

ENTREPRENEURSHIP: INFLUENCE OF ENTREPRENEURSHIP TRAINING COURSES ON ENTREPRENEURIAL BEHAVIOUR OF THE STAFF IN OFFICES OF YOUTH AND SPORTS IN YAZD PROVINCE

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Annotation. The main objective of this study was to analyze the entrepreneurial behaviour of the staff of Offices of Youth and Sports in Yazd province and the influence of entrepreneurial training courses on their behaviour. The population under study were all the staff, a total number of 101 persons, of nine (9) Offices of Youth and Sports in Yazd province. The population for pre-testing was equal to the actual population of the study. In terms of methodology it was a descriptive study and in terms of purpose an applicable one. Instrument for data gathering was a survey questionnaire prepared by the researcher and the validity of which was examined by the professors of the university and approved based on their suggestions and views. It consisted of 55 questions in order to measure and evaluate behavioural characteristics of entrepreneurs (Balanced Risk-taking, Locus of Control, Mental Health, Challenge Seeking, Success Seeking or need for achievement, Dreaming or fantasizing, Activism or pro-active, and Ambiguity Tolerance). The stability of the questionnaire was tested and measured by Cronbach Alpha Coefficient which was $\alpha=0.87$. The gathered data were analysed using descriptive statistical methods (Mean, Standard Deviation, Charts/Figures) and deductive (non-parametric) methods (Kolmogorov-Smirnov test, Friedman, Mann-Whitney U, Spearman and Pearson). The results showed that there is a significant and positive relationship between activism, dreaming and risk taking characteristics with challenge seeking; and between achievement seeking, mental health and ambiguity tolerance with locus of control characteristic. On the other hand, ranking the characteristics of entrepreneurial behaviour of staff demonstrated that the highest ranking belongs to dreaming and mental health and the lowest ranking belongs to activism and locus of control. Overall, there is a significant relationship between entrepreneurial behaviour and entrepreneurial training. Based on these results, conducting entrepreneurial courses and workshops for staff of Offices of Youth and Sports is highly recommended.

Key words: entrepreneurial behaviour, entrepreneurial training, dreaming, mental health, locus of control, activism.

Introduction

Fast pace and tremendous changes are the characteristics of the current times; each second something new is occurring and these events are connected to one another like rings of a chain and if the staff adopt an entrepreneurial behaviour they can transform these changes and evolutions into opportunities and decide appropriately in favour of organization (23). In today's world innovative thinking and entrepreneurship and its practice in organizations cannot be avoided. Rise and fall of organizations is dependent on the insights and capabilities of their founders; in the same manner their growth and survival is dependent on factors such as capability, creativity and innovativeness of their human resources. Planners, decision makers and staff of any organization, in case being entrepreneurial, can comprehend and realize economical opportunities better and take advantage of existing resources for innovativeness better, as a result growing faster and survive better in the competition arena. In order to make this happen, entrepreneurial activities shall be promoted in organizations and entrepreneurial spirit shall be grown among decision makers and employees of the organization and last but not least an entrepreneurial environment shall be governing the organization (13).

Nowadays, study of entrepreneurship has become one of the most prevalent and widely studied areas of research in management. As such it is not exaggeration to claim in recent decades entrepreneurship has been one of the important topics discussed in society as well as the academic research and training (19). Various scholars had defined this concept differently and paid attention to it from different vantage points. The first definition had been given by Schumpeter (1965) who defined an entrepreneur as someone who uses and takes advantage of the market's opportunities with technical or organizational innovations. According to Venkataraman (2000), entrepreneurship is the process of discovery, evaluation and usage of opportunities for production of goods and services in future. Hisrich (1990) believes that an entrepreneur is someone who demonstrates a discovery and invention. In view of Bolton and Thompson (2000) an entrepreneur is more of a person who is innovative and creative based on habit. In a similar view point, Baumol (1993) defines an entrepreneur as someone who tries a new idea on an existing creation (4&14).

The term entrepreneurship is an exclusive word which has been used in different fields. Most of entrepreneurial areas focus on the need for success and search for opportunities to evaluate if those are imaginary or theoretical. Yet there is no particular and widely accepted definition of entrepreneurship. The similar aspect of all definitions focuses on the economical aspect in relation to progress, and development of crucial actions for economical gain which includes innovation and realization of opportunities (7, 18, 32). The latest definition concentrates on formation and persuasion of risky actions and creation of a new organization (9).

Brockhaus and Horowitz (1985) had considered four characteristics as main behavioural patterns of entrepreneurs which are: internal locus of control, high need for achievement, risk taking propensity and ambiguity tolerance. Aside from these, McClelland had included creativity and need for independence as characteristics of entrepreneurs (5). John Cow had enumerated 12 characteristics for entrepreneurs, namely: committed, determined, having high perseverance, highly motivated to achieve goals and progress, goal-oriented and opportunistic, creative and innovative, diligent and gradual in solving problems, realistic, having internal locus of control, risk taker, lack of need for power and high positions, and honest and trust worthy. Stevenson and Gumper, other scholars in this field, have enumerated three general characteristics for entrepreneurs which are: having imagination power, flexibility and risk taking propensity. Carney defines entrepreneurs as optimistic, risk-taker and highly motivated people and insists that entrepreneurs always consider the full half of the glass and try to achieve excellence; they use their failures as a tool for future success (28). Bygrave, the Director of the Center for Entrepreneurial Studies at Bobson College, had specified characteristics of entrepreneurs, consisting of: imagination (fantasizing), determined, perseverance, attachment, devotion, control of destiny, amassing wealth, scrutinizer, and wealth distributor (6).

Burins (2007) illustrates the innovation and entrepreneurship exist at all levels of organizations including executive level which are managers and staff and usually a supportive behaviour exists at the higher managerial levels; these findings are not only prevalent in private organizations but also exist in public organizations and offices (33). Study of Luke (2006) proves that managers' understanding of meaning of strategic entrepreneurship makes them aware of essential elements around them. These elements consist of opportunity realization, innovation, risk taking, flexibility, mission and organizational growth. To create the connection between these levels it is essential that decision making duties would be performed well and successful entrepreneurial behaviours be guided and supported by managers (21).

Morasaei (2006) in a research analysed perception of Physical Education students on methods to increase entrepreneurship in sports. Based on his results, performance of Physical Education colleges on entrepreneurship is weak and not satisfactory; as a result conducting entrepreneurial workshops was recommended by him (24). Gholamian (2006) had compared the entrepreneurial profile of Physical Education students with students of other courses and concluded risk taking and motivation for progress is significantly higher and creativity and ambiguity tolerance is significantly lower among Physical Education students compared to others (10). Kheiri (2008) based on a research had reported that there is a significant relationship between cultural intelligence and each of entrepreneurial characteristics (17). Kouzehchian (2010) in a research entitled "Relationship between Entrepreneurial Structure and Organizational Effectiveness in Physical Education Association of Islamic Republic of Iran" had analysed the structure of this association with its entrepreneurial approach and explained its relationship with effectiveness of this organization; he concluded that there is a significant relationship between entrepreneurial structure with all its dimensions and organizational effectiveness (18). Llano (2005) studied the influence of the environment and the university atmosphere on entrepreneurial behaviours. He claimed that a positive approach toward university entrepreneurship has a positive influence on the tendency toward it in university environment. He believed in the importance of an entrepreneurial environment on the matter and enumerated the appropriate characteristics of university atmosphere for entrepreneurship as: managerial support, honesty, risk taking, risk tolerance, reward (incentive) system, resources and supportive organizational structure (20). Ghulam (2008) in his studies on graduates of entrepreneurship course and their training had illustrated that entrepreneurship training is increasing and progressing all around the world; however the literature, researches and studies on key concepts of entrepreneurship is few and limited (11). Jianghuai et al. (2009) in a research with the objective of analysing entrepreneurship and innovation in China had concluded that establishment of Research and Development System is spreading and this system integrates entrepreneurial programs with innovation and creativity. As a result applying this research and development approach had caused the increase of creativity and innovation from entrepreneurship. The results also showed the existence of a relationship between entrepreneurship and a person's capabilities and applying research and development strategy had increased human resources' capabilities (16). In research, Wel (2010) had concluded that despite the disagreements among scholars on some aspects of entrepreneurial trainings, they agree and are convergent toward a single framework on entrepreneurial training (31).

Taking into consideration the reactions of speedy development, in an attempt to acquire updated information, it increases the expectations for a speedy responsiveness to solve problems as well as to increase risk taking in organizations; all of this is a reminder and evidence of the necessity of existence of entrepreneurs. In fact the entrepreneurs are the ones who make it possible, with the appropriate realization of opportunities, to solve these problems immediately with organizing and management; as a result lack of entrepreneurial behaviour in organization slows down and endangers the organizational activities (1). In this regard, providing a suitable environment and basis in organizations by management is crucial for growth and progress of entrepreneurship among staff, because in each organization there is a group of individuals who use and take advantage of human, financial and technological resources better than the others. Managers need to try to distinguish, promote (incentivize) and support these group of individuals and give them the opportunity to be productive and grow in their field. In other words, in each and every organization there are potential entrepreneurs but there is a need to actualize their potentials and capabilities; and more importantly the organizational structures shall allow the entrepreneurs to show their potentials and make use of them (25). Offices of Youth and Sports as trustees and developers of physical education and sports in the country, in order to cope and adapt to daily, complicate, fast and uncertain changes of environment and to discover potential opportunities in the field of sports, are in need of creative and innovative entrepreneurs to enable them to take advantage of these changes and guide them for the benefit of sports in the county. As such, understanding the behavioural characteristics of entrepreneurs is

the first and most basic step toward understanding concept of entrepreneurship. Considering this crucial fact, in this study the researchers had analysed entrepreneurial behaviour of staff of Offices of Youth and Sports in Yazd province.

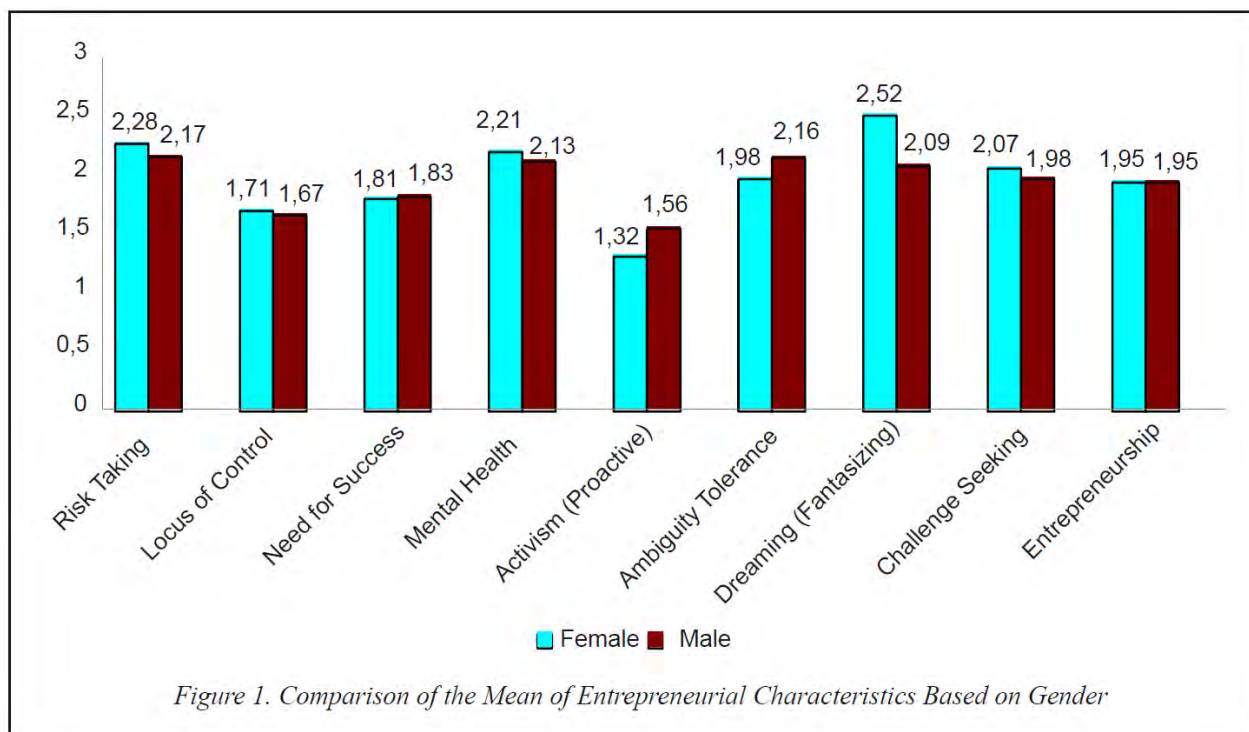
Methodology

This research has been a descriptive one yet statistical measurements had been used to reach verifiable results; the research has been conducted practically and focused on entrepreneurial behaviour of staff and the influence of conducting entrepreneurial training courses on behaviour of the staff in Offices of Youth and Sports in Yazd province. This research can also be categorized as applicable. Population of this research were all the staff of Offices of Youth and Sports in Yazd province the total number of whom was 101 persons from the 9 so called offices in that province. The pretested sample size was equal to the actual population. Considering the objectives of this study, the instrument of data gathering was a survey questionnaire prepared by the researcher and contained 55 questions in order to measure each entrepreneurial behavioural characteristics (balanced risk taking, locus of control, mental health, challenge seeking, success seeking or need for success, dreaming or fantasizing, activism or proactive, ambiguity tolerance) of staff of Offices of Youth and Sports in Yazd province. Validity of the survey questionnaire was examined and approved by the professors of the university. The coefficient Cronbach Alpha was used to show the stability of the questionnaire which was $\alpha = 0.87$. In addition to the above mentioned data, demographic information of the staff such as age, work experience and educational attainment was also gathered and analysed. The gathered data were carefully analysed using descriptive statistical methods (Mean, Standard Deviation, Charts/Figures) and deductive (non-parametric) methods (Kolmogorov-Smirnov test, Friedman, Mann-Whitney U, Spearman and Pearson). The statistical procedures and result measurements were done using SPSS software to reach accurate results.

Findings

Demographic information of the respondents, based on the gathered data was as follows: 36.8% of them were female and 63.2% of them were male; the age average of male respondents was 35.23 years and of female respondents was 32.97 years. In case of educational attainment, 28.4% of them had a high school diploma, 22.1% of them had an associate (2 year college) degree, 44.2% of them had a bachelor’s degree and 5.3% of them had a master’s degree. The mean and average of their work experience was 10.17 years. Finally 68.4% of them never had gone through an entrepreneurial training course.

Figure 1 illustrates that the mean of dreaming (fantasizing), risk taking, challenge seeking and mental health is higher among female staff compared to males. On the other hand the mean of ambiguity tolerance, need for success and activism (proactive) is higher among male staff compared to their female counterparts. However the mean of entrepreneurship is equal among respondents regardless of gender.



As shown below in Table 1, results of Kolmogorov-Smirnov test proved that two variables of locus of control and activism (proactive) are distributed abnormally and in all other variables normality of distribution is proven.

Table 1. Results of Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test

Statistical Indicators of Entrepreneurial Characteristics	Mean ± Standard Deviation	Z	Significance Level
Balanced Risk Taking	2.21 ± 0.56	0.98	0.289
Locus of Control	1.69 ± 0.46	1.49	0.024*
Success Seeking (Need for Success)	1.83 ± 0.43	1.13	0.154
Mental Health	2.16 ± 0.57	0.81	0.521
Activism (Proactive)	1.47 ± 0.63	2.22	0.001
Ambiguity Tolerance	2.09 ± 0.45	1.01	0.267
Dreaming (Fantasizing)	2.15 ± 0.49	1.20	0.112
Challenge Seeking	2.01 ± 0.49	1.15	0.140
Entrepreneurship	1.95 ± 0.29	0.68	0.746

*Significant level of $P \leq 0.05$ is the basis.

Results from the Friedman Test proved that considering the significance level, there is a significance difference between priorities of entrepreneurial characteristics. Specifically it can be claimed that entrepreneurial characteristics of dreaming (fantasizing) and mental health have a higher significance and priority among the staff of Offices of Youth and Sports in Yazd province; on the other hand activism (proactive) and locus of control have the least significance among this staff (Table 2).

Table 2. Results of Friedman Test, Comparison of Priorities of Entrepreneurial Characteristics of the Staff

Row	Entrepreneurial Characteristics	Mean ± Standard Deviation	Mean of Ranks	Chi-Square	Degree of Freedom	Sig.
1	Dreaming (Fantasizing)	2.15 ± 0.49	6.33	202.69	8	0.001
2	Mental Health	2.16 ± 0.57	6.11			
3	Balanced Risk Taking	2.21 ± 0.56	6.10			
4	Ambiguity Tolerance	2.09 ± 0.45	5.79			
5	Challenge Seeking	2.01 ± 0.49	5.47			
6	Entrepreneurship	1.95 ± 0.29	5.24			
7	Success Seeking	1.83 ± 0.43	4.31			
8	Locus of Control	1.69 ± 0.46	3.38			
9	Activism (Proactive)	1.47 ± 0.63	2.26			

*Significant level of $P \leq 0.05$ is the basis.

Results of the Mann-Whitney U Test showed that there is a significant relationship between those staff who had gone under entrepreneurial training courses and characteristics of entrepreneurial behaviour (Table 3).

Table 3. Results of Mann-Whitney U Test

Groups	Mean of Ranks	Mann-Whitney U	Significance Level
Respondents had not gone through entrepreneurial training.	41.24	766.50	0.044
Respondents had gone through entrepreneurial training.	52.35		

*Significant level of $P \leq 0.05$ is the basis.

*Table 4. Comparison of Significance of Entrepreneurial Characteristics (Spearman and Pearson Correlation Test)**

preneurial Entre Characteri stic	Locus of Control		Success Seeking		Mental Health		Activism		Ambiguity Tolerance		Dreaming		Challenge Seeking		Entrepreneurs hipE	
	si	g	si	g	si	g	si	g	si	g	si	g	si	g	si	g
Risk Taking	957	0/	/293	0	/808	0	/294	0	/311	0	/001	0	/001	0	sig	0/001
	006	0/	/109	0	/025	0	/109	0	/105	-0	326**	0/	366**	0/	r	380**
Locus of Control			/001	0	/034	0	/001	0	/039	0	/001	0	/001	0	sig	0/001
			655**		217*		473**		212*		347**		382**		r	682**

			0/		0/		0/		0/		0/		0/
Seeking Success		sig	/0010	sig	/0010	sig	/1710	sig	/0010	sig	/0010	sig	0/001
		r	336** 0/	r	400** 0/	r	/1420	r	415** 0/	r	597** 0/	r	757** 0/
Mental Health		sig	/8120	sig	/6600	sig	/0010	sig	/0010	sig	/0010	sig	0/001
		r	/0250	r	/046-0	r	335** 0/	r	430** 0/	r	441** 0/	r	441** 0/
Activism		sig	/0270	sig	/0080	sig	/0110	sig	/0110	sig	/0110	sig	0/001
		r	226** 0/	r	271** 0/	r	260* 0/	r	260* 0/	r	512** 0/	r	512** 0/
Ambiguity Tolerance		sig	/5980	sig	/3460	sig	/3460	sig	/3460	sig	/3460	sig	0/004
		r	/055-0	r	/0980	r	/0980	r	/0980	r	0/292	r	0/292
Dreaming		sig	/0010	sig	/0010	sig	/0010	sig	/0010	sig	/0010	sig	0/001
		r	728** 0/	r	718** 0/	r	718** 0/	r	718** 0/	r	718** 0/	r	718** 0/
Seeking Challenge		sig		sig		sig		sig		sig		sig	0/001
		r		r		r		r		r		r	813** 0/
*P<0.05 ; **P<0.01 ; n=95													

* - In shaded areas nonparametric test of Spearman has been used due to the abnormality of data. On the other hand in the white areas because of the normality of gathered data the Pearson's parametric test has been applied.

Based on data in Table 4, results of Spearman and Pearson Correlation Test proves that there is a significant positive relationship between activism, dreaming, and risk taking characteristics with challenge seeking; and between success seeking, mental health and ambiguity tolerance characteristics with locus of control. Also there is a significant positive relationship between all entrepreneurial behaviour except ambiguity tolerance with entrepreneurship indicators.

Discussion and Conclusion

Before starting the discussion, it is crucial to mention that even though it is possible to compare the results of this study with some other researches, it is not plausible to compare the results directly with other works and this comparison should be done carefully. It is due to the fact that research and training on entrepreneurship especially in field of sports is a new area and topic; in fact since it is a new topic in experimental studies the literature on it is very limited and mostly theoretical works. However background of entrepreneurship overall shows that many internal or external organizational factors can improve progressing process of entrepreneurial behaviour or stop it altogether. The research in hand is also in line with above mentioned facts and has been conducted with the objective of analysing the entrepreneurial behaviour of staff and the influence of entrepreneurial training courses on the behaviour of staff of the Offices of Youth and Sports in Yazd province. The results showed that the mean age of the respondents was 34.40 years old. In terms of educational attainment the highest mean belonged to bachelor's degree (44.2). Considering this fact and the necessity of executive works in field of sports in Yazd province it can be concluded that staff with a bachelor's or higher degrees are needed to fill in positions at the Offices of Youth and Sports in that province. Results showed, the mean of dreaming (fantasizing), risk taking, challenge seeking and mental health characteristics was higher among female staff compared to males; on the other hand among male staff the mean of ambiguity tolerance, need for success and activism (proactive) characteristics was higher compared to their female counterparts. The interesting point in the results is the equality of mean of entrepreneurship among both genders. Based on this data it is plausible to conclude that gender has no influence on entrepreneurship at Offices of Youth and Sports in Yazd province and this is in accordance with findings of study of Golzaretal. (2010). (12).

It was also found out that between the entrepreneurial characteristics under study (balanced risk taking, locus of control, mental health, challenge seeking, success seeking or need for success, dreaming or fantasizing, activism or proactive and ambiguity tolerance) there is a significant difference; among these entrepreneurial behaviours dreaming or fantasizing characteristics has a greater significance among respondents and activism or proactive characteristic has the least significance among them. These results are in line with findings of Ahmad (1985) and Badry (2005) who had shown that motivation for progress, imagination or fantasy and locus of control are the most important characteristics of entrepreneurs (2, 3).

Another noteworthy finding of this study was that there is a significant relationship between entrepreneurial training and characteristics of entrepreneurial behaviour. The same had been found out by Morasaei (2006), Gholamian (2006), HosseiniLorgani et al. (2008), Pourkiani (2009), Farahani (2010), Rashid (2000), Ghulam (2008), and Wel (2010). (8, 15, 27, 29)

A significant positive relationship was found between activism, dreaming, risk taking with challenge seeking, as well as between success seeking, mental health and ambiguity tolerance with locus of control. Also all characteristics of entrepreneurial behaviour except ambiguity tolerance have a significant positive relationship with entrepreneurial indicators. It is indirectly in line with some other researches such as studies of Schumer (2007), Mirzayi and Moghimi (2003), Reza Zadeh et al. (2004) and Zare' et al. (2007). (22, 30, 34).

At the end to conclude the findings and discussions, in order to create and improve entrepreneurship, it is recommended that information sharing would be put in place at Offices of Youth and Sports. It is also highly recommended to the managers to develop entrepreneur behavioural characteristics and train entrepreneur people in the work place and provide them with the necessary resources to actualize their ideas and achieve their perceived outcomes. Entrepreneurs need to know and believe that the managers of Offices of Youth and Sports realize the difference between a regular and an entrepreneurial conduct of tasks and this would only be possible with evaluation, rightful realization and desirable reaction of managers. It is also recommended and suggested that managers of offices keep in mind and work toward conduct of educational and training courses (classes, seminars, conferences and etc.) in order to boost the entrepreneurial spirit and entrepreneurial behaviour of their staff.

In addition it is important to note that study of entrepreneurship is still in primary stages and study and research on this scientific field is still in progress and existing doubts and uncertainties of psychological and definitional aspects of it are normal. Due to the importance of entrepreneurship and the proven amazing effects of it on flourishing and development of societies, it is necessary for professors, students and researchers to focus more of their attention toward this topic and conduct more researches and studies on this scientific matter to clear out the existing uncertainties and enrich the literature on the matter as well as building a bright and clear path to promote the level of entrepreneurship in society in general and in sports and physical education in specific and for the prosper and advancement of the country as the ultimate outcome.

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