

Strategy to Promote Entrepreneurship Education for Sustainable Development in Higher Education

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Abstract

In the current competitive digital era of education, higher educational institutions need to provide not only bookish knowledge but also knowledge that ensures the holistic development of students. According to the demands of modern times, entrepreneurship education is essential in every subject for technical and skill-based learning. The aim of entrepreneurship education is to make students digitally competent, practical, and employment-oriented. It promotes sustainable development along with skills, creativity, and critical thinking.

Through this paper, an attempt has been made to examine the concept of sustainable development in the context of entrepreneurship education at the border university of Uttarakhand, Almora, along with its strategies and challenges. The paper begins with the concept of entrepreneurship and entrepreneurship education. It further discusses strategies and challenges in promoting entrepreneurial skills. Based on these challenges, suggestions are provided, including that both the central and state governments should ensure that entrepreneurship is taught in all subjects in higher educational institutions of Uttarakhand. The government should also ensure continuous funding for entrepreneurship education activities.

Keywords: Holistic development, Practical, Entrepreneurship education, Employment-oriented, Sustainable development, Strategy, Challenges

1. Introduction

Higher educational institutions in Uttarakhand have long been criticized for insensitivity toward the need for holistic development and skill-based education in response to changing life conditions. Poverty, unemployment, job switching, and job loss have become common. Present education has become limited to obtaining degrees, certificates, and diplomas. Students are often prepared only for government jobs. Securing employment in government or private sectors has become a symbol of success.

The economic success of any nation depends entirely on the quality of graduates produced by its education system. Aliyu (2007) emphasized the need to equip future citizens with proper knowledge to lead useful and productive lives. Producing entrepreneurial graduates requires active cooperation and participation

from students, lecturers, and university administration (Ubogu, 2011). This strengthens the need to incorporate entrepreneurship education into the national curriculum.

In fact, through the National Universities Commission (NUC), the federal government made entrepreneurship education compulsory for all undergraduates in 2004 to reform the education system and align it with industry demands (Ubogu, 2011). Thus, this paper examines strategies to enhance entrepreneurship education and motivate students toward skill-based employment opportunities. It also explores the factors causing challenges in implementing effective entrepreneurship education in higher institutions for sustainable development.

2. Concept of Entrepreneurship and Entrepreneurship Education

Entrepreneurship can be defined as the process of developing creativity and skills in students to meet identified needs and generate income. Nwangwu (2007) defined entrepreneurship as the process of combining innovative ideas and organizational skills with factors of production—land, labor, and capital—to produce goods or services for public consumption.

Ubogu (2010) described entrepreneurship as a dynamic process involving vision, change, and creation. It requires energy and passion to develop innovative solutions and implement them. Therefore, educational institutions should prioritize developing entrepreneurial skills and initiative so that graduates become job creators rather than job seekers.

According to Osuafor, Okeke, and Norom (2010), entrepreneurship education equips individuals with skills to earn a livelihood and promotes self-reliance through starting new businesses. Given global economic crises and rising poverty, especially in developing countries, entrepreneurship education is crucial. It provides knowledge, skills, and motivation to succeed in various settings (Wikipedia, 2009).

The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 emphasizes industry-oriented education and entrepreneurship to develop imaginative, creative, proactive, and opportunity-focused individuals. Skills such as identifying societal problems, thinking critically about solutions, developing products, and learning through experience form the foundation of entrepreneurship.

3. An Overview of Entrepreneurship Education in Higher Institutions in Uttarakhand

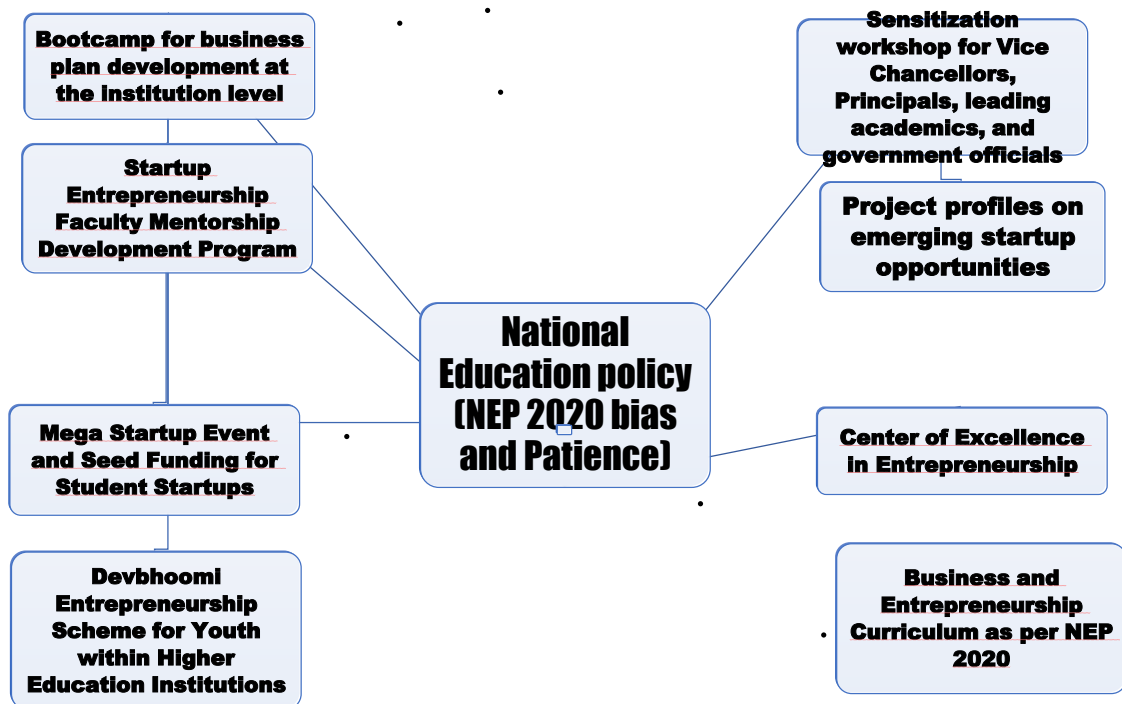
Entrepreneurship education should be a necessary part of the curriculum due to the urgent need for alternative employment sources. Graduates must possess specialized skills to be employable in today's labor market.

NEP 2020 emphasizes functional, practical, and comprehensive education. Quality instruction at all levels should promote value-based and competency-based education for self-reliance.

Research in Nigeria (Akpotu & Agabi, 2011) stressed making entrepreneurship education compulsory for all students regardless of specialization. This policy recognized entrepreneurship as essential for economic growth and wealth creation. Similarly, studies in Tanzania (Ntimbwa et al., 2023) found that knowledge and skills positively influence self-employment.

In India, NEP 2020 has initiated entrepreneurship education in several states. Incubation centers have been established. The Government of India launched schemes such as the Pradhan Mantri Mudra Yojana to revive small enterprises.

In Uttarakhand, the Chief Minister Self-Employment Scheme (28 May 2020) was launched to provide local employment to migrant youth. Other initiatives include Startup support schemes, financial assistance for women entrepreneurs, Prime Minister’s Employment Generation Programme (PMEGP), Deen Dayal Upadhyay Home Stay Scheme (2018), Veer Chandra Garhwali Tourism Self-Employment Scheme, Chief



Minister Solar Self-Employment Scheme, Integrated Horticulture Development Scheme, PM Formalization of Micro Food Processing Enterprises (PMFME), PM Matsya Sampada Yojana, and Lakhpati Didi Scheme for women empowerment. Despite these efforts, much more needs to be done to promote entrepreneurship education effectively.

4. Challenges in Promoting Entrepreneurship Education

- Lack of proper training facilities for learning entrepreneurial skills.
- Preference for stable jobs over business due to fear of risk and failure.
- Limited practical exposure such as case studies, internships, and startup projects.
- Outdated curricula not aligned with digital and technological entrepreneurship.
- Lack of public-private partnerships in curriculum development.
- Insufficient teacher training in entrepreneurial skills.
- Lack of funding and government sponsorship for curriculum innovation and implementation.

Strategies to Promote Entrepreneurship Education

- Teachers should adopt innovative teaching methods and academic technologies.
- Institutions must ensure well-equipped workshops and laboratories.
- Collaboration with industries to design demand-driven curricula.
- Organizing seminars and workshops involving successful entrepreneurs.
- Teaching essential business skills: business planning, time management, people management, marketing, and customer relations. Ensuring sustainable funding and establishing incubation centers under Startup India, Atal Innovation Mission, and Mudra Yojana.

5. Conclusion

Higher education institutions face challenges due to outdated systems that do not adequately promote skill development for self-reliance. Entrepreneurship education equips individuals with skills, knowledge, and competence to become self-reliant even in unstable economies like India. It contributes to socio-economic development and national security.

Entrepreneurship education is not merely a subject but an essential lifestyle of the modern era. It promotes networking, financial literacy, innovation, problem-solving, decision-making, and resource management skills.

6. Suggestions

- Create high-quality academic environments with improved infrastructure and research grants.
- Develop entrepreneurship as a work culture rather than merely profit-making.
- Make entrepreneurship courses compulsory at all levels. Provide practical exposure through small business projects, competitions, and internships.
- Establish innovation labs and business incubators.
- Connect students with industry experts for mentorship.
- Integrate entrepreneurship across disciplines.
- Utilize government programs such as Startup India and Atal Innovation Mission.
- Use digital tools like AI and Canva in entrepreneurship learning.
- Encourage students to solve real-world problems.
- Include entrepreneurship development in all higher education programs.

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