A comparative assessment on Students' awareness of the Concept and the Process of Entrepreneurship, a Study conducted in Hormozgan Payam – e – Noor University

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ABSTRACT

The present study, conducted in Hormozgan Payam- e- Noor University, aims to assess students' awareness of the concept and the process of entrepreneurship in the year 2011 as well as to develop some educational strategies in order to increase awareness of entrepreneurship. Our research tries to answer the following questions: 1- To what extent are students aware of the concept and the process of entrepreneurship? 2- Is there a significant difference between students in different majors in terms of their awareness of the concept and the process of entrepreneurship? 3- Is there a gender difference in terms of awareness of the concept and the process of entrepreneurship? Research theoretical basis The resulting data were analyzed in the two levels of descriptive and inferential statistics using SPSS software. In descriptive statistics, research data were analyzed according to statistic traits such as frequency and percentage. Variance analysis Test was used in inferential level. Statistic population includes senior students studying on B.A level in the three departments of Engineering, Humanities and Pure sciences in Hormozgan Payam – e- Noor University in the year 2011. The sample under study was randomly selected from each department. We finally included 270 participants in the sample, 90 participants from each department. A questionnaire was used to gather information. The findings suggest that over 65% of the students under study know very little about the process and the concept of entrepreneurship. In addition, results from variance analysis test show that there is no significant difference between different majors in terms of students' awareness of the concept and the process of entrepreneurship at F= 3.066 and significance level = 0.05. In other words, all departments (Engineering, Pure Sciences and Humanities) have a very low understanding of the concept and the process of entrepreneurship. As research findings suggest, courses on entrepreneurship concepts and basics, stages of the establishment and the operation of an institute, teaching discovery of opportunities, business laws and regulations, financial management, business management, creativity techniques, time management, problem- solving skill and team work skills need to be provided through practical instruction in universities so that graduates are equipped with entrepreneurship skills before entering job market.

Key words: entrepreneurship, teaching entrepreneurship, the concept of entrepreneurship, the process of entrepreneurship

Introduction

The third millennium has some characteristics that distinguish it from the last periods. We live in the age of acceleration and transformation. The current changes will inevitably influence our lives[6]. In addition to rapid environmental changes, the complexity and competitiveness of societies on the one hand and the population growth and the increasing rate of unemployment on the other hand are the challenges we're dealing with. In order to cope with these challenges and conditions, it's essential to develop graduates' entrepreneurship capabilities [11]. It's also necessary to recognize changes and to engage in creativity and entrepreneurship appropriate with them.

Research Questions:

Due to rapid economic, industrial and cultural changes that have occurred over the last decades, and
the need to strengthen knowledge-based structures and to encourage the production of wealth from knowledge, it's important to provide proper conditions for the production of science and crafts. Universities are primarily entitled to address entrepreneurship and to educate and rear graduates with abilities and skills that are needed to start a job. Results from several researches indicate that teaching entrepreneurship heightens individuals' recognition and helps them succeed in the process of entrepreneurship[8]. High position of universities made this institution bear a lot of expectations[14]. Today, teaching entrepreneurship in universities and higher education institutions is a universal phenomenon which is developed in most countries, whether developed and developing.

The development of entrepreneurship requires that students and graduates be equipped with entrepreneurship skills. In Iran, students acquire the knowledge of their major and enter job market with a mass of information. However, because of limited vacancies in governmental and private sectors and the lack of entrepreneurship skills, graduates spend a lot of time and bear social, economic and mental problems while waiting for a suitable job. It seems that students will be able to determine and capture a job as long as they acquire entrepreneurship skills besides theoretical and practical knowledge and science as soon as they enter universities. Thus, they'll be able to benefit from opportunities so as to open their own business. Regarding the importance of the issue, the present research attempts to study students' awareness of the concept and the process of entrepreneurship in Hormozgan Payam – Noor University in 2011. It also tries to provide some educational strategies for the increase of students' awareness of entrepreneurship.

General aim:

This research primarily aims to assess study students' awareness of the concept and the process of entrepreneurship in Hormozgan Payam – Noor University in the year 2011. Additionally, it tries to provide some educational strategies for the increase of students' awareness of entrepreneurship.

Our research tries to answer the following questions:

1- To what extent are students aware of the concept and the process of entrepreneurship?

2- Is there a significant difference between students in different majors in terms of their awareness of the concept and the process of entrepreneurship?

3- Is there a gender difference in terms of awareness of the concept and the process of entrepreneurship?

Research theoretical basis:

Today, the literature of entrepreneurship is rich. Since it's related to different majors, researchers studying on anthropology, history, administration, sociology and economics have also conducted researches on entrepreneurship[5]. An overview on the literature of entrepreneurship shows that the term "entrepreneurship" first emerged in economic theories and was later used in other schools and theories[1].

The term "Entrepreneurship" was derived from the French word "Entreprendre " which means "to burden something". Entrepreneurship is defined in Webster's dictionary as: someone who commits him/herself to organize, manage and burden the risks of an economic venture"[13].

Scholars have defined entrepreneurship from different perspectives. According to Josef Schmpeter( 1934), an entrepreneur is, indeed, a driving force of economic growth. He calls an entrepreneur a creative destruction, i.e. someone who destroys static balance and creates a dynamic balance [2]. Robert Hisrich[ 7] defines entrepreneurship as the process of creating a valuable and new work. This time – consuming and exhausting process involves financial, mental and social risks on the one hand and financial rewards, independence and personal satisfaction on the other hand. David Mc Land considers an entrepreneur someone who is moderately risk-taker and needs big success. Peter Draker calls an entrepreneur someone who takes the most advantages of opportunities.

Overall, there is a wide variety of definitions for entrepreneurship; there is no single definition as a correct definition since a large number of definitions from opening a business to applying specific behaviors and characteristics and innovations have been used. The literature of entrepreneurship suggests that conceptual and operational definitions have been developed in different socio-economic environments for the particular conditions of the environment under study.

Entrepreneur University:

Nowadays, countries are struggling to expand human capital and to improve the quality of human resources in order to achieve strategic goals stated for national and economic growth, the production of wealth, cultural dynamics, civil excellence, social unity. In general, they try to move toward stable development based on innovation, entrepreneurship, the management of knowledge, knowledge-orientation in different fields and levels [3]. In other words, today, the main capital of societies is the knowledge, skills and attitudes of their human resources. Using this capital for social well-being requires that entrepreneurship capabilities be provided. It's expected that universities play a key role in the development of entrepreneurship capabilities. For this reason, traditional universities...
that mainly focus on research and teaching must be transformed to entrepreneur universities [10]. Entrepreneurship on university level includes the provision of conditions for innovations and creativity in universities, commercialization of knowledge, using the findings of academic researches and innovations in the development of human knowledge [11].

In its global perspective for higher education in the 21st century, the United Nation's Scientific and Academic Organization defined modern universities as a place where entrepreneurship skills evolve in order to facilitate graduates' capabilities and to make students job creators [15]. In developed countries, universities are directed toward preparing individuals for job market and entrepreneurship activities [16].

**Fig. 1:** a transition from education and the production of knowledge to the application of sciences and knowledge[4].

**Methodology:**

**Research tools:**

A questionnaire designed by the researcher is used for gathering data. The questionnaire was prepared according to research objectives, the society under study and previous researches. Validity and reliability measures were used to determine technical characteristics of measurement tool. We consulted entrepreneurship scholars to study content reliability of the questionnaire. In order to determine reliability of the questionnaire, we used Cronbach α-coefficient. α coefficient in this study was 0.83%, i.e. reliability. Coefficient is high and the results are reliable.

**Statistic sample and population:**

Statistic population includes senior students studying on B.A level in the three departments of Engineering, Humanities and Pure sciences in Hormozgan Payam - e -Noor University in the year 2011. The sample under study was randomly selected from each department. We finally included 270 participants in the sample, 90 participants from each department.

**The analysis of results:**

The present study was analyzed on the two levels of descriptive and referential statistics using SPSS software. On the level of descriptive statistics, some statistic features such as frequency and percentage were used to describe research data. On the level of referential statistics, we used ANOVA and T- test.

**Research findings:**

Table 1: The results of variance analysis for students’ awareness of the concept and the process of entrepreneurship in the three departments of Humanities, Engineering and Pure Sciences

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The source of changes</th>
<th>SS</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>MS</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>sig</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Intragroup</td>
<td>0/925</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0/463</td>
<td>3/066</td>
<td>0/048</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intergroup</td>
<td>40/296</td>
<td>267</td>
<td>0/151</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall</td>
<td>41/221</td>
<td>269</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As can be seen from the table, the results from variance analysis show that there's no significant difference between various majors in terms of awareness of the concept and the process of entrepreneurship at F = 3.066 and significance level = 0.05. In other words, all departments have low awareness of the concept and the process of entrepreneurship.
students studying the basics of entrepreneurship for the development of entrepreneurship among researchers. Research shows that the most appropriate strategy requires an educational system must be revised and reformed.

Skills and self-employment. Thus, higher abilities at the expense of less interest in practical students to gain large scientific knowledge and current higher educational system which encourages business. This suggestion implies a big change in the economic stimulation so as to open their own ideas or how much knowledge we possess. Instead, it means how they can be applied to improve well-being and economic growth.

Because of the key role of universities in economic development, it's essential that educational system doesn't simply encourage students to look for a job but instead to work as a generating force and economic stimulation so as to open their own business. This suggestion implies a big change in the current higher educational system which encourages students to gain large scientific knowledge and abilities at the expense of less interest in practical skills and self-employment. Thus, higher educational system must be revised and reformed. Researches show that the most appropriate strategy for the development of entrepreneurship among students studying the basics of entrepreneurship includes teaching stages of the establishment and operation of a business institute, the recognition of opportunities, business laws and regulations, financial management, business management, creativity techniques, time management, problem-solving skill and team work skills and encouraging innovation. The best methods to teach these skills are classroom instruction, seminars, interview and visits with entrepreneurs, workshops, practice and lecture.

As research findings suggest, courses on entrepreneurship concepts and basics, stages of the establishment and the operation of an institute, teaching discovery of opportunities, business laws and regulations, financial management, business management, creativity techniques, time management, problem-solving skill and team work skills need to be provided through practical instruction in universities so that graduates are equipped with entrepreneurship skills before entering job market.

Seminars, workshops and special courses on entrepreneurship should be held in order to upgrade students' awareness, knowledge and insights.

Successful entrepreneurs should be invited in the universities in order to heighten students' and graduates' spirit and interest in entrepreneurship as well as to promote entrepreneurship culture.

Creative and innovative students and teachers should be discovered and motivated to engage in entrepreneurship activities.

Besides, we strongly recommend a systematic relation with graduates in order to determine the influence of higher education instruction on entrepreneurship and to develop a model for the measurement of the influences of studies on the process of instruction.

It's recommended that a transformation process be introduced in all university instructions, researches and structures toward an entrepreneur university.

Discussion and Conclusion:

The results show that more than 65 percent of students know very little about the concept and the process of entrepreneurship. Besides, results from the variance analysis suggest that various majors aren't significantly different in terms of their awareness of the concept and the process of entrepreneurship at F=3.066 and significance level of 0.05. In other words, in all departments (Engineering, Pure Sciences and Humanities,) awareness of the concept and the process of entrepreneurship are equally low.

Since entrepreneurship plays a key role to meet ever-changing needs of job market and employment rate through job provision, students' low awareness of the concept and the process of entrepreneurship is an unfortunate issue that must be taken into account by officials so that they develop appropriate solutions to this problem.

A review on the history of entrepreneurship shows that the process of entrepreneurship can be taught to students. Teaching entrepreneurship can encourage graduates to start their own business (12). According to professor Roukpe, the Dean of Hamburg University and the Chief of Entrepreneurship Centre of Hamburg University, knowledge becomes a productive source only if it is combined with entrepreneurship. It's necessary to eliminate the gap between knowledge and practice. In fact, entrepreneurship doesn't mean how many ideas or how much knowledge we possess. Instead, it means how they can be applied to improve well-being and economic growth.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Index</th>
<th>frequency</th>
<th>average</th>
<th>Standard deviation</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>sig</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Females</td>
<td>151</td>
<td>1.90</td>
<td>0.404</td>
<td>1.129</td>
<td>0.260</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Males</td>
<td>119</td>
<td>1.95</td>
<td>0.374</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

T-test was used to compare male and female students' awareness of entrepreneurship. The results show that there is no meaningful difference between male and female students' awareness of the concept and the process of entrepreneurship (table 2).

Table 2: A comparison of awareness of entrepreneurship between male and female students of Hormozgan Payam –e-Noor University in 2011

References

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