Research on Cultivating University Students’ Entrepreneurial Ability
—The Case of Business Administration of Huainan Normal University of Anhui China
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Abstract. With the urge of the reform for university high-level education, great importance has been attached to college students’ entrepreneurial abilities all around China. This research explores the entrepreneurship education and training system from three aspects: macro, meso and micro synergy. Besides, based on the experience of the Business Administration at Huainan Normal University of Anhui China, this research emphasizes the combination of theory impartation and practical exploration for entrepreneurship education, which can shed a light on the development and innovation practice of entrepreneurship education and training in a board range.

Introduction
Entrepreneurship, which is defined as ambitious to develop and innovate one’s own business, has becoming a hot topic (Adel Al-Wugayan, Turki Alshimmiri, 2010) in mainland China recently, for it is essential to the multi-faceted development of a nation, such as knowledge-based economy, social stability, education level and so on. A successful entrepreneurship requires qualified and educated enterprising leaders, executives, and effective organizations (Strazdienë, Garalis et al., 2008). And it has been proved by many empirical studies that entrepreneurship can be taught to some extent (Saeid Karimi, Harm J. A. Biemans, Thomas Lans, et al., 2016). Academic institution education is a key determinant to incubate entrepreneurs from the inception and foster their entrepreneurial spirits, motivations, and competences, thus it has been calling to develop a high-quality education and training program. Therefore, entrepreneurial education, though as a new subject that proposed about three decades ago, has been developed rapidly (N. Kesavan, R. Sangeetha, 2015). A report shows that, according to the Chinese Ministry of Education, from 2016, the entrepreneurship education related courses shall be pervasive in all domestic universities.

Required Entrepreneurial Ability for Business School Students
As we discussed before, entrepreneurship demands all-around abilities, and the premise to make a successful entrepreneurship success is the joint circumstance: the presence of a suitable entrepreneurial opportunity and a person who is capable and eager to take this opportunity (Krueger and Brazea, 1994). Thus, for entrepreneurship education, a high level of entrepreneurship cultivation is suggested to combine both theoretically and spiritually training.

Professional Knowledge
Previous researches has demonstrated that the top leader makes strategic choices according to their skills, market knowledge, education and living background (Abhishek Srivastava, Hun Lee, 2005), thus can finally affect the performance of a whole organization. And to ensure that they can make advisable decisions, and win battles in markets, entrepreneurs are required to master outstanding abilities in marketing, enterprise management, risk controlling, data analysis, opportunity discerning and so on, which can be taught from their courses.
Management Ability

Entrepreneurial orientation is a proclivity of a company’s top management to take risks, be innovative and be proactive (Abhishek Srivastava, Hun Lee, 2005). And no matter in which degree and stage the top management involves in, they clearly have a significant influence on the decision process (Li and Calantone, 1998) and have an influence on the entire entrepreneurial activity. In this dynamic era, facing increasingly development of globalization, entrepreneurs have to know how people with different abilities cooperate and culture background to build an effective organization, and decide which strategy to be adopted. Before start their own business, entrepreneurs have to cogitate on their marketing and organization objectives; during the process, they may face various obstacles, and have to discern the differences between superﬁcies and the essence.

Communication Ability

Since human beings are involved into almost every economy activity, business cannot work without people’s participation. Consequently, in order to successfully manage a business, entrepreneurs are obliged to deal with a wide range of relationships with funders, managers, and staff from all walks of life especially when financial incentives are less available, and management authority over supporters, volunteer staff, and trustees is rather limited (James Austin, Howard Stevenson, Jane Wei-Skillern, 2006). With a good network with diversity economic or non-proﬁt entities, entrepreneurs are more likely to win support from different aspects, and to smooth the way for future development.

Innovation Ability

The entrepreneurship theory of innovation distinguishes entrepreneurs a cardinal motivation of economic development through the introduction of innovation (Craig Lee, Rob Hallak, Shruti R. Sardeshmukh, 2016). With this ability, entrepreneurs can create individualized marketing methods and original operating system, break the status quo, create revolution in the market, and form patent competitive advantage (Hebert & Link, 2006). This is one of the key characteristic for entrepreneurs, and it exists in the process of decision-making, new products introduction, business extension and so on. Thus, students with innovative ideas are more likely to success.

Entrepreneurial Ability Cultivation System for Business School Students.

Without support, student can hardly success in the fierce market and become full-fledged entrepreneurs without a comprehensive capacity that required for any entrepreneurship leaders and managers. As a systematic project, the Entrepreneurship Ability Cultivation (EAC) system shall incorporates not only professional skills, but also their mental and behavior characteristics, that analyses from macro, meso and micro three aspects in order to optimize the cultivating system. See Figure 1.

![Figure 1. The entrepreneurship ability cultivation system.](image_url)
The Macro Level—Government

In the process of starting their own business, university students are often faced with many constraints: lack of financial support, scarce working experience, academic pressure and so on, which hinder their ability to achieve entrepreneurship ambitious goals. Therefore, we suggest that government offering finance and legislation support, such as simplifying the enterprise registration procedure and adopting preferential tax policies. In particular, the enforcement and supervision of current entrepreneurship supportive policies should be stricter. According to a research, in China, though the “National Innovation and Entrepreneurship Training Plan for Local University Students" applied by some Universities has been approved by governments, the financial supports is usually unavailable in time, which drags university students’ enthusiasm to start their own business. And the education reforms of university higher-education should be strengthened and prone to motivate college students’ entrepreneurial spirits.

The Meso level—Society and Schools

A suitable and dependable academic curriculum can promote healthy perception about entrepreneurship among university students (Laukkanen, 2000). However, the traditional pedagogical methods are not sufficient to help potential entrepreneurs to deal with perplex risks and opportunities (N. Kesavan, R. Sangeetha, 2015). Entrepreneurial faculties should receive training spontaneously, which will in turn help to fully assist the development of students’ entrepreneurial ability. High relative entrepreneurship courses should be introduced into student education (Saeed Karimi, Harm J. A. Biemans, 2016), and practical entrepreneurship simulation can be added into examination system, which is helpful to encourage students to develop critical thinking spirits as well as hands-on capacity.

The Micro level—Teachers, Students and Family

At the micro level, teacher and student, the promoter and the executor, comprise the micro aspect for entrepreneurship education and training system. Department counselors, as they have a more frequent connection with students, can strengthen university students’ entrepreneurship education by giving a full play to their "vanguard" role, help students to take the advantage of existing resources and fortify their personal professional skills.

The Entrepreneurship Education Ability Training Practice of Business Administration of Huainan Normal University

The predecessor of the Business Administration of Huainan Normal University was a department of economy and management that founded in June 2004, and presently, it has evolved into the largest institution of the whole university with more than 3000 students, and 6 professional majors including International economy, accounting, marketing, electronic commerce, financial management, financial engineering and so on. What’s more, there are two China-Australia International cooperation courses in accounting and international business, one international cooperation education center, one provincial experimental (training) center and three provincial & university level research institutions. After a long-time development, a particular entrepreneurship ability cultivation pattern that integrates the specialty of business school students’ entrepreneurship ability development has been formed.

The Special Entrepreneurship Guiding Pattern

A full-time faculty is appointed to be responsible for the entrepreneurship training, and project guiding. While enhancing entrepreneurship talents cultivation and the training-base construction, the department training students through both in and off campus methods. And multidimensional tutors, such as school counselors, head teachers, professors and industrial advisors are included into the guidelines according to particular stages of entrepreneurship education. For instance, at the beginning of entrepreneurial awareness developing stage, counselors and head teachers play a major role in shaping students thinking pattern. In the formative stage of entrepreneurial thinking ability, school
faculties and their enterprise mentors will offer a special consultant service to make their courses more concise and cogent to amend their confidence and guarantee a smooth transition to the next stage. In the hatching stage, the college invites enterprise managers and leaders into classes to teach students with practical entrepreneurship skills directly as part of the education system.

**Encourage Students’ Participation in Academic Competition Innovative Platform**

Since its establishment, the college has been working on strengthening students’ academic ability and actionable faculty by academic competition. Moreover, through various activities, such as the academic competition, entrepreneur interviews and reports, the department selects the outstanding works, and promote the successful entrepreneurship stories to the public, thus motivate more students to refine their entrepreneurial plans. **Table 1** shows part of the academic competition achievement statistic.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Categories</th>
<th>Projects</th>
<th>Grades</th>
<th>Annual attendances</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Entrepreneurship</td>
<td>National university challenge cup of business plan competition</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>National undergraduate electronic commerce &quot;Innovation, Creativity and Entrepreneurship&quot; challenge</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>National university student occupation career planning and college students entrepreneurship competition</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>University future entrepreneurs entrepreneurship competition</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>450</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business</td>
<td>&quot;Financial Security Cup&quot; financial virtual simulation investment competition</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>180</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>International transaction skills competition of the national business college</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The national business college financial professional skills competition</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>260</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The national business college skills competition in mobile commerce professional competition</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Create a Powerful Training and Experiment Environment**

Combining with the characteristics of business school students, and with the aid of the multidimensional practice platform, the college constructed high simulation of specialized laboratory to let students engage in realistic work environment. This ameliorates the entrepreneurship education quality as well as the students’ assurance in start their own businesses. The traditional theoretical didactics has combined with practice in a large extent. Education curriculums are designed in compliance with the market demand. Seminars and conferences that encourage the students to participate into diversified competitions over the business topic were held.

**Enhance Students’ Innovation and Entrepreneurship Ability**

The college supports students’ innovation activities vigorously by the simulation experimental platform, the campus network, the information platform and experimental programs that include levels of rudimentary, comprehensive, and innovative were offered to propose adequate practicing opportunities for students. Focused on innovation and plan training, the center actively encourages students to participate in the scientific research projects, which not only dilates students' academic capacity, but also forces their engaging in entrepreneurship researches to let them closely follow the need for social entrepreneurship development.
Discussion

This study has extrapolated that entrepreneurship education can play a significant role in developing students’ entrepreneurial self-efficacy by synthesizing the practical activities and theoretical teaching (Schoenfeld and Borgia, 2007), and the development of university students’ entrepreneurial ability require support from comprehensive perspectives. Through the case of our study: The Business Administration of Huainan Normal University of Anhui China, we suggest that university should focus on business school students’ dynamic demands according to this changing economic society environment and apply consequential professional courses and entrepreneurial practical activities flexibly to its education system, thus, enrich the meaning of entrepreneurial education, extend students' entrepreneurial capabilities and qualities through various forms of school-enterprise cooperation, academic competition, and business incubation etc. The experience of Huainan Normal University can shed a light on the entrepreneurial education and training practice of entrepreneurship education for universities, as well as illuminate particular demands for a successful entrepreneur who is apt to start their own business.

References


