Research on the Problems and Countermeasures of Entrepreneurship Education in Chinese Colleges

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Abstract

Entrepreneurship education is very important for innovative education and quality education; as well as the major way to develop students’ entrepreneurship. In this paper, the problems Chinese college entrepreneurship education encounters are analysed. And building an entrepreneurship education platform is discussed from several aspects, including curriculum system, teaching mode, teaching content, and teaching methods. In order to further enhance innovation and entrepreneurship, measures for reforming teaching standards, quality of personnel training are put forward. Training mode for Chinese college students' entrepreneurial talent is also actively explored.

Keywords

Entrepreneurship Education; College Students; Problems; Countermeasures

Introduction

With higher enrolment since 1999 in China, the number of college graduates has been rising. In this particular context, self-employment has become the main way of university students’ employment. However, GEM 2011 (Global Entrepreneurship Monitor Report of China in 2011) showed that the proportion of Chinese students is less than 1% of the total number of graduates and the level of entrepreneurial success is significantly lower, while the proportion of entrepreneurship in the developed countries is 20%-30%. Chinese enterprises are still in transition phase from existence venture start-ups (to ensure survival needs, relatively passive) to opportunistic entrepreneurs (tend to innovation, relatively active). Recently, Chinese Academy of Social Sciences released 2013 "Economic Blue Book" and addressed that the society should encourage students to be opportunistic entrepreneurs rather than the existence ones.

At the early stage of ventures, the Enterprise Education provided by colleges and universities has direct impact on the entrepreneurial effectiveness and success rate. Therefore, to analysis the colleges enterprise education situation and propose appropriate measures to help students shape the entrepreneurial spirit, screening opportunities, entrepreneurial behaviours tie important practical significance.

Problems in Entrepreneurship Education in Chinese Colleges

According to the latest statistics of Global Entrepreneurship Monitor report, 51.13% of the students have the skills and experience to start a business in United States, while only 32.73% in China. Even under the impact of the international financial crisis, the employment of American college students is not serious. In China, entrepreneurship education was carried out later and lack of systematization. Entrepreneurship students having successful practice are very few. In this paper, the university entrepreneurship education status and problems in China are analyzed in depth, based on decades of teaching experience and research data.

Concept of Entrepreneurship Education Lag Behind

Entrepreneurship education is a new concept of education in late 1980s in the Western countries, with the focus on developing students’ entrepreneurial skills and entrepreneurship as a fundamental goal of higher education. Entrepreneurship education in colleges and universities can be traced back to "World War II" in Australia. It has been sixty years of history. While in China, entrepreneurship education training objectives or training programs are not formally incorporated into majority of colleges and universities. It is only treated as an essential means to increase the employment rate, one of the ideas behind entrepreneurship education. And the backwardness of
entrepreneurship education has caused a series of problems in entrepreneurship teaching system and teaching methods.

Absence of Entrepreneurship Education Content

The current entrepreneurship education course is lack of practice, and there is no good business practice to guide students. Implementation of the second class can help students get some business knowledge, but the second class is very limited. Most students are still on campus and disconnected from social society, which leads to understanding deficiency of the market laws and rules. Students are also lack of sufficient practical experience, industry technology, services, knowledge and other aspects of innovation, etc. They generally lack entrepreneurial skills and entrepreneurial abilities. In addition, even if some students want to transform technological achievements into business value, they couldn't make it. It shows that business students need fostering business awareness, entrepreneurial spirit, necessary business knowledge and adequate entrepreneurial guidance. But these are basically not met in current education system.

Lack of Systematization in Entrepreneurship Education

In United States, entrepreneurship education has been established in college courses since 1919. American entrepreneurship education is the basic model of entrepreneurship. Entrepreneurship education committee has been established. It is also encouraged for different colleges to participate in substantial entrepreneurship education and activities to prepare the funding, teacher training and program developing. For example, at Babson College ranking the top in entrepreneurship education in the United States, the entrepreneurship education research center committed innovative teaching programs, outreach expansion plans as well as academic research etc. to support and promote entrepreneurship education.

However, in China what is carried out in most colleges and universities is a single form of entrepreneurship education and is separated from various disciplines professional education of science, engineering, business and culture, and just with the focus on the middle part of entrepreneurship education activities, which lacks front-end and back-end theory of teaching entrepreneurship business practices.

Inflexibility of Teaching Method in Entrepreneurship Education

Different from the Western entrepreneurship education system, the basic model of entrepreneurship education in China is for the school-based guidance. Specifically, on the one hand, the university treats entrepreneurship education as an element of graduates’ employment guidance education, including policy analysis of the situation, employment skills guidance and so on. On the other hand, the second class is entrepreneurship education. By participating in the second class, students can better grasp business knowledge and practice entrepreneurial behavior. Moreover, in second class on the active role, students' innovative entrepreneurial atmosphere is also very obvious.

However, universities are lack of "business incubators" to support student entrepreneurial resources. Basic entrepreneurship education teaching methods and teaching materials remain in classroom, and practical aspects of entrepreneurship are weak. Due to the lack of necessary support from government and business cooperation, students' entrepreneurial idea can not be transformed into a business plan. Thus the effectiveness of entrepreneurship education is much lower compared with the western countries.

Deficiency of Faculty in Entrepreneurship Education

Entrepreneurship education requires teachers possessing both extensive theoretical knowledge and rich social experience. However, when the majority of colleges and universities carry out entrepreneurship education courses, they just depend on the management team as the main employment guidance. Teachers are weak in research capacity and entrepreneurial experience. The teaching methods are traditional. As a result, the teaching effect is unsatisfactory.

Construction of Entrepreneurship Education Platform

The goal of entrepreneurship education is to develop and improve students' entrepreneurial qualities. College entrepreneurship education should be under guiding of the concept to "create students entrepreneurial atmosphere, promote entrepreneurship action, and achieve a successful entrepreneurship among college students". Entrepreneurship education should target to developing students versatile entrepreneurial talents with strong ability, high quality and adaptation, and striving to nurture students to possess strong sense of innovation and entrepreneurship, as well as higher innovation skill.

To achieve this goal, it is indispensable to co-ordinate educational resources of college, social and individual
students. Make full use of their respective advantages, and strive to build an entrepreneurial education model called "school initiative, social interaction, self-actuated", as well as form the mechanism of all-round education. In this paper, it has been explored to construct an entrepreneurship education platform which is suitable for Chinese college students based on the existing college training model of entrepreneurship education in China, as shown in Figure 1.

![FIGURE 1 SCHEMATIC OF ENTREPRENEURSHIP EDUCATION PLATFORM](image)

**Rich Curriculum**

Current entrepreneurship courses offered by universities contain entrepreneurship management, entrepreneurship and enterprise development, innovation management, business plan and entrepreneurship innovation. General courses will be the basis of professional knowledge in future, and some core curricula are added to entrepreneurship education, such as “Family Businesses”, "Building and Management of Entrepreneurial Team”, "Business Growth Management,” "Entrepreneurial Case Analysis", "Business Practice Simulation”, "Entrepreneur Lecture" and so on. Students could combine the expertise and entrepreneurial knowledge through curriculum improvement and refinement, and their overall quality and entrepreneurial skills could improve too.

**Optimizing Teaching Content**

Based on the course improvement above, first of all, college could focus on developing students' entrepreneurial abilities. To resolve the problem that theoretical knowledge of entrepreneurship is not sound and lack of practice in current system, it is important to open a series of ideology and methods courses. It is also necessary to open some courses about business decision-making and management which are more focused on the business case. Secondly, in order to broaden students' knowledge, college should strengthen professional education based on the general curriculum and increase the proportion of entrepreneurship education-related courses. Thirdly, college should adhere to comprehensive education and training which combine knowledge, ability and quality, and integrate financial knowledge transfer, capacity-building as well as improve the quality as a whole, so that students can gain the comprehensive and coordinated development. Meanwhile, college must actively build business case base and research entrepreneurship education.

**Improve Teaching Methods**

Colleges are urgent need to improve teaching methods more creative which can motivate students’ potential and desire for knowledge instead of the current teacher-leading methods. Major measures include: first of all, strengthening case-oriented teaching mode; secondly, implementing discussion teaching modes, such as a business plan (require students to complete a full business plan); thirdly, introducing experimental teaching model, such as establish the college's behaviour laboratory, as well as the experimental games and other new teaching methods to entrepreneurial opportunity recognition, entrepreneurial team building and other aspects of the content; fourth, strengthening debate simulation teaching methods, such as using "ERP sand table simulation lab", which introduces electronic sand table and manually sandbox into entrepreneurial management courses.

**Improve the Examination System**

Colleges should explore and implement reformation on entrepreneurship education examination and evaluation system actively; and then establish the teaching evaluation system of which the core is to assess students’ ability; all with the aim to change the traditional examination contents and examination forms. College no longer just focuses on "credits" and student test scores, but more on "capability". Designing the proper scores of "capability" and the assessment structure for high-quality students is very necessary.

**Strengthen the Construction of Teaching Faculty**

Entrepreneurship education is inseparable from highly qualified faculty. It is a great challenge for universities' entrepreneurial faculty to develop entrepreneurial talent. Colleges can send teachers to leading universities for training in entrepreneurship education
at home and abroad, which can optimize the teacher structure for entrepreneurial education. Strengthen professional training on chief entrepreneurial teachers, at the same time, encourage young teachers to exercise on first-line by some inspiring measures. Moreover colleges can appoint some successful entrepreneurs as part-time entrepreneurial mentor, hold seminars, or serve lecturer at entrepreneurial base to expand entrepreneurship education faculty.

3.6 Strengthen internal and external alliances

First of all, Chinese colleges try to strengthen cooperation with the United States Babson College, Wharton, Columbia Business School and other leading business schools abroad, in addition, these colleges strengthen bilateral cooperation and exchange teacher for training; as well as entrepreneurial contacts and exchanges internal. Universities should establish a bond with local guiding fund for venture capital, college Alliance, college student entrepreneurship community, co-sponsored entrepreneurship contest and other activities.

Conclusion

Although there is great gap between China and the western countries in entrepreneurship education; based on the analysis on the problems in entrepreneurship education in China, measures can be implemented to shorten the gap, which can further enhance students’ innovation and entrepreneurship.

REFERENCES


