractive to consumers and technology also enables more effective data management, such as monitoring plant conditions, analysis of harvest results, and better cultivation planning based on historical data and there are many more advantages of using technology. Thus, they learn to see the opportunities behind every challenge and develop innovative solutions that can increase the added value of products; thus, without realizing it, the younger generation can develop entrepreneurial character through vanilla cultivation.

#### **4. Program Development Strategy**

Based on several problems above, the researcher examines them in several points to explain, provide understanding, and strategies in efforts to provide character and entrepreneurship education for the younger generation, namely specifically in vanilla cultivation:

1. **Training and Education:** Providing intensive instruction and clear education to the community regarding vanilla cultivation techniques and business principles so that through training and education it can provide an opportunity to learn about how basic knowledge and entrepreneurial concepts, including financial management, marketing, and business strategy.
2. **Collaboration with Experts:** Collaboration with established or experienced experts in their fields significantly influences character education and entrepreneurship. This can encourage the younger generation to learn more closely about how to start a business or the obstacles that need to be considered to understand better the shortcomings and advantages that need to be overcome.
3. **Utilization of Technology:** Technology is critical in the agricultural sector because it can increase productivity and efficiency, reduce production costs, and optimize the use of natural resources. Through technologies such as precision agriculture, mechanization, and automation, farmers can manage land more accurately and efficiently, reduce waste, and increase yields and product quality. In addition, technology allows easier access to market information and broader distribution networks, so farmers can access global markets and get more competitive prices. With technology, the agricultural sector can become more sustainable, adaptive to environmental changes, and meet the world's increasing food needs.
4. **Formation of Working Group:** Working groups play an important role in character and entrepreneurship education for young people because they enable collaboration, knowledge sharing, and social skills development. Through teamwork, young people learn to value the opinions and expertise of others, hone communication and negotiation skills, and build self-confidence and empathy. In addition, working groups create an environment that supports innovation and creativity, fosters an entrepreneurial spirit, and helps group members support each other in achieving common goals. Thus, working groups strengthen individual character and prepare young people to become successful entrepreneurs and contribute positively to society.
5. **Product Diversification:** Product diversification in vanilla cultivation is essential for the younger generation because it can increase their agricultural businesses' added value and sustainability. By creating various vanilla derivative products, such as vanilla extract, vanilla powder, and processed food and beverage products containing vanilla, young farmers can open up more market opportunities and expand distribution networks. Product diversification also helps reduce the risk of dependence on one product type so that income remains stable despite price fluctuations or market demand. In addition, innovation in product diversification can create competitive advantages, attract new consumers, and strengthen the business's position in the global market. Thus, product diversification is an important strategy to support the success and growth of vanilla farming businesses for the younger generation.

From here, the younger generation is expected to improve their character and entrepreneurial attitude further because all the facilities and knowledge provided will not run optimally without consistent implementation. This aligns with the concept conveyed by Ly (2022) that a quality

instilled in character can bring about changes for the better or for the worse in the previous direction.

From the above presentation, this research has advantages, namely regarding how to form a disciplined character and entrepreneurial attitude in generation young in Letkole village. Discipline and entrepreneurial attitude need to be analyzed to determine the factors that cause the low level of national participation and the obstacles faced in developing and utilizing vanilla as a source of income. After conducting this research, it is expected to add research references on the character of discipline and entrepreneurial attitude, especially on agricultural land in the future, because not many researchers discuss the character of discipline and entrepreneurial attitude in the younger generation, especially related to vanilla cultivation.

## **Conclusion**

The younger generation has an important role in Indonesia's agricultural development. Its role is to help increase the productivity and welfare of farmers. Based on research conducted in Letkole village, South Amfoang, NTT, Letkole village is one of the villages with agricultural resources, namely vanilla cultivation, which has a selling value. However, in addition, the lack of participation and understanding of the younger generation makes vanilla cultivation not utilized optimally, this can be seen starting from their understanding that work as a farmer cannot provide sufficient income, in addition, the lack of understanding and strategy in marketing and character education in vanilla cultivation makes the younger generation less interested in the agricultural sector and prefers to migrate outside the region so that without realizing it if utilized properly vanilla can be a source of significant income. As is known, vanilla can produce various derivative products, such as vanilla extract, vanilla powder, processed food products, drinks containing vanilla, and so on, this is also supported by data from the World Agriculture Organization (FAO) in 2023 explaining that the export value of vanilla reached around 538.2 million USD, with an average price of 148,785 USD per ton. Thus, the lack of participation of the younger generation in agriculture in Letkole village makes vanilla a guide to teach the importance of character education and entrepreneurship to the younger generation while improving the economic welfare of society in general.

The results of this study indicate that vanilla cultivation not only provides economic benefits but also serves as an effective medium for character education and entrepreneurship in the younger generation, this can contribute to the development of a more independent and productive society. Thus, through vanilla cultivation activities, the younger generation can learn various important aspects related to how to form character in terms of discipline and have an entrepreneurial spirit because, of course, it would be very wasteful when knowledge and the availability of technology and promising natural products are not adequately cultivated through educational training, collaboration with experts, utilization of technology, formation of working groups, and product diversification.

## **List of abbreviations**

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**Ethics approval and consent to participate**

Not applicable

**Consent for publication**

Not applicable

**Availability of data and materials**

Not applicable

**Competing interests**

All authors declare that there are no relevant conflicts of interest related to this research.

**Author contributions**

**GGH** and **MDSB** analyzed and interpreted the patient data regarding the hematological disease and the transplant. **FLK** performed the histological examination of the kidney, and was a major contributor in writing the manuscript. All authors read and approved the final manuscript."

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