



**EVALUATION OF THE ENTREPRENEURSHIP EDUCATION IN DEVELOPMENT
OF ENTREPRENEURIAL SKILLS: WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO NIZWA COLLEGE OF
TECHNOLOGY, SULTANATE OF OMAN**

V. Kavitha Rajan

Lecturer, Department of Business Studies, Nizwa College of Technology, Sultanate of Oman

ABSTRACT

This paper explores the key skills required for becoming successful entrepreneur and how it is being imparted through entrepreneurship education. The study was conducted in Nizwa College of Technology, Sultanate of Oman. The Data were collected using structured questionnaires. The collected data was analysed using point likert scale, simple percentage and correlation and the results were summarized. The proposed research questions were: What are the key skills required for becoming successful entrepreneur? How the acquisition skills promote successful entrepreneurship?

Keywords: Entrepreneurship education, Promoting Entrepreneurial skills

INTRODUCTION

Entrepreneurship is most often related to the creation of new businesses. However, entrepreneurship and entrepreneurial dynamics is as relevant to the creation of innovative products and satisfy the customers. It is about generating ideas, organizing, and hands-on action that can have many different effects. (Stockholm school of entrepreneurship)

In Developing countries growth-oriented firms are more likely to create new employment opportunities than stagnant ones. The recent research is the notion that entrepreneurship in developing countries is distinctive from that practiced in developed countries, and that understanding these distinctions is critical to private sector development in developing countries. According to Fillion, 1997 states the entrepreneurship said to have originated from economics and associated with managerial aspects of enterprises, business development and business management.



Entrepreneurship in Oman now appreciated the positive relationship that business start-ups have with the provision of employment opportunities, and diversification of the economy. As a result of this a number of initiatives have been introduced to facilitate an environment that is encouraging to entrepreneurship. In order to make endorsements regarding the support of these existing efforts are important to examine each of the potential barriers. Providing the necessary access to finance, the **Sultanate** has made a number of efforts to make self-employment an attractive and feasible option for jobseekers in the country. The SANAD Program was developed to target Omani youth in particular by granting loans to those interested in pursuing self-employment. From the provision of business support in Oman, it is clear that there is room for improvement. The Public Authority for Investment Promotion & Export Development (PAIPED) is tasked with facilitating investment in the Sultanate and to strengthen the private sector although this does not extend to equipping local entrepreneurs with the knowledge and skills necessary to starting and growing their own businesses.

This essential function appears to have been overlooked by policy makers and as a result of this there is clearly an opportunity for educational institutions to contribute to the growth of the private sector. Recognizing the differing needs of entrepreneurs, entrepreneurial education programs should be developed to target organizations at the various stages of the business life cycle. It should be remembered that the support required by entrepreneurs does not end at the start-up phase but rather develops as the enterprise seeks methods of sustainable growth. Sadler (2001) declares Entrepreneurship education is the Centre of an integrate model of economic development.

Therefore Ministry of manpower implemented the decree to Colleges of Technology to educate entrepreneurship course to entire specializations. Educational institutions can promote the skills and practices through entrepreneurial action such as to enhance skills and motivation to encourage entrepreneurial success. The objective includes development of personal qualities and attitudes and formal knowledge and skills of beneficiaries.



LITERATURE REVIEW

According to Roe Odegard (2004), the primary goal of entrepreneurship in education and training is to strengthen the individual's ability to see and exploit opportunities in an economic, social and cultural context. Williams (2011) says entrepreneurship is a learnable process that can be taught, nurtured, supported and enhanced through various types of education and training. Jennings (1994) analysed Entrepreneurship is stimulated by organic, adaptable, openly communicating, consensual, loosely controlled, decentralized and flexible structures. Sadler (1999) agrees with Jennings by stating that entrepreneurship is promoted through stimulating flexible and organic clusters within hierarchical structures. This implies that the autonomy traditionally enjoyed in educational faculties and schools is an ingredient required to foster entrepreneurship. The **Chisholm Institute of Technical and Further Education, Melbourne, Australia**, has implemented a system which requires each unit within the institution to scan for environmental opportunities to reach an agreement with management whether to pursue the project incorporating the risks. The Institute requires staff to pursue the process as a mandatory component of the organization's Performance Management System. Hisrich & Peters (2002) in their study states that entrepreneurial skill can be defined as the ability to create something new with value by devoting the necessary time and effort accompanying financial, and social risks, and receiving the resulting rewards of monetary and personal satisfaction and freedom. Pleshette (2009) examined the determinants of skills needed for the business, in terms of management, administrative and technical skills, to own a personal goal and objectives; furthermore the results indicated a realistic personal development plan for the potential entrepreneur. In addition the study monitored the on-going performance of the entrepreneur once the business has started and progress made towards developing the new skills. This applies both to the entrepreneur's personal needs and to the process of assisting employees to develop new skills that will also benefit the business. A study by Young (1997) found that Entrepreneurial learning is the active and thought processes individuals employ as they acquire, retain and use entrepreneurial knowledge. . Antončič and Hvalič Erzetič (2004) in their study indicated Entrepreneurs need to be self-directed through formal education and training to secure the business performance of their ventures. Decision to precede new facts of development process, quality, investment and



preliminary knowledge of communication, leadership, listening, and basic technical skills are the elements learning through education only. Formal education perceive direct requirement of knowledge.

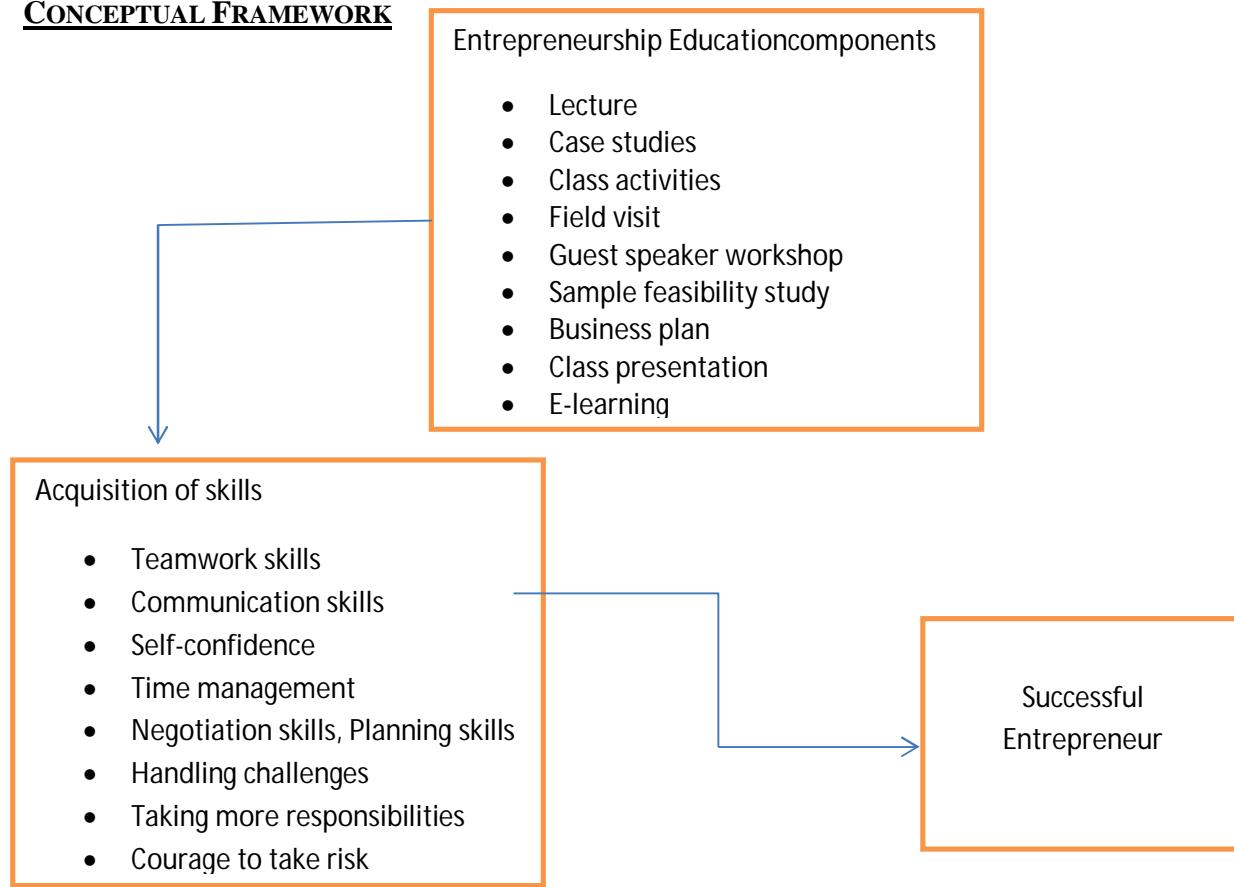
A study by Hayton (2015) reveals skills for successful entrepreneurship is identifying customer needs, the design, branding and price. The study examined that technical opportunities and market opportunities include the size of the industry, competition and operations. Alvarez & Barney(2007) studied that most of skills to create of new opportunities are thoughtful products. Chell(2013) summarised in her study that skills refers to proficiency in performance and may be enhanced by practice and training. She proceeded that Skills are multidimensional constructs; they comprise the cognitive knowledge and what is learnt; the affective emotional expression and what is experienced; the behaviour action at strategic, tactical and personal levels; and the context sectoral, occupational, job and task levels. She highlighted her views through the study experiential learning and is linked to specific situations and/or issues more likely to be successful in developing entrepreneurship skills than classroom-based learning. Volery et al (2015) suggested on the basis of a detailed qualitative study of the actions of entrepreneurs, that different skills may be required to successfully undertake the idea recognition/creation, element of entrepreneurial behaviour, as compared with the skills necessary to capitalise successfully on the idea. All these researchers concluded the fact that entrepreneurship skills may reside or can be developed in one individual.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study entitled, Evaluation of the Entrepreneurship Education in promoting Entrepreneurial skills - A study on Nizwa college of Technology in sultanate of Oman. The research focuses on developing, understanding and promoting ability of entrepreneurial skills in different perspectives.



CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK



RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. **What are the key skills required for becoming successful entrepreneur?**
2. **How the acquisition skills promotes successful entrepreneurship?**

The research design for the present study is Exploratory. It aims to analyse entrepreneurship education, promoting graduates to acquire and equip them with skills relevant to their career. It inspires awareness to business opportunities, provides knowledge to entrepreneurship process, develops resourcefulness and improves student's planning skills propounded by Screen, C.C. (1976). Students' pursuing Entrepreneurial course at Nizwa College of Technology, Sultanate of Oman and it is determined to be 650 in number. The data has been collected from primary source by using structured questionnaire. The total population from Nizwa College of Technology is 650; the number of samples was limited to 200 in number. Random sampling techniques were used



according to student's specialization in the departments of Business, Engineering and Information Technology. The duration of the study is 6 months. Point Likert – scaling technique ranges from Strongly Agree (5 points) to Strongly Disagree (1 point) and the study **using simple percentage analysis, were calculated on the total sample. Correlation** was applied to determine whether the acquisition skills such as entrepreneurial orientation, developing resourcefulness, communication, teamwork, handling challenges, leadership, process, improving self-confidence and encourage to take risk have relation for becoming successful entrepreneurs.

RESULTS AND ITS IMPLICATIONS

Research question 1

What are the key skills required for an entrepreneur?

The data collected was analysed by using simple percentage analysis.

Table No.: 1

Table showing simple percentage analysis of key skills

Key skills	Number	%
a) Entrepreneurial orientation	186	93
b) Self confidence	116	58
c) Exposure to entrepreneurship	144	72
d) Resourcefulness	162	81
e) Planning skills	146	73
f) Teamwork skills	164	82
g) Communication skills	154	77
h) Time management skills	134	67
i) Negotiation skills	138	69
j) Good experience to own business	146	73
k) Marketing skills	148	74
l) Leadership skills	150	75
m) Learn to handle challenges	150	75
n) Taking more responsibilities	150	75
o) Talent of competency	152	76
p) Take risk	142	71

The results from table No: 1 indicated that entrepreneurship education creates entrepreneur's orientation 93%(186). Their creativity from entrepreneurship education 73% (146), the study



reveals that the self-confidence of the respondents are 58%(116). The respondents pointed out their exposure to entrepreneurship process 75%(150), furthermore the study stated that identifies resourcefulness 81%(162). Respondents planning skills were educated, it motivates to start own business as a career 73% (146). The results revealed that 71%(142) of respondents prefer to run their business. Acquiring team work skills shows that the 82%(164) of respondents are getting the support from peer group and family members. Majority 77%(154) has replied that communication skills are acquired. Punctuality and time management 67%(134) are in line to their existing style. Positively, respondents leadership skill accounts to 75 %(150). Negotiation skills with vendor, potential customer and getting consumers feedbacks are reveals 69% (138). Subsequently that reveals). 78% (156) of respondents are exposed to handle their problem. 76% (156) of respondents faced major challenges such as cash inflow and outflow, funding, investments, margins of financial management.

Major respondents are learning long term challenges and goals. An additional Practical skill of decision making to vendor selection, marketing, keeps the employees to be motivated and productive. Alternatively effective multi-tasking can boost productivity by ensuring the works gets completed in time. 71%(142) of respondents are encouraged to take risk. Respondent's intentions are to conduct market research from the industry, to know the latest trends, sales figures and to study the ideal customer and competitions.

RESEARCH QUESTION 2

How the acquisitions skills promotes successful entrepreneur?

Acquired skills play a vital role in promoting successful entrepreneurship. Hence the results of entrepreneurship education correlated the various factors such as developing resourcefulness, communication, teamwork, handling challenges, leadership, process, improving self-confidence and encourage to take risk for becoming successful entrepreneurs.

The main result of a correlation is called the **correlation coefficient "r"**. It ranges from -1.0 to +1.0. The closer r is to +1 or -1, the more closely the two variables are related. If r is close to 0, it means there is no relationship between the variables. If r is positive, it means that as one variable gets larger the other gets larger. If r is negative it means that as one gets larger, the other gets



smaller it's called an "inverse" correlation. While correlation coefficients are normally reported as $r =$ (a value between -1 and +1).

Table No: 2

Table showing correlation between entrepreneurial skills promoting entrepreneurship

Skills	r = value	Results	Level of Significance
q) Teamwork skills	0.965	Positive	Significant
r) Communication skills	0.982	Positive	Significant
s) Good experience to own business	0.852	Positive	Significant
t) Self confidence	0.727	Positive	Significant
u) Time management	0.828	Positive	Significant
v) Negotiation skills	0.912	Positive	Significant
w) Planning skills	0.911	Positive	Significant
x) Marketing skills	0.955	Positive	Significant
y) Leadership skills	0.841	Positive	Significant
z) Learn to handle challenges	0.704	Positive	Significant
aa) Taking more responsibilities	0.734	Positive	Significant
bb) Talent of competency	0.982	Positive	Significant
cc) Take risk	0.942	Positive	Significant

The study reveals that acquiring skills are highly promoting successful entrepreneur. It was empirically tested with the following factors.

- There is high significance in entrepreneurship education promoting team work skill, communicating, negotiation, planning, marketing, competency skill and taking risk in their business.
- Entrepreneurship education promotes Good experience to own a business, time management, leadership skills as they are moderately significant in the above study.
- There is significance in entrepreneurship education promoting Self-confidence, Learn to handle challenges and Taking more responsibilities in the direction to create a new product.



CONCLUSION

The study found that entrepreneurship education encourages teamwork from their peer and family members. Students are acquiring communication skills to deal with customers via email, phone, website and social media. The study also indicated that leadership skills are inculcated which help to manage clients and helps in keeping employees motivated and productive. Entrepreneurial skills will help in managing funds and to generate profit. The author concludes that the most important entrepreneurial skills are decision making, courage to take risk, self-motivation, negotiation skills, and communication skills. The result of this study recommends that entrepreneurship education creates a positive influence on the students and it helps in raising the level of entrepreneurial skills in them.

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