Full Length Research Paper

Factors influencing the effectiveness of entrepreneurship courses on agricultural graduates at the Ilam province in Iran

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Unemployment is one of the critical issues concerning the youth, specially graduated students of Ilam in recent years. Entrepreneurship can be considered as a strategy to make occupational opportunities for graduated agricultural students. The present study was aimed at recognition of effective factors on the effectiveness of entrepreneurship education courses. The population for this study included 552 people of the agriculture field graduates of Ilam province with of which 160 people were selected by stratified sampling. Respondents believed that the effectiveness of entrepreneurship education courses was much. Educational and policy factors determined 19% of effectiveness of entrepreneurship education courses, as well.

Key words: Entrepreneurship, effectiveness of entrepreneurship education courses.

INTRODUCTION

Today, entrepreneurship is among the most important issues attracting many nations and scientific communities. One of the entrepreneurship's importance reasons is the over growing of the governmental bureaucratic organisations. Governments, especially in developing countries, are experiencing the unemployment crisis of a large number of their citizens especially youth and graduates due to various reasons such as population growth, budgetary constraints, policy limiting public sector, lack of ability to recruit new forces, and the nonexistence of management strategies (KhosraviPour, 2009).

Creating employment is the government's most important objective in the Third Development Plan. This objective is emphasized in the Fourth Development Plan and the Islamic Republic of Iran's outlook of 1404 horizon, as well. University graduates are exposed to the unemployment crisis. To solve this problem, using entrepreneurship which had a positive reflection in many countries, which its basis was studied seriously, can be considered as a strategy for agricultural sciences graduates’ employment (Farshbafiyan, 2005; Petrin, 2002; Golrad, 2004; Hisrich and Brush, 1998).

Universities can have an effective role in the development of entrepreneurship by developing programs and courses to learn the necessary skills and experiences in order to create and manage small businesses among students (Rastegar, 2007). Most micro and macro level studies have shown that entrepreneurship can be taught and learned. Some micro-level studies have shown that participants in these courses have set up more businesses than those in other professional courses (Hosseinkhah, 2007). Entrepreneurship training can be one of the most effective methods to facilitate the transfer of graduates to the labour market (Garavan, 2006). Howard (2004) has evaluated the influences of creativity, risk, internal control, development motivation, and independence on entrepreneurship and concluded that there is a direct relationship between these capabilities and the persons’ entrepreneurial abilities.

Jones (2007) found that there is a significant relationship between entrepreneurship training and self-
The research used the applied research method because, its results can be used in the planning and decision making, and non-experimental (descriptive) research. The methodology used in this study involved a combination of descriptive and quantitative research and included the use of correlation, regression and descriptive analysis as data processing methods. The total population for this study was 552 agricultural sciences graduates in Ilam City and by using Cochran formula, 160 were selected through stratified sampling method.

For measuring study tool's validity, the questionnaire was given to researchers, experts, advisors and experts, and a primary-test by completing 30 questionnaires and for measuring reliability, the questionnaire was taken and the Cronbach alpha coefficient was 72%. Content and face validity were established by a panel of experts consisting of faculty members at Islamic Azad University, Science and Research Branch and some specialists in the Ministry of Agriculture. Minor wording and structuring of the instrument were made based on the recommendation of the panel of experts.

A pilot study was conducted with 20 persons who had not been interviewed before the earlier exercise of determining the reliability of the questionnaire for the study. Computed Cronbach's Alpha score was 72.0%, which indicated that the questionnaire was highly reliable.

**RESULTS**

Based on the results of this study, 58.1% were men and 41.9% were women. Studies show that 62.5% of the respondents were unmarried and 37.5 were married. Based on educational degree, 71.2% were bachelor and 10% had MS degrees. Based on the collected information, it was determined that 63.8% of the respondents were members of the engineering organization and 36.2% were not. Studies show that 44.4% of respondents were unemployed and 3.1% had a fertilizer and poison distribution shop.

Information shows that 50% of agricultural sciences graduates categorized the effectiveness of entrepreneurship courses as high level (50%) and 50% categorize it as an average level.

Results show that 97.5% of graduates of agricultural sciences graduates believed the effect of the educational factors in the effectiveness of entrepreneurship training in Ilam province is high (60%), economical is moderate (83%), political is high (57%), socio-cultural is moderate (64%), and psychological as moderate (83%).

Pearson correlation coefficient was used to test the correlation between variables. Result of Table 1 show that there is a significant positive relationship between the educational, administrative-organizational, and policy making factors and the effectiveness of entrepreneurial courses at 99%.

Multiple regressions were used to measure the effectiveness of entrepreneurial courses. After entering all independent variables which had significant correlation, educational factors and policy making variables remained in the equation. These variables are able to determined 19% of the effectiveness of entrepreneurial courses.

### Table 1. Pearson correlation between factors with of entrepreneurship courses.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research variable</th>
<th>r</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Educational</td>
<td>0.342*</td>
<td>0.007</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economical</td>
<td>0.129</td>
<td>0.105</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organizational</td>
<td>0.210*</td>
<td>0.008</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Policy making</td>
<td>0.340*</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Socio-cultural</td>
<td>0.159</td>
<td>0.044</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psychological</td>
<td>0.124</td>
<td>0.118</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 2. Multiple regression analysis.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>Beta</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Constant</td>
<td>1.711</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educational factor (X1)</td>
<td>0.214</td>
<td>0.300</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>policy making (X2)</td>
<td>0.121</td>
<td>0.297</td>
<td>0.031</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

$R^2 = 0.194.$

courses. Variable of the educational factor ($R^2 = 0.112$) is the most important factor influencing the effectiveness of entrepreneurial training among agricultural sciences graduates of Ilam province so that this variable, alone, has clarified about 11% of the effectiveness of entrepreneurial courses (Table 2).

According to the following table, multiple regression linear equations are:

\[
Y = 1.711 + 0.214(X1) + 0.121(X2)
\]

\[
Y = 0.300(X1) + 0.297(X2)
\]

The determining factors on knowledge management have been shown in Figure 1.

![Diagram](image)

**Figure 1.** The determining factors on effectiveness of entrepreneurship courses.

DISCUSSION

This research, which is aimed to recognizing the influencing factors on effectiveness of entrepreneurial courses from the viewpoint of agricultural sciences graduates of Ilam province, indicates that the graduates categorized the effectiveness of entrepreneurial courses as high level. The most important factors affecting the effectiveness of entrepreneurial courses were educational and policy making factors. In other words, more attention to these factors can result in a better and more effective application of entrepreneurial training among agricultural sciences graduates of Ilam province. Reza-Zadeh (2002), Gholami (2003), Zahedi (2004), Darab-Zadeh (2008), Mirza-Amini (2007), Moghimi (2007), Jancikova (2004), Peak and Marshal (2006) and Reynold (2004) have confirmed this in their studies.

According to the results of the educational factors, providing the necessary tests for measuring the apprentice's learning rate is one of the important aspects of the entrepreneurial training courses that is often ignored. In the entrepreneurial training courses, the estimation method or estimating the trainees' skills were measured by marking and scoring the entrepreneurial business plan of the under evaluation trainees. Preparing
the necessary tests for measuring the apprentices learning rate has many applications and purposes; these applications can be emphasized in the educational positions. Educational psychologists have found that if people are allowed to be involved with the design, implementation, and evaluation processes, they will be more motivated for being trained and meet their educational needs assessment is necessary to design a course. It can also be used to determine the specific issues or elements and components of the training course. Entrepreneurial training is a communicational process. The relationship between teacher and trainees; this is not a simple process and should be placed on its proper path to make this communication to be effective. Educators can make the communication to be more effective in different ways (increasing the trainees’ motivation, teaching a special subject, increasing the trainees’ competence motivation etc):

1. Meetings with the trainees before the first session of entrepreneurial courses are suggested;
2. According to the results of policy making factors, considering the supportive policies is recommended. Government should support policies that increase the level of entrepreneurship’s knowledge, through the scientific contents such as magazines, posters and other things which increase the entrepreneurial knowledge of the community.

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