Research on Connotations and Characteristics of Innovative Entrepreneurship Education in Colleges and Universities of China

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ABSTRACT

Under the background of implementation of “mass entrepreneurship and innovation”, in China, the innovative entrepreneurship education in colleges and universities is not only the inheritance and development of traditional education, also the educational activities for cultivating innovative entrepreneurship talents. In new era, in order to achieve the healthy and continuous development of innovative entrepreneurship education in colleges and universities, it is necessary to fully understand its basic connotation of cultivating talent, and to grasp its core characteristics accurately including independent, universality, elitism, initiative and transcendentality.1

KEYWORDS

Innovative entrepreneurship education in colleges and universities, connotation, characteristics, China

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INTRODUCTION

In September 2014, the developing concept of mass entrepreneurship and innovation was proposed by Prime Minister Keqiang Li during the Summer Davos forum. After that this concept has been written into the government work report. It means that the innovative entrepreneurship, a new concept made by China, officially became one of national development strategy. Then, with proposing strategy of innovative entrepreneurship, the innovative entrepreneurship education was born. Colleges and universities as the main position of developing innovative entrepreneurship education, their quality of education is not only affecting the cultivating of innovative entrepreneurship talents, also is impacting the implementation of the national innovation driven strategy and the strategy of reinvigorating China through human resource development. However, after decades of development, innovative entrepreneurship in colleges and universities has been misunderstood. The first misunderstanding is to narrow it to cultivate entrepreneurial education, and excessive emphasis ability of establishing and operating enterprises. Then, it has become a minority of revelry and trapped into a strange cycle as "rapid prosperity and death". The second one is to generalize a comprehensive ability of education. It caused chaos situation of confused goals and lack of scientific induction in educational process by putting all social expectations into system of the innovative entrepreneurship education as a "basket" without distinction. What's more, some scholars don't realize that there is a narrow and broad sense of innovative entrepreneurship, which leads to unnecessary chaos. To avoid these situations and make innovative entrepreneurship education developing with high quality, in this paper, it is necessary to clarify the connotations and characteristics of innovative entrepreneurship education.

THE CONNOTATIONS OF INNOVATIVE ENTREPRENEURSHIP EDUCATION

The essence of education, which is “what is education”, is the logical starting point for studying education. The debate about the essence of education has never stopped. Many scholars put forward the relevant viewpoints in specific historical period, such as “education is the superstructure”, “education is the productivity”, “education is the life”, “education is the guidance”, “education is the growth”, “education is the development”, “education is the construction”, and so forth. “What is education” is actually expressing the value proposition of content through formal factual propositions [2]. Under the scrutiny of practical reason, education is not “to be something” that is separated from human practice, but “should be something” that is continuous development with value and significance. In other words, education is not a factual judgment, but value recognition. In the long period of accumulation and exploration, the essence of education has a gradual regression, which means that education is factitious social practice for human. Therefore, the
connotation of innovative entrepreneurship education in colleges and universities is defined that the educational activities carried out by colleges and universities in order to cultivate innovative entrepreneurship talents.

THE CHARACTERISTICS OF INNOVATIVE ENTREPRENEURSHIP EDUCATION

In order to understand innovative entrepreneurship education with deeper, more comprehensive and more accurate, the author extracted the five basic characteristics of innovative entrepreneurship education in colleges and universities, which are autonomy, universality, elite, initiative and transcendentality. These five dimensions can be used to grasp the innovative entrepreneurship education in colleges and universities.

Autonomy

The autonomy is the basic feature of innovative entrepreneurship education in colleges and universities. It refers to the degree and depth of innovative entrepreneurship education can be chosen by student autonomously. No matter what is the major when student register at beginning of college and university, the major has to be finished based on original training plan throughout the whole period of college and university without choice, due to pursue degree. But, innovative entrepreneurship education totally depends on students’ choice autonomously. In order to ensure comprehensive coverage and encourage students taking part in innovative entrepreneurship education, some seminars and compulsory courses would be set by colleges and universities. But after the compulsory courses are over, if students do not have the motivation to continue learning, they can choose to give up learning at any time.

Universality

The universality is the age requirement of innovative entrepreneurship education in colleges and universities, which refers to popularize innovative entrepreneurship education in colleges and universities [3], and which needs to face to all students and throughout whole process of training talents. [4] It is found that innovative entrepreneurship plays an important role in promoting economic growth during period of development of developed countries. Under the current situation of slow economic development in our country, the government take promoting employment through entrepreneurship as an important breakthrough to solve the employment problem which is not only based on the situation of our country present stage, also conform to the demands of the development of innovative entrepreneurship education. Since the 18th national congress of the CPC, innovative entrepreneurship education has attracted unprecedented attention and has gradually risen to the level
of national development strategy. “Young students are imaginative and creative, and they are the effective force for innovative entrepreneurship,” Jinping Xi said. Prime Minister Keqiang Li has also written: “college students are the new force to implement innovation-driven development strategies and promote mass entrepreneurship and innovation [4].” Therefore, developing universal innovative entrepreneurship education, based upon promotion of students’ social responsibility, entrepreneurial consciousness and ability, is not only inevitable demands on growth of the college students, but also the inevitable demands on construction of an innovative country with rich human resources.

**Elitism**

The elitism is the inevitable choice of innovative entrepreneurship education. “China’s economy has shifted from a high speed to a high-quality stage of development,” the party’s report said [5]. Talents are the first resource to achieve high-quality development. The innovative entrepreneurship education is a kind of concept and mode which suits for economic society and national development strategy[4]. It asks for persisting in elitism with high quality of cultivation and supporting national development strategy through training qualified talents of innovative entrepreneurship. Meanwhile, innovative entrepreneurship education in colleges and universities should set up an elite image and aim for students who have desire for achievements, which also benefits for realization of universality. The main consideration is that “leading wild goose effect” and “demonstration effect” would be generated by those elite students’ positive participation. Then more and more students would take part in innovative entrepreneurship education deeper and wider. In this way, the innovative entrepreneurship education would be a one of mainstream of education form, and its’ impacts and coverage also would be promoted gradually.

**Initiative**

The initiative is the internal standard of innovative entrepreneurship education. Stevenson said that entrepreneurship is the spirit of chasing opportunities with regardless of the limitation of existing resources [6], which is entrepreneurial definition widely used in academia. On this basis, some viewpoints have been developed, such as “entrepreneurship is creating an organization”, “entrepreneurship is adventure”, and “entrepreneurship is the innovation”. It can be clearly found that practitioners are people with initiative in above mentioned definitions. It means that the initiative could be seen as an important characteristic in term of innovative entrepreneurship. In order to achieve personal sense of accomplishment and independence, and create valuable new things, it is necessary closely combine dream, creative and execution through entrepreneurial behavior which presents the act of self-actualization and self-transcendence [7]. The nature about initiative of innovative entrepreneurship makes it become a behavior of creating value. Such
value, social and economic value, is not only creating fortune, also a social responsibility. It also generates a possibility which entrepreneurship can be served as a person’s life attitude and behaviors, thus become entrepreneurial career choice [8]. Currently, entrepreneurship has become widely accepted philosophy of life in the whole society. In the west, it is presented as a chain which includes grasping opportunities, integrating resources, building organizations and creating value, and as a process which includes creating fortune and social responsibility throughout whole life. Generally speaking, entrepreneurship is beginning from business and penetrating entire life. In contemporary China, the entrepreneurship actually bases on the understanding of life. “Hard entrepreneurship” usually means that people exploit and strive for the common interests and common ideals of the country, nation and people in difficult environment, in order to develop the socialist cause. The spirit of hard entrepreneurship is not only a lofty ideological state, but also an indispensable spiritual power for people to achieve any cause. Among them, the “entrepreneurship” refers to the inheritance, also refers to the enterprise. Then, lively situation of entrepreneurship appeared in China based on the policy of “mass entrepreneurship and innovation”. Generally, entrepreneurship starts from life and be used for business in China. Above all, although, China and the west has passed different way about the understanding and application of innovative entrepreneurship, the core characteristics are initiative by stimulating people’s initiative to create life value and meet the ideal of life. Therefore, according to the basic connotation of education, the internal standard of education is to cultivate people’s “initiative”.

Transcendentality

The transcendence is the spiritual essence of innovative entrepreneurship education in colleges and universities. In the rapidly developing modern society, a traditional education, which suits for the development of society and goals for training all kinds of talents, has been greatly challenged. It is found that many students would not be employed or cannot find a suitable job after graduation; even they already have chosen relative major based upon social demands at the beginning of college life. The main reason is that the cycle of social industry has been shortening dramatically. Especially, some industrial changes would take place rapidly during period of two years. That directly coursed adaptive training talents of traditional education cannot follow the pace of current modern society. However, comparing such adaptability, the innovative and entrepreneurship in colleges and universities is a kind of transcendence education. Such transcendence would be understood as three aspects as follow. Firstly, it transcends tradition. Innovative entrepreneurship education helps to promote reforming of concepts about vocational design and selection for student even entire society. It benefits for building the new concept which entrepreneurship is the natural outlet for good scholars, and shifting a traditional one-way of career which officialdom is the natural outlet for good
scholars. Such process of reforming social concepts, in fact, is a process of people’s modernization. Secondly, it transcends reality. The essence of innovative entrepreneurship is creation, innovation and breakthrough, which is based on social reality as well as transcends it. The general education would cultivate qualified constructors and satisfy social demands, but, the innovative entrepreneurship education would surpass qualified talents, cultivate the pioneers and lead the social needs. As professor Jie Lu said, “As an activity of training people, core transcendence of education is cultivating person who could transform the existing world, have consciousness and practice ability and can go beyond the real world and society. This is the basic function of education to endow people’s exclusive essence of practice [9].” Thirdly, it transcends self. Human beings are the most difficult to recognize and transcend themselves. The innovative entrepreneurship education mainly aims to cultivate self-transcendence in vocational level of values, guide identity of innovative entrepreneurship consciously for the value of life, and take innovative entrepreneurship as a kind of conscious career choice. College students who have achieved self-transcendence will take innovative entrepreneurship as a responsibility. The basic idea of the responsibility would provide the most basic code of ethics for vocational behavior and make the person would be introspection and self-discipline. Because that “The people who have chosen a cherished career, would run scare when feel unfit for the job. Such kind of people will have to keep their noble behavior due to their noble position in society [10].” College students have a long way to go for self-transcendence; their goals are just like the principal of a university putting forward four hopes, which are the upward spirit, the interest in learning, the passion to create, and the social responsibility [11]. Above mentioned four points are highly correspond to Jeffrey Timmons’s summary which is advisable and core entrepreneurship character, including “the sense of responsibility and decision-making”, “leadership”, “obsessed with business opportunities”, “hold degrees on risk, ambiguity and uncertainty “, “creation, self-reliance, and the ability to adapt”, “the motives of beyond others”. [12]

CONCLUSIONS

The innovative entrepreneurship education in colleges and universities is the new concept and mode under the condition of market economy and knowledge economy in China. It is not only the objective requirement for reforming quality education in colleges and universities, also the important measures to promote graduates’ employment with high quality. In this paper, the connotation of innovative entrepreneurship education in colleges and universities has been pointed out, which namely educational activities are carried out by colleges and universities for cultivating innovative entrepreneurship talents. And, the five core characteristics of innovative entrepreneurship education in colleges and universities, which are autonomy, universality, elitism, initiative and transcendentality, have laid a solid
theoretical basis for deepening development of innovative entrepreneurship education in colleges and universities of China.

REFERENCES

5. Jinping Xi, 2017. Remain true to our original aspiration and keep our mission firmly in mind, hold high the banner of socialism with Chinese characteristics, secure a decisive victory in building a moderately prosperous society in all respects, strive for the great success of socialism with Chinese characteristics for a new era, and work tirelessly to realize the Chinese Dream of national rejuvenation [EB/OL]. http://www.gov.cn/zhuanti/2017-10/27/content_5234876.htm