

Review Article

THE MODEL OF ACADEMIC ENTREPRENEURIAL CULTURE IN ISLAMIC AZAD UNIVERSITY (REGION 2)

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ABSTRACT

This study aimed to provide a model for academic entrepreneurial culture in Islamic Azad University (Region 2). This was a descriptive- applied survey research. The population consisted of all faculty members of Islamic Azad University, region 2 (N= 1200). Using stratified random sampling method, 286 subjects were selected as sample. The questionnaire was used for collecting the required data and information. All data processing and statistical analysis was done using SPSS software. The one group t-test was used to analyze the data. Based on the main elements of academic entrepreneurial culture, the researcher provided a model and action framework to improve the existing situation. The proposed model consisted of elements of philosophy and objectives, theoretical foundations, components, implementation process, and reevaluation. This model obtained an acceptable score (4.466 from 5) from the perspective of experts and professionals in higher education system.

Keywords: Entrepreneurship, Academic Entrepreneurial Culture, Islamic Azad University

INTRODUCTION

Today, unlike the past, the markets in the world are facing the daily changes and even every moment changes in human communities needs. As the main factor of meeting these needs, the manufacturing and service organizations must move quickly and with the right target to move ahead of the rapid changes and survive and grow in these markets (Farhangi & Safarzadeh, 2007).

In today's world, the information explosion, development of communication, electronic revolution, and concepts evolution in the systems of power and wealth have been addressed as academic entrepreneurship in recent studies. Also, their fundamental changes of culture have put the human societies at rapid evolution (Farasatkah, 2009). However, these global changes as a vital component of modern societies have influenced the universities and their role as well. Undoubtedly, one of the essential needs of universities in today's world is moving towards a third mission or a role play (Etzkowitz, 2003).

Several organizational factors such as organizational culture, organizational structure, systems, and procedures and technology are effective in the development of academic entrepreneurship. Entrepreneurial culture can be considered as one of the most important factors affecting the development of entrepreneurship in universities. In the entrepreneurial culture, the identification, protection and development of creative talents are emphasized (Clark1998). The prevalence of this type of culture causes the universities consider innovation and risk taking to exploit the opportunities as a necessity to confront the threats of competitors (MCquaire, 2003).

In the US, the entrepreneurship education within the university courses and institutions has attracted very special attention. Canada and some Asian countries such as Philippines, India and Malaysia have also taken essential steps to support entrepreneurial activities. This support includes practical guidance, consulting, financial services, and special courses on entrepreneurship in universities and outside of them (Ahmad, 2000).

A number of scholars have stressed the need to promote "entrepreneurial model" at universities. For example, Bykas Sanyal mentioned that the model of entrepreneurship is one of the decision-making

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patterns at universities and higher education institutions. According to him, this model has the following features:

A – Universities are entrepreneur and autonomous.

B – They provide educational, research and consulting services and earn required resources from students, government, businesses, local communities, and regional communities.

C – They are competitive, sensitive to costs, and have accountability system. They obtain needed funds from multiple resources and focus on strategic and operational integration through new management techniques. Although, in practice, universities use the combinations of the above four models to coordinate themselves with special positions, this indicates the attention to the entrepreneurship (Hatami, 1998).

A study was conducted by Brennan and Mac (2006) entitled: discovering, describing and explaining the processes involved in the application of entrepreneurship) at the Alster University, UK. They pointed out that the importance of academic entrepreneurship role has increased due to the changing role of universities in knowledge-based economies. The results provided a model for identifying key elements of academic entrepreneurship in terms of different methods of knowledge creation and value creation processes.

Shea & Allen conducted a study entitled: Creating Entrepreneurial University at MIT University. They aimed to use the experiences of MIT University and provide recommendations to other universities in terms of academic entrepreneurship. The results showed that MIT is a successful research university that could well promote the entrepreneurial culture and the commercialization of university research.

Vienna (1990) states that an entrepreneurial culture basically consists of 6 specified characteristics including:

- 1) Feelings, emotion and arousal.
- 2) Concerns regarding products and customers more than focus on personal and financial politics and policy, and legal issues.
- 3) The focus on this work must be done.
- 4) Spontaneity, experience, and spirit of confidence.
- 5) Confidence of leaders to the competency and ability of individuals.
- 6) Behavior of individuals is such that someone who has dedicated himself/herself to creating and solving problems seems to be bold, questionable, pro of contest, tradition breaker, rude, and demander of experience (Winslow, 1990). Vienna also adds that in the entrepreneurial culture, the rude behavior happens and it is allowed to happen.

The Research Question:

What model of entrepreneurial culture can be provided with respect to its elements?

Methodology

This was a descriptive- applied survey research. The population consisted of all faculty members of Islamic Azad University, region 2 (N= 1200). Using stratified random sampling method, 286 subjects were selected as sample.

Analysis of the data with respect to the research question:

What model of entrepreneurial culture can be provided with respect to its elements?

The answer to this question and to determine the validity of the model, a questionnaire consisted of philosophy and objectives, theoretical foundations, components of model, implementation and evaluation processes was designed and evaluated by experts in higher education system. Therefore, using purposive sampling, 30 scholars and experts in higher education system were selected as sample. Their views were collected using 5-point Likert scale. Then, the one group t-test was used to compare the opinions of experts and professionals with theoretical mean. The description of these comparisons is shown in the below table.

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Comparison of experimental and theoretical mean to determine the model’s appropriateness degree

Theoretic al mean	Possibilit y value	Degree of freedo m	statis tic s	Mean differenc e	Standar d deviatio n	Experiment al mean	Model elements
12	0/00	29	23/337	6/300	1/417	17/300	Philosophy and objectives
3	0/00	29	68/019	19/966	1/608	22/966	Theoretical foundations
15	0/00	29	27/140	7/966	1/607	22/966	Components
15	0/00	29	26/012	8/266	1/740	23/263	Implementatio n process
15	0/00	29	39/087	8/533	1/195	23/533	Evaluation system
3	0/00	29	11/789	1/466	0/681	4/466	Total model

According to above table, the results showed that there is a significant difference between the experimental mean of model elements (philosophy, objectives, components, theoretical foundations, implementation process, feedback system, and re-evaluation) from the perspective of experts and the theoretical mean. In other words, the empirical mean of all elements is considerably higher than the theoretical mean. This hypothesis is confirmed with 95% confidence. The proposed model obtained an acceptable score (4.466 from 5) from the perspective of experts and professionals in higher education system in relation to be consistent with the unique features of academic environment.

CONCLUSION

In today's world, the innovation and entrepreneurial thought and its use in organizations are inevitable. As the birth and death of organizations depends on the insights and abilities of their founders, their growth and survival also depends on factors such as ability, creativity and innovation of their human resources (Rasekh, 2007). The learning and innovation is an imperative for organizations which are trying to survive and be effective. Many organizations are highly looking for innovative and entrepreneurial approaches to improve their effectiveness, efficiency, and flexibility. In this regard, CE is rapidly becoming a weapon of choice for organizations, especially for large organizations.

This study aimed to provide a model for academic entrepreneurial culture in Islamic Azad University (Region 2). In order to design the model, the components of academic entrepreneurial culture were determined. Using the analysis of main factors, the priority of each component in explaining the concept of academic entrepreneurship was determined. The results showed that there is a significant difference between the experimental mean of model elements from the perspective of experts and the theoretical mean. In other words, the empirical mean of all elements is considerably higher than the theoretical mean. This hypothesis is confirmed by 95% confidence. Therefore, the proposed model obtained an acceptable score from the perspective of experts and professionals.

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