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Designing a Strategic Model of Entrepreneurial Competencies of Students of Guilan University of Applied Sciences

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Research Paper

Abstract

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Purpose: The main purpose of this research was to design a strategic model for the development of entrepreneurship competencies of students of the University of Applied Sciences.

Methodology: The present study was applied in terms of the purpose and qualitative in terms of the research method employed. The research population included the academic experts of Gilan University of Applied Sciences in the academic year of 2020-21, 17 of whom were selected based on the theoretical saturation method and purposefully. The research tool was a semi-structured interview, which was used to validate the findings from the re-review strategy by the researcher and formal validity (university professors) and for reliability, the coding agreement coefficient of two coders was used, which was 0.89. For data analysis, coding using thematic analysis method was used in MAXQDA19 software.

Findings: The findings showed that 115 initial themes, 12 central themes and 3 optional themes were identified for the strategic model of developing students' entrepreneurial competencies; So that the chosen themes included passion strategy (venture capital, innovation and high growth), ability (competition, technology absorption, human capital and new opportunities) and orientation strategy (opportunity understanding, risk-taking, cultural support, networking and skill).

Conclusion: According to the results, it can be said that the planners of the university system, on the one hand, should motivate and encourage and remove financial and structural obstacles to increase and develop the entrepreneurial skills of students, and on the other hand, they should focus on empowering entrepreneurs and the cultural and social contexts of entrepreneurship



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Detailed abstract

Purpose: Universities, as scientific centers whose nature is based on education and knowledge development, always undergo changes based on the requirements and developments of societies. Although these developments are based on their scientific framework, in the 21st century, universities are expected to go beyond the creation, education and dissemination of knowledge. In fact, today, responding to the needs of the society goes beyond the acquisition and education of knowledge, and productivity is a very serious issue that is placed on the shoulders of universities. On the other hand, today's world is a world of unpredictable environmental changes, complexities and turbulences, and the increasing speed of the third millennium and the severe economic, social, cultural and political changes in today's world require universities to coordinate with these changes. In this regard, the priority of universities today is to cultivate students with entrepreneurial skills. Because competence and reaching its acceptable level is first created in the university through education and attitude, and becoming an entrepreneur requires the development of competences. are specifically required. A competency is a core set of personal characteristics that lead to high performance. There are two schools of thought in the definition of competence. The first school considers competence to consist of knowledge and skills, and the second school claims that competence means characteristics that help improve people's performance. In the second approach, competence has a more comprehensive concept that includes knowledge, skills, motivation and personality traits. Entrepreneurship is also considered as a voluntary and planned behavior, an influential factor in economic development and job creation. The main goal of the current research was to design a strategic model for the development of entrepreneurship skills of students of the University of Applied Sciences.

Methodology: The present study was applied in terms of purpose and qualitative in terms of implementation method. The research community included the academic experts of Gilan University of Applied Sciences in the academic year of 2020-21, 17 of whom were selected based on the theoretical saturation method and purposefully. The sampling method was such that people and experts were selected who were knowledgeable about the subject and were selected through searching for their works as well as introductions from others. Some of the criteria for those selected included a master's degree or higher and having at least 2 works on entrepreneurship. Since the research was of a non-clinical nature, the criterion for leaving the research was accompanying the participants until the end of the interview and providing their opinions. The research tool was an interview with 10 general questions that the researcher had prepared based on a semi-structured questionnaire before conducting the research with the participation of expert professors, and during the interview, new questions were formed and some new topics were formed (Table 1). Each interview lasted between 30 and 65 minutes, depending on the speaking ability of the interviewee. The interviews were conducted on paper with the help of an assistant. After the implementation, the answers were sent to the interviewees via email to confirm their accuracy. For the validity of the findings, the viewpoints of the participants themselves and also 3 people outside the research were used to check the validity of the findings. Therefore, all the stages of the interview, notes and analysis were given to them and finally it led to some changes and adjustments. Coding agreement coefficient was also used for reliability. For this purpose, the text of 3 interviews was randomly selected and the researcher along with another experienced coder did the coding from the beginning and the agreement coefficient was 0.89. For data analysis, coding using thematic analysis method was used in MAXQDA19 software.

Findings: The findings showed that 115 basic themes, 12 central themes and 3 optional themes were identified for the strategic model of developing students' entrepreneurial competencies; So that the chosen themes included passion strategy (venture capital, innovation and high growth), ability (competition, technology absorption, human capital and new opportunities) and orientation strategy (opportunity understanding, risk-taking, cultural support, networking and skill). According to the results, it can be said that the planners of the university system, on the one hand, should motivate and encourage and remove financial and structural obstacles to increase and develop the entrepreneurial skills of students, and on the other hand, they should focus on empowering entrepreneurs and the cultural and social contexts of entrepreneurship.

Conclusion: The first finding of the research was passion strategy (with the components of risk-taking capital, innovation and high growth). In explaining this finding, it can be said that passion with its various components is one of the main areas and elements of entrepreneurial competencies, which was emphasized from the point of view of experts. Enthusiasm causes entrepreneurs to be attracted to entrepreneurship on the one hand, and on the other hand, enthusiasm should be institutionalized within students so that entrepreneurs enter the job market with the same enthusiasm and acquiring the required skills after graduation. Another finding was the ability strategy (competition, technology absorption, human capital and new opportunities). In explaining this strategy, it should be said that ability means using the individual capacity of people and cultivating the entrepreneurial capabilities of people. Ability in psychological and social issues can shape the

entrepreneur personally. Some experts believe that entrepreneurial personality is one of the important elements of entrepreneurial skills that should be formed in them. Another finding was orientation strategy (opportunity understanding, risk taking, cultural support, networking and skill). It can be said that human resources is the most important and sensitive resource of an organization, which can be the cause of both the success of the organization and the failure of the organization. Managers cannot expect great results from their employees, unless they create such results in their employees through proper training of the fields and strategies. In this regard, the tendency of entrepreneurs is one of the important elements of entrepreneurial competencies. Understanding the opportunity allows the entrepreneur to look at the issues related to entrepreneurship with a deeper analysis. Understanding entrepreneurship makes entrepreneurs understand the importance of the situation and internal and external acceleration changes, and this belief is formed as an important tendency in him. Another important element of this strategy was cultural supports. In this regard, it can be said that culture has a close relationship with the category of entrepreneurship

Keywords: Strategic Model, Entrepreneurial Competencies, Comprehensive University of Applied Sciences