

Research Paper

Designing and validating a model for creating an entrepreneur school

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Abstract

The current research was conducted with the aim of designing and validating a model for creating an entrepreneur school. In terms of the nature of the data, the method of this research is mixed with an exploratory design, and practical in terms of purpose. In the qualitative part, the qualitative content analysis method was used to design the model, and in the quantitative part, the survey method was used to validate the model. In the qualitative part, the data was collected through semi-structured interviews with 17 experts who were selected by the purposeful snowball sampling method, and the inductive coding method was used to analyze the data. In the quantitative part; confirmatory factor analysis, mean descriptive indices, and standard deviation were used. After obtaining the proposed model,, 43 experts were selected through a researcher-made questionnaire, and by purposeful sampling method to validate the model. The findings of the qualitative part of the research were 95 core codes related to the characteristics of the entrepreneur school, which in the quantitative stage, after the confirmatory factor analysis of the questionnaire by PLS software, two items were removed from the initial model due to having a factor load of less than 0.4, and the modified model with 93 features and with good fit, validated and presented.

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Extended Abstract

Introduction

Examining the economic and social trend of the developed countries in recent decades shows that in most of them, entrepreneurship is one of the strategic topics that is considered in the policy field. They found that the economy is influenced by entrepreneurship (Mohd Noor et al, 2021), and entrepreneurs play a significant role in economic and social development (Artakhov Anton, 2022; Rajput, 2015). On the other hand, entrepreneurship is a process that requires planning in the educational system, and the implementation of its programs carries out at the level of the family, school, university, and organizations (Dutta & Crossan, 2005). Therefore, providing conditions for teaching entrepreneurship to people and the consequences of earning entrepreneurial capabilities for them, in addition to improving individual development, promoting creativity, self-confidence, innovation and social skills (Lackeus, 2013), is a response to a complex, uncertain and changing world (Gibb, 2002). Due to such an important role, fundamental steps have been taken in the developed countries of the world to support entrepreneurial activities for the education and training of entrepreneurial competencies (Bridge & O'Neill, 2012), and much attention has been paid to competency-based training in entrepreneurship education programs in the educational environment. (Izquierdo, 2008).

Also in Iran, considering the importance of the issue and in order to lay the groundwork for the training of specialized and committed, knowledge oriented, creative and entrepreneurial human resources in accordance with the needs of the software movement, in the fifth development program, the creation and strengthening of the entrepreneurial spirit and entrepreneurial efficiency through the evolution of educational programs and methods has been emphasized (The fifth development program, 2010). In the document of the fundamental transformation of education, entrepreneurship is one of the basic approaches and creative and entrepreneurial human education is mentioned as a major goal (Document of the fundamental transformation of education, The 4th chapter, paragraph 1, 2015). Nevertheless, the results of the investigations show that the operational strategies adopted have not been very successful in practice. The serious ineffectiveness of the current methods of education, for training creative and problem-oriented students (Mehrabi, 2018), on the one hand, and the inevitable needs of the labor market and the need for future jobs for more skilled and efficient people, on the other hand, are among the evidence and reasons that show that these environments need fundamental changes and should have features that those have not used so far. But what characteristics and how they should be put together in order for a school to become an entrepreneur school, is a topic that this research has addressed.

Therefore, the question which the research is searching an answer for is: what are the components and features of an entrepreneur school?

Theoretical Framework

Since the emergence of the concept of entrepreneurship, several definitions have been proposed for it. For example, Stevenson et al (1985) consider it the process of value creation through taking advantage of an opportunity. Others consider it the same skill as realizing an opportunity (Ahmadi et al, 2018). Entrepreneurship is creation from nothing and a combination of risk taking, creativity, personal success and innovation. In addition, entrepreneurship requires planning through which the raw ideas be managed in such a way that they lead to economic consequences. Accordingly Schumpeter considers the entrepreneur as an economic actor who breaks the stagnation to move the economy towards development (Vaz-Curado & Mueller, 2019). The studies of many thinkers (Frank et al, 2005; Hartshorn & Hannon, 2005) also indicate that entrepreneurship can be taught, and through education, the

concepts and skills necessary for entrepreneurship can be transferred and brought it to a conclusion in society (Zali et al, 2007).

Until the early 1970s, researches in the field of entrepreneurship were focused on the characteristics of individuals. But the researchers in this field later realized that the organizations themselves also engage in entrepreneurial activities (Miller & Friesen, 1982; Jennings, 1994; Burglemann, 1983). Therefore, schools can also become entrepreneurs. The movement of schools to become entrepreneurs has been an effort in this direction and it is an issue that the upper documents have assigned to the governments and have emphasized.

Entrepreneur schools are the main centers for training students with new ideas (Ghorbani, 2017; Faghiri & Salehi, 2017), centers to help students create jobs and create businesses and prepare them to enter the business environment (Sattari et al, 2018), and science and technology production centers and the place of making applicable the knowledge, and can play a significant role in the progress and development of the country in the world arena (Abbasi, 2014). Despite the importance of the subject of the entrepreneur school, there are few studies about it that have examined the issue from different perspectives. Some researches, such as Nepal (2021), Hashemi et al (2021), Baharvand & Gouran (2019), and Ghorbani (2017), have identified the dimensions and characteristics of the entrepreneur school. Others, such as Nasre-Sfahani et al (2017), Juvova et al (2017), and Maktabi & Babakhanian (2015), have investigated the role of various factors in the entrepreneur school. Some have also investigated the factors affecting students' entrepreneurial interest or intention, including the researches of Shahin et al (2021), Senarath & Perera(2018), Indrawati & Caska (2018); Cited by Hashemi et al (2021), King (2018)), Rosique-Blasco et al (2016), and Bakherad (2016). Some have also investigated the development of entrepreneurship in schools in different countries of the world, including the experience of Spain (Barba-Sánchez & Atienza-Sahuquillo, 2016), Indonesia (Hadi et al, 2015), Malaysia (Rahman et al, 2015), Hong Kong (Cheung, 2012), Korea (Park, 2012), South Africa (Steenekamp et al, 2011), Portugal (Do Paco et al, 2011) and Austria (Frank et al, 2005; McFadzean et al, 2005).

Nepal (2021) considers the educational methods as the foundation of the teacher's performance progress and the results of the students' learning; and in the shape of the school's features, mentions paying attention to the interaction between the teachers and the students, environment and the learning tasks, educational contents and understanding the various needs of the learners, the physical conditions of the classroom and its surroundings as the effective tools of education.

Hashemi et al (2021) also consider the flexible structure, cohesive entrepreneur culture, constant interaction with the environment, paying attention to the human source, common viewpoint and promising strategy, comprehensiveness and harmony of the trainings, decentralization, autonomous and independence of the schools, self-believing reinforcement, self-identifying, skill learning, training, creativity and innovation in students as the characteristics of these schools

Despite the above researches, there is no research that can provide a clear picture of an entrepreneur school in the form of a model to those involved. In this research, the model of Sporn (2001) has been used to guide the design of the entrepreneur school model. In 2001, he proposed a model for greater adaptability of universities to entrepreneur universities and six factors: "Goal and mission", "Structure", "Culture", "Management", "Governance", "Leadership" and an intermediary namely " environment" (sporn, 2001). Therefore, the same dimensions have been considered here to identify the characteristics of the entrepreneur school and design a model for it.



Research Methodology

The current research is of mixed type (qualitative and quantitative) and exploratory design and includes two main parts of model design and model validation. In the model design part, in order to achieve the desired facts and information, the qualitative method and qualitative content analysis have been used, and in the model validation part, the survey method was used to measure the level of importance and the fitness of identified components, and data analysis has been done based on confirmatory factor analysis and descriptive statistics indicators.

Qualitative part: In this section, to examine the theoretical foundations and background of the research, the research field includes all thematic contents related to the concept of the entrepreneur school in books, articles and publications and authoritative scientific sites, as well as all upstream documents, including Iran's vision document 2025, the document of the fundamental transformation of education and training, the comprehensive scientific map of the country, which, for sample, uses search results to the point of saturation in various domestic (such as SID, Magiran, Civilica, Irandoc) and foreign (such as Science Direct, ProQuest, Springer, Eric, Sage) scientific sites. The statistical community for the interview section also includes all experts including professors, managers and teachers who have knowledge, research and experience in the two fields of education and entrepreneurship. Theoretical and purposeful snowball sampling method was used to select the interviewees and the number of interviewees reached 17 until the saturation level was reached. In this section, the method of documentary research and surveying was used to collect data, and in the interview section with experts, the survey method using semi-structured interview was used.

To check the validity and reliability of the tool in the qualitative part, the three criteria of "Credibility", "Portability" and "Verification" were used (Lincoln & Guba, 1994; Quoted by Abbaszadeh, 2012: 23). To analyze the data collected in semi-structured interviews, the three-step coding method of Strauss and Corbin was used, under the title of open coding, axial coding and selective coding, and the unit of analysis is the "subject".

Quantitative part: In the model validation part, the statistical community included professors, managers and experts with knowledge, research or experience in the two fields of education and entrepreneurship, and the statistical sample included 7 professors of entrepreneurship course, 6 teachers or trainers of entrepreneurship course, 22 directors of technical and vocational colleges and 8 entrepreneurial researchers. There were 43 people in total who were selected by targeted and available sampling method. Also, in this section, a researcher-made questionnaire was used to collect data for model validation. This questionnaire, which is derived from the results of qualitative analysis and developed based on the initial template, has 95 items and is designed on a five-point Likert scale and has been approved by supervisors, consultants and experts. In this research, a researcher-made questionnaire was used to validate the proposed model of the entrepreneur school, and it was used to determine the validity of the questionnaire from the experts' point of view. For this purpose, its formal and content validity has been confirmed by mentors and advisors and an entrepreneurial manager. Cronbach's alpha coefficient was also used to ensure the reliability of the designed questionnaire, and the value of α was equal to 0.986. To analyze the quantitative data from the questionnaire, descriptive-analytical method and descriptive statistics (mean and standard deviation) and SPSS 22 and PLS 3 software were used.

Research Findings

In this research, according to the model of Sporn (2001), first 7 components of "environment, goals, structure, culture, governance, management and leadership" were examined for the entrepreneur school, and then using semi-structured interviews with experts and coding, a total of 95 features were determined for them. In the quantitative part, after the confirmatory

factor analysis of the Researcher-made questionnaire by PLS software, two variables were removed from the initial model due to having a factor load of less than 0.4, and the modified model of the entrepreneur school with 93 variables and with a good fit by R2 and Q2 indicators. and GOF, validated and presented.

Conclusion and Discussion

According to the results of this research, schools need changes in seven components including "environment, goal, structure, culture, governance, management and leadership", which we will discuss further.

The environment of the entrepreneur school should have specialized, standard and equipped physical and virtual spaces, the curriculum content should be up-to-date and creativity-oriented and comprehensive for all kinds of entrepreneurial skills. It is necessary for the training to be individualized and activity-oriented with a flexible schedule as much as possible so that students learn to develop their own ideas. Of course, the necessity of providing such an environment is the presence of experienced and entrepreneurially qualified teachers who can make the classroom environment dynamic, questioning and collaborative and raise informed, motivated and active students. The entrepreneur school should be a base for the needs, threats and opportunities of its environment in order to use them to become a place of income generation. The policies, rules and regulations of the education system and the preparation and companionship of all people, protection of entrepreneurial models and funds, support of ideas and their owners, and active communication with other organizations. Empowering government policies and, of course, facilitating and supporting laws and regulations are the features that the entrepreneur school needs to succeed.

Another part of the entrepreneur school is having a specific mission. According to the experts, the goal of the entrepreneur school should be education, research, promotion and development of entrepreneurship. The governing culture of the entrepreneur school should be a culture of creativity and entrepreneurship, which means that transformation, dynamism and innovativeness, free communication and effective interactions, spontaneity and automation, and perfectionism, while paying attention to teamwork and responsibility, are valuable features. According to experts, in order for the structure of the school to facilitate entrepreneurship, it is necessary for this structure to be dynamic and flexible, and for horizontal communication to be sufficiently established along with vertical communication. Behaviors are less formal and more informal, the scope of supervision is limited and possibly diverse with a tendency to be more complex.

In addition to the characteristics required for all managers, the manager of the entrepreneur school, including talent and skills management, knowledge and information management, must have a positive attitude towards entrepreneurship. To have the necessary knowledge, expertise and skills for entrepreneurial management. Have entrepreneurial experience. Be innovative and support innovations. Be pragmatic and active and always seek the growth and development of yourself and the group under your management. The principal of this school should be like a leader accepted by his subordinates so that he can benefit from their support to make the necessary changes.

Governance in the entrepreneur school has its own characteristics. According to experts, deciding on the type and method of carrying out school activities and programs is not only the right of the educational organization, but school officials, teachers, trainers, parents and even the students themselves also consider themselves to share in this right, and this multiplicity of the main actors of the situation It makes it complicated. In any case, in order to create an entrepreneurial ecosystem, facilitate the business environment, respect freedom of speech and democracy, and transparency and accountability during the rule of law, it is necessary for the



school to move towards playing a greater role of the non-governmental sector by reducing the role of the government. It is in this case that the school, with its relative independence and maintaining the position of the manager, can bring about the necessary changes in accordance with its environment to realize the entrepreneur school.