



Knowledge E

Vol. Social Sciences

International Conference on Social  
Science and Biodiversity of Papua  
and Papua New Guinea 2015

ISBN 978-602-81001-1-1



PUBLISHED

2016-08-20

## Table of Contents

### **International Conference on Social Science and Biodiversity of Papua and Papua New Guinea 2015**

Julius Ary Mollet

Pages 1-2, <http://doi.org/10.18502/kss.v1i1.426>

### **Education and Entrepreneurship: Best Learning from Helm Project at Cenderawasih University**

Beth L. Goldstein, Mesak lek, Westim Ratang, and Jhon Blesia

Pages 3-6, <http://doi.org/10.18502/kss.v1i1.427>

### **Home-Brewed Alcohol, Gender and Violence in Wamena, Papua**

Jenny Munro

Pages 7-13, <http://doi.org/10.18502/kss.v1i1.428>

### **Sustainable Development Ecotourism in West Papua: Learning from The Scottish Experience**

Julius Ary Mollet

Pages 14-18, <http://doi.org/10.18502/kss.v1i1.429>

### **Effect of Temperature on Butterfly Community (Lepidoptera) at Gunung Meja Recreational Forest Area, Manokwari, Papua Barat**

Rawati Panjaitan, Tri Atmowidi, and Djunijanti Peggie

Pages 19-26, <http://doi.org/10.18502/kss.v1i1.430>

### **Determination of Priority Species for Invasive Plant Management in Wetlands of Wasur National Park Merauke**

Sarah Yuliana

Pages 27-36, <http://doi.org/10.18502/kss.v1i1.431>

Conference Paper

## Education and Entrepreneurship: Best Learning from Helm Project at Cenderawasih University

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### Abstract

In 2013, as part of the Higher Education Leadership and Management national initiative sponsored by US AID, Universitas Cenderawasih proposed an action research project to address the under-employment of UNCEN graduates through purposeful entrepreneurship education. Although entrepreneurship education had been introduced previously at UNCEN, it had never been custom designed to integrate theory and practice appropriate to Papua as part of the formal curriculum. This paper focuses on the use of core principles of the action research process (ARP) to develop and implement a locally effective curriculum for students enrolled in UNCEN's Faculty of Economics. A central value underlying the project was the development of a curriculum that could address social inequalities in Papua, specifically the significant under-representation of Papuan native peoples in the entrepreneurship sector. Through a mixed methods approach that used demographic, attitudinal and outcome data as well as observational, interview and focus group data, the ARP team designed an experientially-based learning module, documented implementation of the pilot learning module, evaluated its effectiveness, and developed proposals for improvement and institutionalization. As a result of its action research project, the ARP team suggests that future iterations of the entrepreneurship curriculum at UNCEN should adopt a culturally responsive pedagogy (Gay, 2010; Ladson-Billings, 1995) that addresses the disparities in cultural and social capital shown to be significant in the ARP to entrepreneurship education.

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Received: 16 July 2016  
Accepted: 14 August 2016  
Published: 25 August 2016

Publishing services  
provided by Knowledge E

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Selection and Peer-review under the responsibility of the ICSBP Conference Committee.

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### 1. Introduction

Universitas Cenderawasih is charged in the era of Papua Special Autonomy to graduate students who are trained and willing to lead the region to sustainable economic and job growth through creative and responsible entrepreneurship. Yet, to date, students have continued to aspire to the secure and prestigious employment afforded by the civil service. Young Papuan graduates are most likely to queue waiting for the chance to become civil servants despite increasingly limited jobs in the civil service. To interrupt this pattern and encourage student entrepreneurship, starting in 2014 UNCEN in collaboration with the USAID/HELM undertook an Action Research Program (ARP) to create an integrated, experiential curriculum in entrepreneurship, attentive to the cultural and social conditions significant to its Papuan students.

**How to cite this article:** Beth L. Goldstein, Mesak Iek, Westim Ratang, and Jhon Blesia, "Education and Entrepreneurship: Best Learning from Helm Project at Cenderawasih University," *KnE Social Sciences*, vol. 2016, pages 3-6.  
DOI 10.18502/kss.v1i1.427

Page 3