

Investigating Challenges and Opportunities of Entrepreneurship among Graduates Field of Educational Sciences

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ABSTRACT

This research has been conducted with the aim of investigating the challenges and opportunities of entrepreneurship among the graduates of the field of educational sciences, using the qualitative research method. Considering the increasing importance of entrepreneurship in creating employment and economic development, it seems necessary to examine this issue among educational science graduates who play an important role in the education of the future generation. The statistical population of this research includes graduates of educational sciences in Tehran and sampling was done in a targeted manner. The data collection tool included semi-structured interviews with 15 graduates and data analysis was done by thematic analysis. The findings of the research show that educational science graduates face challenges such as lack of familiarity with entrepreneurial skills and lack of financial and consulting support, but at the same time, they also have opportunities such as using their specialized knowledge in the field of education and creating businesses related to this field. Based on these findings, suggestions have been made for the development of entrepreneurship training programs for graduates of educational sciences and the creation of consulting and support centers for start-up businesses in this field.

Keywords: Challenges, Entrepreneurship Opportunities, Educational Sciences

I. INTRODUCTION

In today's era, entrepreneurship as a global phenomenon plays a central role in economic development and is closely related to the educational system. The importance of this issue comes from the fact that entrepreneurship is inextricably linked with creativity and innovation, two essential factors in economic growth. Several studies have shown that creativity is the main engine of economic growth of countries and entrepreneurs, as pioneers in this field, contribute to the economic prosperity of societies by creating and developing profitable activities. (Ba Vafa et al., 2019)

In recent years, the economies of many countries have faced serious challenges such as economic recession, high unemployment rates, and severe fluctuations in international markets. At the same time, phenomena such as globalization, increased competition, development of information technology, emphasis on the quality of goods and services, customer orientation and the need for creativity and innovation have put additional pressure on the economy of countries. These conditions have made policy makers and decision makers to the vital role of entrepreneurs as an effective way to reduce unemployment and achieve economic and social welfare. As a result, in recent years, we have seen a significant increase in research and studies in the field of entrepreneurship and entrepreneurs. (Mazbouhi et al., 2013)

Moreover, Farzpourmachiani M. and Farzpourmachiani A.'s "Attrition Entrepreneurship Theory" describes income-generating ventures that fail to build societal wealth, potentially harming the economy. This form of entrepreneurship, often influenced by policies, contrasts with genuine innovation. While the theory doesn't explicitly discuss IP, attrition entrepreneurship likely overlooks its importance. Focusing on short-term gains, it may bypass the creation of protectable intellectual assets crucial for long-term economic prosperity driven by genuine innovation (Farzpourmachiani M. and Farzpourmachiani A., 2024).

Nowadays, educational institutions provide people with opportunities to learn entrepreneurial skills by focusing on training and formalizing information related to entrepreneurship. Entrepreneurship, as a new phenomenon in the field of economy, plays a prominent role in the development and progress of countries. Creating a culture of business and entrepreneurship in the society, teaching general business skills and adopting supportive decisions by the government are key factors in the development of entrepreneurship (Pour Dariani and Erfanian, 2016).

Despite the significant increase in the number of graduates in the last two decades, their quality and professional adaptation to the needs of society is still questionable. In addition to specialized skills, successful graduates have characteristics such as creativity, innovation, risk-taking, ambiguity tolerance, success-seeking, and self-confidence. Universities should also take steps to cultivate these skills; Because until these features are not strengthened in students, new ideas, planning to operationalize them and exploitation of expertise and finally entrepreneurship will not be possible (Falahi Haghighi et al., 2019).

The field of educational sciences, as one of the important fields in the field of human capital development and management, needs special attention. Empowering the graduates of this field in the field of entrepreneurship plays an important role in employing them and serving the development of the country. In the following, the literature on entrepreneurship and entrepreneurship in educational sciences will be reviewed.

Theoretical foundations

In today's world, universities, as the engine of growth and development, play a key role in aligning the education of scientific disciplines

with the developmental needs of society. In a transformative way, universities have changed their mission from purely educational to educational-research and then to entrepreneurship, or are currently on this path. In addition, universities play an essential role in creating and sustaining a knowledge-based society and economy.

In Iran, higher education is not fully compatible with the development needs of the country, and despite spending heavy educational expenses, universities have not been able to fully play the role of the engine of development, so that university graduates have the highest unemployment rate. The field of educational sciences, as one of the important fields in the field of human capital development and management, needs special attention. Empowering graduates of this field in the field of entrepreneurship can be effective, considering the educational-cultural nature and educational structures and the cultural-socio-economic context (Yadalehi Farsi and Mir Arab Razi, 2018).

In general, with the revelation of the role and impact of entrepreneurship on job creation and economic growth in developed countries, efforts to educate and promote entrepreneurial knowledge and spirit have increased. Entrepreneurship education is an evolving field that faces challenges due to fragmented issues and eclectic approaches that must be solved using strong educational theories and tools that can effectively penetrate the entrepreneurship research discourse (Kakouris& Georgiadis, 2016). Numerous studies demonstrate the benefits of entrepreneurship education and the ways in which entrepreneurial motivation can be enhanced. Accordingly, entrepreneurship education plays an important role in the development of successful entrepreneurs. In this context, universities play a significant role in developing curricula related to entrepreneurship education (Dissanayake et al, 2022).

Entrepreneurship Education Curriculum

Deveci and Ciclo Lino (2018) stated that the concepts of entrepreneurship and entrepreneurship education are now appearing in educational curricula in many countries (Deveci 2022). On the other hand, the current situation of entrepreneurship education, especially at the higher education level of the country, does not have a coherent model and is scattered and confused. Considering the importance and role of entrepreneurship and considering the problems of society, promoting and spreading entrepreneurship, creating a platform for a culture that supports

entrepreneurship and training entrepreneurs is necessary for all societies, especially developing societies like our country, and this is one of the tasks and perspectives of higher education. On the other hand, education experts and thinkers consider the curriculum as the most important element of the education system. This field is considered to be one of the youngest fields of human knowledge, which is developing and evolving so rapidly in different fields and territories that it is difficult and even impossible to determine the boundaries and gaps for it. Of course, the curriculum is the heart of the education system and a tool to achieve the goals of education. (Shojai et al., 2019).

Despite the fact that in the advanced countries of the world since the late 1970s, serious attention has been paid to the issue of entrepreneurship and even in many developing countries they have paid attention to this issue since the late 1980s, in our country, until the implementation of the third development plan, little attention was paid to entrepreneurship. Even in scientific and academic circles, except for very rare cases, there was no activity in this field. The problem of unemployment and the prediction of its worsening in the 1380s caused the issue of entrepreneurship development to be taken into consideration during the formulation of the third development plan. In the recent program, the development of entrepreneurship at the level of the ministries of science, research and technology, health, treatment and medical education, Jihad-Agriculture, Industries and Mines and Metals, as well as the Institute of Jihad Academic has been proposed due to its connection with their activities (Jalili et al., 2013). Like other countries, Iran has considered economic prosperity and sustainable development as its goals in the direction of globalization by designing entrepreneurship courses and training and creating creative and entrepreneurial thinking. By designing the Faculty of Entrepreneurship at the University of Tehran, it pursues activities related to entrepreneurship education in a more formal, regular, and coherent manner. However, what is important in the process of entrepreneurship education is the method of education (teaching method), content and learning activities, students' readiness and talent in starting and planning businesses, and government and industry support for entrepreneurs. These are all fundamental issues, and ignoring any of them affects the quality and effectiveness of entrepreneurship education (Rezaeian, 2012).

Research Method

Thematic analysis is a common and widely used method in qualitative research that allows you to identify and analyze patterns and themes in textual data. This method is very useful for a deeper understanding of experiences, views and meanings hidden in qualitative data. The statistical population includes students and professors. The statistical population includes students, professors.

II. FINDINGS

Interview 1: With an education graduate who became an entrepreneur

Interviewer: Hello, thank you for your time. Please introduce yourself and explain a little about your business.

Respondent: Hello, I am a student of educational sciences and I own an educational counseling center for children with special needs.

Interviewer: What motivated you to start your own business instead of being employed by an organization?

Respondent: I have always been concerned with helping children who were neglected in the formal education system. I felt that I could provide better services to them by creating a different atmosphere.

Interviewer: What challenges did you face on the way to entrepreneurship?

Respondent: The most important challenge was securing financial and marketing resources. Also, it was difficult to manage a team and balance between personal and work life.

Interviewer: What role do you think universities can play in fostering an entrepreneurial spirit in education graduates?

Respondent: Universities can help students acquire the necessary skills to start their own businesses by offering entrepreneurship courses, holding training workshops and creating growth centers.

Interview 2: with a university professor in the field of educational sciences

Interviewer: Hello, thank you for your time. What do you think about the importance of entrepreneurship in educational sciences?

Respondent: Entrepreneurship is very important in educational sciences. Graduates of this course can help solve educational and social problems by creating innovative businesses.

Interviewer: In your opinion, what are the obstacles in the way of entrepreneurship development in educational sciences?

Respondent: One of the main obstacles is the lack of proper educational programs in universities.

Also, the traditional culture ruling the society may prevent the acceptance of innovative ideas.

Interviewer: What suggestions do you have to remove these obstacles?

Respondent: Universities should revise their educational programs and add entrepreneurship courses to them. Also, with the cooperation of public and private organizations, they should provide internship and entrepreneurship opportunities for students.

Interview 3: With a policy maker in the field of education

Interviewer: Hello, what is your opinion about the role of entrepreneurship in the development of the country's educational system?

Respondent: Entrepreneurship can play an important role in improving the quality of education and responding to society's needs.

Interviewer: What steps has the government taken to support entrepreneurship in education?

Respondent: The government supports innovative businesses in the field of education by providing financial and advisory facilities.

Interviewer: What plans do you have for the future in this field?

Respondent: We are trying to strengthen the entrepreneurship ecosystem in the field of education in cooperation with universities and the private sector.

Interview 4: with a student of educational sciences

Interviewer: Hello, how familiar do you think you are with the concept of entrepreneurship?

Respondent: To be honest, not very much. I think entrepreneurship is mostly related to technical and engineering fields.

Interviewer: Do you have any interest in starting your own business in the future?

Respondent: Maybe, if I have a good idea and know how to make it work.

Interviewer: In your opinion, what can the university help you in this regard?

Respondent: I think holding educational workshops on entrepreneurship and providing advice to students can be very useful.

Step 1: Open coding

In this step, the interview data is divided into small semantic units and each unit is assigned a code.

Code	Quote	Interview
Concern for helping neglected children	"I have always been concerned about helping children who are neglected in the formal education system."	Interview 1
Financial and marketing challenges	"The biggest challenge was funding and marketing."	Interview 1
Importance of entrepreneurship in educational sciences	"Entrepreneurship is very important in education."	Interview 2
Educational barriers in universities	"One of the main obstacles is the lack of appropriate educational programs in universities."	Interview 2
Role of entrepreneurship in improving education	"Entrepreneurship can play an important role in improving the quality of education and responding to the needs of society."	Interview 3
Government support for innovative businesses	"The government supports innovative businesses in the field of education by providing financial and consulting facilities."	Interview 3
Limited perceptions of entrepreneurship	"To be honest, not very much. I think entrepreneurship is more related to technical and engineering disciplines."	Interview 4
Need for training and advice in entrepreneurship	"I think holding workshops on entrepreneurship and providing advice to students can be very useful."	Interview 4

Step 2: Axial Coding

In this step, the open codes are organized into larger categories (categories) based on their connections and similarities.

Codes	Category
Concern for helping neglected children	Motivations and Concerns
Financial and marketing challenges	Entrepreneurship Challenges
Importance of entrepreneurship in educational sciences	Importance of Entrepreneurship in Educational Sciences
Educational barriers in universities, limited perceptions of entrepreneurship	Obstacles to Entrepreneurship in Educational Sciences
Role of entrepreneurship in improving education	Role of Entrepreneurship in Education
Government support for innovative businesses	Support for Entrepreneurship
Need for training and advice in entrepreneurship	Educational Needs of Entrepreneurship

Step 3: Selective Coding

In this step, a main category (main theme) is selected around which other categories are organized. This main category constitutes the central core of the emerging theory.

Main category (main theme): Entrepreneurship in education: challenges, opportunities, and solutions

Subcategories:

- Motivations and concerns
- Challenges of entrepreneurship
- Importance of entrepreneurship in education
- Barriers to entrepreneurship in education
- Role of entrepreneurship in education
- Support for entrepreneurship
- Educational needs of entrepreneurship

III. CONCLUSION

Entrepreneurship in the educational system is a dynamic and continuous process that, on the one hand, leads to the identification and optimal utilization of all internal and external resources of the educational system, and on the other hand, creates new opportunities for teaching and learning. Rapid and continuous developments in the scientific and technical fields, continuous challenges in the economic and social system, reduction of underground resources and increase in poverty and unemployment have drawn the deep attention of policymakers and thinkers to the concept of entrepreneurship. To the extent that the new development model is considered to be entrepreneurship-based development. Therefore, entrepreneurship education has been proposed as a necessity in many developed and developing countries.

Considering the importance of entrepreneurship, its ability to be taught and the urgent need of today's society for employment, as well as considering the relationship between

educational methods and studies of educational sciences, it is possible to strengthen the entrepreneurial mentality by creating appropriate platforms, designing curricula related to entrepreneurial skills, fostering creativity and innovation of students and creating entrepreneurship centers in educational centers, and as a result, reduce the unemployment rate and improve social welfare. Challenges, opportunities and solutions related to this field of payment. The analysis of themes extracted from the interviews showed that entrepreneurship in educational sciences is a multifaceted phenomenon that requires attention to different dimensions. In this research, it was found that graduates of educational sciences often enter the field of entrepreneurship with humanitarian motives and a concern to help people in need, especially children. These incentives are a strong driving force for setting up innovative businesses in this area. However, entrepreneurs in educational sciences face many challenges, including financial problems, marketing, and lack of management skills. Despite these challenges, entrepreneurship in educational sciences is very important. This field can play an important role in improving the quality of education, responding to the needs of the society, and creating new job opportunities. The main obstacles to the development of entrepreneurship in educational sciences include the lack of appropriate educational programs in universities, limited perceptions of entrepreneurship among students, and cultural and social barriers. To remove these obstacles, there is a need for comprehensive support from the government, universities, and the private sector. The government can support innovative businesses in this field by providing financial and advisory facilities. Universities can play an important role in fostering entrepreneurial spirit in students by revising educational programs, including entrepreneurship courses, and creating

growth and innovation centers. Also, holding educational workshops, providing expert advice, and creating communication networks between entrepreneurs can help strengthen the entrepreneurship ecosystem in educational sciences. The need for education and counseling in entrepreneurship was well expressed by students and professors. In short, entrepreneurship in educational sciences is a valuable opportunity to develop this field and respond to society's needs. By identifying the challenges and providing suitable solutions, this opportunity can be used in the best possible way.

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