
Research on the Influence of the Management of University Entrepreneurship Education on the Entrepreneurial Practice of University Students – A Case Study of Universities in Western China

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ABSTRACT: *With the weakness of the world economy, China's economic growth slow down also, while domestic colleges continue to improve the rate of enrollment, the number of graduates keeps climbing, the employment situation of college graduates is becoming increasingly tense. In 2018, there were 8.2 million university graduates in China in total. Compared with 7.95 million in 2017, this number created a brand new record, which makes it more difficult for graduates to get job. Entrepreneurship is not only the driving force of economic growth, but also can create a large number of new jobs, alleviate employment pressure, increase government revenue, promote exports and improve productivity. However, the overall level of entrepreneurship activities of Chinese college students and their rate of success are both considerably low.*

KEYWORDS - *Enterprising Education, Management, Entrepreneurial Practice*



1. Introduction

Due to rapid development of the economy and society, the employment form of graduates in our country has changed significantly and the employment form is extremely severe. Under the new normal, how to change the concept of employment, how to promote employment through entrepreneurship, and how to build a complete management system of college students' entrepreneurship education has become an important issue for universities, society and government. Through combing the circumstance nowadays and existing problems of graduates, entrepreneurship education management in the public management perspective, it is concluded that the cooperative management among college students, society, family and college students will form a collaborative force to educate the students' entrepreneurship education management, improve the effectiveness of entrepreneurship education and promote their rate of success when they establish a new business (Dong Xiaohong,2009). Today the college graduates in our country are facing with more and more serious pressure of employment, however the students who graduate from University of China depend on our country and society too much. And there is insufficient initiative spirit and poorer enterprise ability (Wang Dongming 2018). In order to construct the model of college enterprising education, create the

evaluation Model of College enterprising education, improve the quality of enterprising education and Implement the transformation of educational model about bring along employment with entrepreneurship, this research analyzes the problems and their reasons about the management of enterprise education in many aspects such as mechanisms, system and organization according to the current situation of college enterprising education.

On the one side, a lot of graduates do not have great employment opportunities in China, but their innovation ability and the cultivation of talents have already reached a considerably high level. In addition, practical teaching is of great importance in the cultivation of innovation and entrepreneurship ability. However, the practical teaching of innovation and entrepreneurship in China is not ideal, and many problems need to be improved. Based on the above background, this research focuses on systematically finding out the proposition of college innovation and entrepreneurship practice teaching. The research on this topic can help us to clearly understand the deficiency of the practical teaching mechanism in Chinese universities and provide direction for future reform. Through establishing scientific innovation and entrepreneurship practice teaching mechanism, it provides reference for cultivating innovative higher education system. At the same time, through systematic research on innovation and entrepreneurship practice teaching, it is of great significance to improve the ability of students in terms of their entrepreneurial skills and knowledge, and also help solve the problem of employment difficulty for college students. Centering on this proposition, first of all, the theoretical basis of innovation and entrepreneurship practice teaching and its significance to the cultivation of innovation and entrepreneurship ability are analyzed. Secondly, this study summarizes the current situation of innovation and entrepreneurship practice teaching in Chinese universities and also analyzes the main problems existing in this area. Then it analyzed the successful cases of international and domestic innovation and entrepreneurship practice teaching and summarized its advantages and disadvantages. Finally, based on the main problems and the advantages and disadvantages of successful cases, the practical teaching mechanism of innovation and entrepreneurship in Chinese universities is constructed.

2. Literature Review

According to the research topic, this research has studied a large number of domestic and foreign literature related to entrepreneurial education, entrepreneurial education management, entrepreneurial opportunity recognition ability, entrepreneurial environment and entrepreneurial intention, and summarized the relevant concept definition, development process and relevant impact research.

In recent years, China's college graduates increased year after year, has prepared many talents for the society, but during the process, also have a problem of employment pressure, especially since entering the new period, along with the advancement of education reform in higher education system, how to train practical talents for the society but also to the core competitiveness of colleges and universities own development. In this context, the management of university entrepreneurship education has also received extensive attention. Actively applying the management of university entrepreneurship education has an important role in cultivating entrepreneurial talents and improving the core competitiveness of universities (Gao Longzheng, 2017). Especially under the background of encouraging graduates to start their own business in China, colleges and universities actively apply entrepreneurship education, which also fits actual conditions in the time of China, cultivating entrepreneurial talents for the society, encouraging graduates to establish their own businesses and the public to also start their own businesses. In this regard, college entrepreneurship is of great importance. Also

should see, in the management of entrepreneurship education in Chinese higher education system is more and more important.

According to Sexton and Bowman (1984), a major problem in the existing literature in terms of entrepreneurship is that there is no clear definition of entrepreneurship. During the process of applying concepts such as entrepreneurship education and enterprise education, it is argued that these two terms represent very different concepts and ideas (Hynes, 1996). Specifically speaking, it is introduced that entrepreneurship education focuses on creating self-reliance, while enterprise education focuses on creating opportunity-seeking individuals. In addition, there are also other people, like Gibb (1993) as cited in Fank et al. (2005), who pointed out that entrepreneurship education and enterprise education could be considered as two similar concepts but they are contextually different. To explain it in detail, entrepreneurship education is mainly applied in the North America, but enterprise education is mainly applied in Western Europe. Moreover, Jones and English (2004) pointed out that entrepreneurship education can be served as a substitute of entrepreneurial education, and it refers to “a process of providing individuals with the ability to recognize commercial opportunities and the insight, self-esteem, knowledge and skills to act on them.” Although the definitions of these terms can be regarded as a controversial topic, still most articles tend to use the terms interchangeably (Hynes, 1996). Through analyzing the different definitions of these terms, it can be seen that they also share commonality to some extent. Faoite et al. (2003) pointed out that from a general point of view, entrepreneurs can be considered as innovators, and at the same time, NKC (2008) stated that entrepreneurs are also wealth creators and challenge takers. Specifically speaking, in terms of entrepreneurship education, Timmons (1989) explained that it refers to the study that focuses on teaching people how to discovery opportunities and apply them properly through using an individual’s ability of creativity and risk taking. There are also some researchers who hold the opinion that entrepreneurship education focuses on teaching people how to deal with uncertain situations and factors in business, in which venture creation is considered as a key idea (Kratko, 1997). However, Co and Mitchell (2006) explained that it should also be noted that developing entrepreneurial attitude, skill, and managerial attributes is still the major focus of entrepreneurship education currently.

3. Problem statement

There are some of the more prominent problems, some universities have not better recognize the importance of entrepreneurship education and core connotation, did not establish the perfect university entrepreneurship education management system, thus to a large extent affected the university entrepreneurship education management effect.

4. Research Questions

At the end of the questionnaire survey, SPSS and other tools were used to conduct empirical studies such as correlation analysis and regression analysis, and the hypothesis model proposed in this study was verified to reach a conclusion.

- 4.1. Evaluation of college students 'entrepreneurship education management.
- 4.2. The Relationship between Entrepreneurship Education Entrepreneurship Intention Entrepreneurial Motivation and Entrepreneurial Attitude.

5. Theoretical Framework and Research Hypotheses

In this study, the theoretical framework focuses on examining entrepreneurship education variables, its components of entrepreneurship curricula, teaching methodologies and universities roles as the independent variables, and attitude and stake holder support systems

as mediating variables to test entrepreneurial intentions, the dependent variable (Parimala Rengiah, 2013). Entrepreneurship education can be identified as a process focusing on improving individuals' entrepreneurial competence by drawing lessons from both theoretical knowledge and real-life practice. Through learning a semester of the course, it is expected that the knowledge and skills learned by a student could help improve his or her motivation and attitude toward entrepreneurship considerably (Raposo & do Paco, 2011). If entrepreneurship education can be conducted smoothly, as a result, the entrepreneurial competencies of students would be able to be developed at least to some extent, and more importantly, students would be encouraged and motivated to engage in activities related to entrepreneurship (Khalili et al., 2014). According to Prodjosoesilo (2005), it is pointed out that there are considerable connections among students' entrepreneurial motivation and attitudes, entrepreneurship learning process, and students' concern in entrepreneurship education. Moreover, Lee and Wong (2003) also explained that entrepreneurship education could affect the attitudes of students in terms of risk taking during the process or preparation process of establishing new business. In addition, it is found out by Rengiah and Sentosa (2016) that entrepreneurial attitude could serve as a mediator in the relationship between entrepreneurship education and entrepreneurial intention. Therefore, based on the findings of previous research, this study mainly focuses on examining the relationship among different variables as presented in Figure 1.

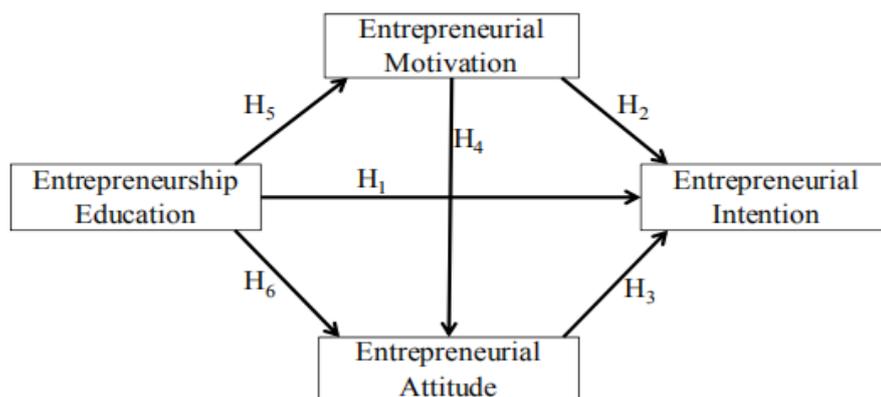


Figure 1. Conceptual framework

(Mahendra, Djatmika, & Hermawan, 2017)

There are six hypothesis examined in this study. These include a relationship between entrepreneurship education and entrepreneurial intention (H1), a relationship between entrepreneurial motivation and entrepreneurial intention (H2), a relationship between entrepreneurial attitude and entrepreneurial intention (H3), a relationship between entrepreneurial motivation and entrepreneurial attitude (H4), a relationship between entrepreneurship education and entrepreneurial motivation (H5), and a relationship between entrepreneurship education and entrepreneurial attitude (H6).

6. Research Methodology

In this section, the research paradigms, approach and methodology applied in this study will be discussed and analyzed, and they would be applied to find out details about the research issues and also test the hypotheses above.

6.1 Relevant theories

It should be noted that entrepreneurial intentions could be hard to measure, for various factors can affect entrepreneurial intentions. Therefore, it is necessary to introduce some essential theories in which the determinant factors of entrepreneurial intentions are examined in detail

6.1.1 Theory of reasoned action (TRA) and Theory of planned behavior (TPB)

According to Ajzen and Fishbein (1980), under the TRA framework, intentions play an essential role in capturing the factors that can affect an individual's motivation, which as a result affects a particular behavior of this individual considerably. These factors can reflect their degree of willingness in terms of conducting a behavior of every individual. Specifically speaking, According to TRA, the intention of an individual determines his or her behavior, and it should be noted that their intention is affected by two major factors: personal attitudes and subjective norms. The former can be evaluated by patterns of belief and performance evaluations of behavior, while the latter refer to the belief in which people would behave in a particular way under the influence of society (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980). Under this circumstance, subjective norms would be affected by the opinions of the family, friends, colleagues and even community and public views.

As for the TPB, according to the study conducted by Ajzen (1991), it mainly focuses on behavioral awareness, addressing different levels of personal awareness in terms of the limitation of the performance of a specific behavior.

The TRA and TPB framework presented by Ajzen have become two significant concepts that have been frequently applied in academic studies on entrepreneurial intentions (Eagly & Chaiken, 1993). According to Bird (1988), entrepreneurial intentions should be considered as a significant determinant factor in terms of the interest of an individual toward business, thus should also be regarded as an important business concept. When an individual plans to establish a new business, he or she has to deal with the unforeseen uncertainties. Therefore, it is necessary for them to learn related skills and knowledge, which can help motivate them to deal with these challenges in a more efficient way.

6.1.2 The theory of entrepreneurial activities and the model of entrepreneurial potential

The theory of entrepreneurial activities was developed by Shapero and Sokol (1982), and according to this theory, life and personal attitudes play a very important role in the process of establishing a new business. Specifically speaking, there are two factors that can help measure the life and personal attitudes, one of which is pull factors, while the other is push factors (such as unemployment and excessive time, etc.); As a result, under the influence of these factors, personally perceived feasibility and entrepreneurial desirability would change considerably. As for the model of entrepreneurial potential, it was developed by Sokol (1982), and according to this theory, there are three significant factors that can affect the entrepreneurial potential of an individual. The first one is the perceived desirability of starting a new business; the second one is the perceived feasibility, while the last one is action tendencies. It should be noted that both the theory of entrepreneurial activities and the model of entrepreneurial potential are built on a foundation, which indicates there is a close connection between life changes and trends of action.

6.2 Research Model

According to Ajzen (1991), how an individual views his or her own ability in term of controlling their own behavior can affect their intention to establish a new business. Specifically speaking, before an individual decides to establish a new business, they would evaluate if this process would be easy or difficult. This argument presented by Ajzen has a close connection to the concept of perceived feasibility presented by Shapero and Sokol (1982), because it should be noted that both concepts address the ability of an individual to establish a new business. According to Shapero and Sokol (1982), when an individual finds out that there is a good opportunity in the market and there are also feasible plans accompanying this opportunity, then it would be very likely for this individual to develop an intention of starting a new business. However, at the same time, there are also other factors served as catalysts that can affect one's decision of conducting the actions, and these factors include changes in lives, daily working and learning processes. As mentioned above, there are pull and push factors that can affect the behavior of an individual, which can lead to a change in the intention of beginning new businesses. According to Shapero and Sokol (1982), this kind of change is closely related to the environmental impacts. For instance, when an individual is mainly surrounded by the educational environment, then teaching and extracurricular activities can help them develop higher level of skills and knowledge as well as positive attitudes toward establishing new business, which motivates them to establish new businesses. What's more, the research conducted by Heilbrunn and Almor (2014) also stated that entrepreneurial education and socio-economic conditions can impact the perceived feasibility.

Moreover, as explained above, subjective norms also play a key role in affecting the behavior of an individual. The opinions of family and friends around an individual can affect how he or she evaluates or thinks of the new business, resulting in a change of the perceived feasibility which in turn can affect the individual's intention (Krueger et al., 2000).

According to the case study conducted by Zain, Akram, and Ghani (2010), it proved how entrepreneur intentions can be affected by both subjective norms and entrepreneurial education. In addition, entrepreneurial desirability and work experience can directly affect the individuals' entrepreneur intention in both China and the United States according to their research.

If comparing the model of entrepreneurial potential with TPB, it can be seen that among the three significant factors that affect entrepreneur intentions in the former framework, two of which, the perceived feasibility and entrepreneurial desirability, can considered as similar to TPB's framework about entrepreneurship.

From a general point of view, this research is based on the theories that have been introduced and explained above, including TPB, the theory of entrepreneurial activities, and the model of the entrepreneurial potential. In addition, except these theories, this research also take other possible factors that could affect the entrepreneurial attention into consideration, including national norms, the institutional environment, the entrepreneurial education, and factors of personal characteristics.

6.3 Analytical methods

6.3.1 Data processing method

Both qualitative and quantitative measures are applied in this research:

For the application of qualitative method, first, the questionnaire would be made based on related literature, and latent variables were also taken into consideration. Next, we contacted

several experts who are lecturers in universities in Western China and possess plentiful experiences in terms of training and preparing students for business start-ups. Their knowledge and skills also helped to construct the questionnaire. In addition, the questionnaire was also tested with the help from about 30 students. The result of this test was applied to help examine the reliability and scale value of the questionnaire, which helped to perfect the questionnaire efficiently. As for the quantitative method, this research used Cronbach's Alpha to evaluate the change of observed variables in a latent variable and also to evaluate the reliability of related factors. According to Nunnally and Bernstein (1994), the reliability coefficient should be at least 0.70, and only under this circumstance, the result of the research is regarded as acceptable. As for the latent variable, it can only be accepted when the Cronbach's Alpha is at least 0.60 and the Corrected Item-Total Correlation is less than 0.30. In addition, Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) was also applied in this research in order to find out how the environmental, cultural, and social factors have affected the entrepreneurial intentions of students in Western China

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