

A STUDY ON ENTREPRENEURIAL INITIATIVES AMONG MBA STUDENTS IN SULTANATE OF OMAN

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ABSTRACT

Purpose: Higher education institutions assume an effective role in enriching the education quality of a nation. The curriculum developed or approved by the ministry, which is an apex body in the country, has a direct impact on the outcomes of the educational system. This paper has made an attempt to critically evaluate the entrepreneurial initiatives developed by the students who pursue their MBA programme.

Methodology: This research work is based on both primary and secondary sources of data and the primary data required for the study were collected through a structured questionnaire from rightly designed sample size while for the secondary data, the researchers have relied on previous research works in the same field, apart from other sources like, magazines, e-library resources, text books and websites. The data were analysed by Percentage Analysis and Henry Garrett Ranking Technique to attain the objectives of the study.

Findings: The results of the study indicate that most of the students who pursue MBA programme are willing to initiate own business to make a career.

Practical Implications: This research work implies that if MBA programmes offered by HEIs incorporate more of practical sessions involving the students in real world problem analysis and decision making mechanism, the students would be able to become successful entrepreneurs.

Social Implications: The results of the study indicate that when more of entrepreneurial oriented master programmes are offered, the country will be able to ensure sustainable growth in the business field focusing on SME.

Result Limitations/Implications: The present research study has focused on only the MBA students whereas there are other master degree programmes having courses in entrepreneurship, creativity and innovation, which are not covered by the study.

Originality/Value: The result outcomes and suggestions would be of valuable basis for any authority who is involved in reviving the curriculum of academic programmes in entrepreneurship.

Key words: *Entrepreneurship; Educational system; Creativity and innovation; development programme; entrepreneurial tendency*

INTRODUCTION

Entrepreneurship is a global phenomenon and the future of any nation in the world will be driven by innovation and entrepreneurship. Both entrepreneurship and education are considered as main drivers for boosting economic growth of a country. This is evident from the recent [guidelines by Ministry of Higher Education](#) (MoHE) of Oman to all Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) directing to incorporate a module “Entrepreneurship: Creativity & Innovation” and many HEIs in Oman have already started to include this module in the curriculum. Though the contexts around the world vary dramatically, entrepreneurship education, in its various forms, can equip people to proactively pursue those opportunities available to them based on their environments. Entrepreneurship is a discipline and like all disciplines it has models, processes and case studies, which can help an individual to acquaint with principles and practices revolving around entrepreneurial capabilities.

LITERATURE REVIEW

[Alain Ndedi \(2013\)](#) investigated some of the interventions which have been introduced by the South African Government through its various agencies to support youth entrepreneurship and explore the challenges, namely policy development, operational and pedagogic impediments. The study found that there are no inter-disciplinary approaches in entrepreneurship training that make entrepreneurship education possible to all students, and where appropriate create teams for the development and exploitation of business data.

[Alistair R. Anderson \(2011\)](#) reviewed the existing literature and conceptual developments to explore how and why universities should teach entrepreneurship. This study raises awareness of the importance of the university's role for developing the right sort of entrepreneurship. It also highlights important pedagogic points that will realize full potential of a university entrepreneurial education. The researcher reported that universities are uniquely able to provide the right sort of education that will produce 'better' entrepreneurs.

[Cindy Millman \(2010\)](#) examined the factors that motivate Chinese students' attitude and perceptions relating to their internet entrepreneurship intentions (IENIs). It is based on the results of a survey of students studying at three universities in China. It explores gender, household incomes, study disciplines, online activities as well as other factors that might influence their internet entrepreneurship intentions. It stated that demographic factors such as gender, household incomes and student status are positively related their IENIs. The students of various courses like information and communication technology (ICT) and online shopping have a significant impact on their IENIs. The result of this research study also provides evidence for understanding the reasons why some students in Chinese HEIs are more likely than others to become internet entrepreneurs.

[David Gilbert \(2012\)](#) examined the notion of designing and developing applied, industry-engaged learning environments that embrace ambiguity and uncertainty in overcoming pedagogical inertia in educating your entrepreneurs and innovators. The study reports that the significant triangulated evidence is provided; which validates the proposed dynamic and industry-engaged learning model. The skill and capability development of entrepreneurship students, as well as the positive impacts upon self-confidence and self-efficacy, supports the approach adopted in moving beyond the business planning paradigm into rapid innovation prototyping.

[Dinis Anabela et al \(2013\)](#) demonstrated that there is a relationship between some psychological characteristics and entrepreneurial intentions. According to him, this may be achieved not only by presenting entrepreneurs as role models and promoting an entrepreneurial culture but also by developing entrepreneurial skills that improve self-confidence. However, the model needs further development through the incorporation of behavioural characteristics.

[Dugassa Tessema Gerba \(2012\)](#) aims to explore and evaluate entrepreneurship education in public universities in Ethiopia. The study is based on the data obtained from 16 public universities in the country. The undergraduate curriculum of each university was examined to understand the focus areas and objectives of entrepreneurship education. The results showed that, the entrepreneurship education is in its early phase of development in Ethiopian public universities. Entrepreneurship education was mainly offered in business schools and agricultural colleges, though recently it started to be included in the curricula of other schools too, mainly technology institutes/colleges. Traditional teaching and evaluation methods are dominant in teaching and assessing entrepreneurship courses in Ethiopian universities. Ethiopian public universities are also characterized by a dearth of entrepreneurship promotion centres.

Earnest [Samwel Mwsalwiba \(2010\)](#) aimed to take stock of existing publications devoted to entrepreneurship education and assess the alignment existing between its generic objectives, target audience, teaching methods and impact indicators. A semi-systematic literature review was applied; using six separated excel data collection spreadsheets/ a total of 108 articles were reviewed. It was found that scholars in this field of study, though differing in number of definitive issues, are covering towards a single framework of entrepreneurship education and accepted that there is a shift from a start-up view to an attitude-changing perspective of entrepreneurship education. It was also noted that there is still a non-alignment between what educators and other stakeholders wish to achieve in educating for entrepreneurship with the applied pedagogical approaches and success indicators.

[Elena Ruskovaara and Timo Pihkala \(2013\)](#) highlighted the entrepreneurship education practices that teachers use in their work and also to analyse how these practices differ based on a number of background factors. This article presents a quantitative of 521 teachers and other entrepreneurship education actors. The results of the study indicated that the perception in teachers have their own entrepreneurship education which skills which are closely connected to the implementation of entrepreneurship education. Moreover, the findings present the connection between teacher training and the implementation of entrepreneurship education.

[Gary Packhamet \(2010\)](#) examined the impact of enterprise education on entrepreneurial attitude within European Higher Education Institutes in France, Germany and Poland. The research also considered whether differences between cultural and industrial heritage can influence entrepreneurial attitude and mediate the effectiveness of entrepreneurship education. The study highlighted that entrepreneurship education has a positive impact on the entrepreneurial attitude of French and Polish students. It was also found that while female students are more likely to perceive a greater benefit from the learning experience, the impact of enterprise education on entrepreneurial attitude is actually more significant for male students. Research also reported that enterprise education has a positive impact on entrepreneurial attitude of French and Polish students.

[Roya Molaei et al \(2014\)](#) explored the effect of entrepreneurial idea dimensions along with intuitive cognitive style versus an analytical style on students' entrepreneurial intention among the students of behavioural sciences and engineering at University of Teheran. The researcher recommended that for creating and encouraging entrepreneurial ideas among all students, a course entitled "Entrepreneurial Idea Generation" is offered in Entrepreneurship Education Programmes at undergraduate and graduate levels.

[Jack Mason and Ana Siqueira \(2014\)](#) stated that entrepreneurship education has made a remarkable evolution over time and number of entrepreneurship text books multiplied and boosted the interest in entrepreneurship programmes in HEIs. The study not only reveals the areas that are covered by existing text books but also themes that future textbooks and research could cover to address the challenges of future entrepreneurship education. The results suggest that most text books provide significant coverage of such topics as the nature of entrepreneurship, business plans, financing, marketing and cases.

[Liv Anne Storen \(2014\)](#) examined the proportion of higher education graduates in Norway who have undertaken different forms of entrepreneurship education and how comprehensive the entrepreneurship education has been. The study indicated that entrepreneurship graduates, to a certain extent, are more interested in setting up their own company in future, but this tendency is much lower than what is found in other European studies.

[Mohammed Ismail and Syed Ahmed \(2013\)](#) investigated the effectiveness of the entrepreneurship curriculum delivered in Malaysian polytechnics. The study identified that the entrepreneurship curriculum in polytechnics is not effective as the students are not equipped with entrepreneurial knowledge, skills and attributes with a practical focus during the course of study.

[Solesvik Marina et.al. \(2013\)](#) conceptualized for the first time the linkage between three elements of entrepreneurship alertness and student entrepreneurial mindset. Survey information from 189 students from three universities in Ukraine was collected. Hierarchical multiple ordinary least squares regression analysis and slope analysis were used to test presented hypotheses. The findings reported that students were more oriented to higher entrepreneurial mindset when they had accumulated more connection entrepreneurial alertness asset.

[Usman Yousaf et al. \(2015\)](#) studied the influence of entrepreneurial attributes, subjective norms and perceived desirability on entrepreneurial intentions. The data were collected from the business students of Quaid-i-Azam School of Management Sciences, Quaid-i-Azam University, Islamabad, Pakistan. In total, 200 questionnaires were circulated among students of which, 185 were returned, representing 92.5 percent response rate. After discarding incomplete and biased questionnaires, 170 were left for further analysis. The research found that students' entrepreneurial attitude, perceived desirability and subjective norms significantly lead to the development of students' intentions to become entrepreneurs. Interestingly, the student's existing skills and capabilities do not prove to be a significant predictor of their intentions to become entrepreneurs. The study concluded that the students can become successful entrepreneurs even without existing entrepreneurial skills and capabilities, provided that they have the entrepreneurial attitude, desirability and support by community.

[Yonca Girol and Nuray Atsan \(2006\)](#) explored the entrepreneurship profile of Turkish university students for their entrepreneurship orientation by comparing them with non-entrepreneurially inclined students. The study indicated that the students are found to have higher risk taking propensity, internal locus of control, higher need for achievement and higher innovativeness.

[Josee Audet and Paul Couteret \(2012\)](#) examined the effectiveness of coaching as a support measure for young entrepreneurs and to identify the factors likely to have an impact on the success of coaching initiatives. The findings from the study suggest that the success of a coaching relationship is explained by a set of factors or 'winning conditions', some of which are more important than others. The results also reported that the most crucial one appears to be the entrepreneur's open attitude to change.

Having gone through the existing literature on entrepreneurship, the researchers have identified that a study of the present nature has not yet been initiated in Sultanate of Oman to critically assess and analyse the entrepreneurial capabilities of the students who pursue academic programmes in management stream. Hence, the researchers have developed an interest to undertake such a study to explore the entrepreneurial initiatives among the MBA students in Sultanate of Oman.

PROBLEM STATEMENT

As entrepreneurial innovation, initiation and motivation provide a way forward for solving present day global challenges. "Entrepreneurship Education" can be one of the best change agents to explore the entrepreneurial capabilities, skills and mindset of the students to make them successful entrepreneur. Due consideration also exists about the importance of promoting entrepreneurship to simulate economic development and employment generation. Therefore, under such a

situation, it is very significant to discuss the entrepreneurial capabilities acquired by the students of management streams in Sultanate of Oman. This has driven the researchers to undertake such a study in Sultanate of Oman.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

This research study is aimed to achieve the following objectives:

1. To assess the entrepreneurial mindset among the MBA students in Oman;
2. To analyse the various skills and knowledge possessed by the MBA students towards entrepreneurship;
3. To determine the motivational factors that stimulate the students towards entrepreneurship;
4. To suggest appropriate measures for enriching the curriculum to increase the entrepreneurial ability of the learners.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

In this research study, both primary and secondary data are involved. Primary data were collected from the students who pursue their MBA programme from different HEIs in Oman. For collecting primary data, the researchers decided to use structured questionnaires covering the various aspects fulfilling the objectives of the study. A sample size of 100 respondents were targeted for the study, selected by 'random sampling' method. Besides, secondary data were collected from relevant international and national journals and magazines, e-library resources, text books and websites.

The data were collected from MBA students of various colleges in Muscat during the period from September 2016 – August 2017. The data collected have been organized, classified and analyzed using a wide range of appropriate statistical tools like Percentage Analysis and Henry Garrett Ranking Technique to attain the objectives of the study.

SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The study has the potential to promote further study in several areas which can bear further exploration. To ensure higher accuracy, the study should be replicated with a bigger sampling frame and the results to be compared with those in this study in HEIs in Oman. One possible insight of this study is to implement and evaluate the effectiveness of the entrepreneurial initiatives and knowledge among the MBA students in HEIs in Oman.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The time spent with the faculty members to get the details about the students for the in-depth interview was considerable. The time spent with the students to collect the data to fill the questionnaire was limited. The graduated students were not given consideration. However adequate care was taken to collect unbiased data.

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

The researchers have analysed the data pertaining to personal information of the respondents, environmental and motivational factors affecting the entrepreneurial abilities; factors reflecting the entrepreneurial mind-set of the respondents; importance of entrepreneurial knowledge and skills and educational system towards entrepreneurship development;

A. Percentage Analysis

Gender of the Respondents

As far as entrepreneurship is concerned, there is a general tendency across the world that gender factor plays a major role in the success of entrepreneurship. Women are, on an average, about half as likely as men to start business and much less likely to start high-growth and high profit firms. This has led to a situation of gender variation wherein female participation is seen lower in almost all the countries across the world. The researchers have analysed the gender of respondents and results show that majority of the respondents are female as is evident from the following table:

Table 1: Gender of the respondents

S. No.	Gender	No. of Respondents	Percentage
1.	Male	40	40
2.	Female	60	60
	Total	100	100

(Source: Primary Data)

Gender of the Respondents

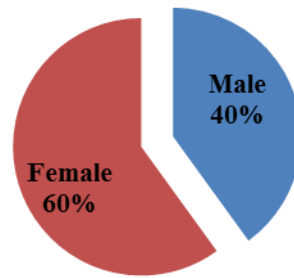


Figure 1

Opinion of the respondents on Family Business

Entrepreneurship is very often portrayed by researchers (Fairlie and Zinman, 2015; Altonji and Ware, 2016) as effective outcome of family background and the influence of siblings. The researcher attempted to analyse the impact of family business towards the entrepreneurial abilities of the respondents and the result indicates that majority of the respondents do not have family business as is seen in the following table:

Table 2: Opinion of the respondents regarding Family Business

S. No.	Family Business	No. of Respondents	Percentage
1.	Yes	33	33
2.	No	67	67
	Total	100	100

(Source: Primary Data)

Opinion Regarding Family Buisness

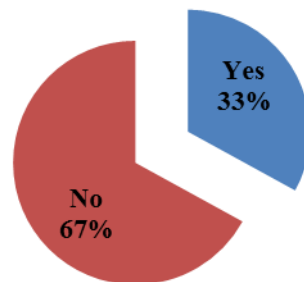


Figure 2

Respondents' Relative/Friend/Mentor as an Entrepreneur

Behind the success of an entrepreneur, the role of mentor is inevitable factor. A mentor is someone with more entrepreneurial business experience than the new entrepreneur, who serves as a trusted confidante over an extended period of time, usually free of charge. An attempt has been made to identify the respondents' relative/friend/mentor as an entrepreneur or not. The result is presented in the following table which indicates that majority of the respondents do have relative/friend/mentor as entrepreneur to offer useful guidance in entrepreneurial activities.

Table 3: Respondents Relative/Friend/Mentor as an Entrepreneur

S. No.	Relative/Friend/Mentor	No. of Respondents	Percentage
1.	Yes	53	53
2.	No	47	47
	Total	100	100

(Source: Primary Data)

Respondents Relative / Friend / Mentor - as an Entrepreneur

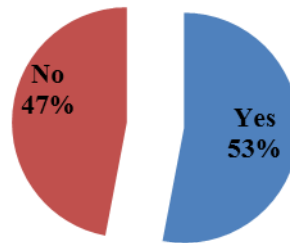


Figure 3

Entrepreneurial development training undergone

'Entrepreneurs are not only born but can also be trained and developed'. Entrepreneurial development programmes help the potential entrepreneur to set-up his own business enterprise appropriate to his abilities and liking. Entrepreneurial development is an organised and continuous process. The basic purpose of entrepreneurial programme is to influence the potential persons and motivate them to take entrepreneurship as their career. Entrepreneurs can be developed through training, education and development. Inculcating entrepreneurial skills for setting up and operating business enterprise can be called development of entrepreneurs. Entrepreneurial development prefers to enhance the skill and knowledge of entrepreneur through training and development. The researchers have analysed the training programmes undergone by the respondents and found that majority of them did not undergo any training programme for enhancing the entrepreneurial abilities.

Table 4: Undergone any Business Training/ Entrepreneur Development by the Respondents

S. No.	Business Training	No. of Respondents	Percentage
1.	Yes	46	46
2.	No	54	54
	Total	100	100

(Source: Primary Data)

Undergone any Business Training/ Entrepreneur Development

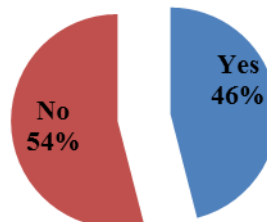


Figure 4

Sources that motivated the respondents towards Entrepreneurship

An attempt has been made to know the motivational sources towards entrepreneurship of the respondents. The details results are shown in the following table.

Table 5: Sources that motivated the respondents towards Entrepreneurship

S. No.	Factors Motivating	No. of Respondents	Percentage
1.	Family member	30	30
2.	Role Model of Entrepreneurs	21	21
3.	Teacher	23	23
4.	Fellow Students	5	5
5.	Dreams and Desires	21	21
	Total	100	100

(Source: Primary Data)

It is evident from the above table that majority of the respondents got motivated by family member the respondents towards entrepreneurship (30%) while the next motivating factor is teachers (23%). Role models and dreams and desires stand to be the third most influencing factor for entrepreneurship (21%).

Sources that motivated the respondents towards Entrepreneurship

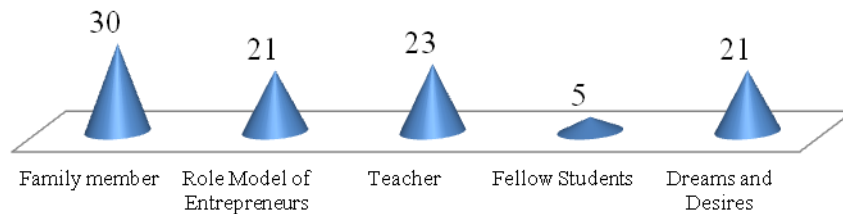


Figure 5

The respondents wish to enter in future business

Choosing an appropriate field of business has a direct influence on the success of an entrepreneur. Selection of a right field of business at the right time ensures the successful exploitation of business opportunities (Henrekson and Sanandaji, 2014). An attempt has been made to identify the respondents wish to enter in future business. The result presented in the following table indicate that majority of the respondents (40%) opted to enter in trading while 31% of the respondents intend for engaging in providing services. It is also interesting to note that 29% of the respondents opt for manufacturing field.

Table 6: The respondents wish to enter in future business

S. No.	Future Business	No. of Respondents	Percentage
1.	Manufacturing	29	29
2.	Trading	40	40
3.	Providing services	31	31
	Total	100	100

(Source: Primary Data)

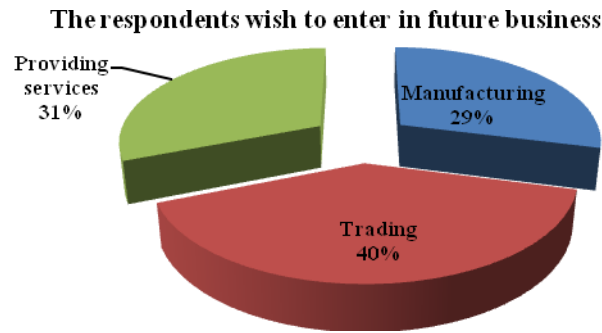


Figure 6

Respondents acquire the Knowledge and Information about Entrepreneurship

All business have access to an extensive pool of knowledge – whether this is their understanding of customers’ needs and the business environment or the skills and experience of staff (Huber, et al, 2016). The way a business gathers, shares and exploits knowledge can be central to its ability to develop successful. This does not just apply to huge multinational companies. Knowledge management can benefit everyone who engage in business, whether small, medium or large scale operations (Lindquist, 2016). An attempt has been made to identify the sources of knowledge and information about entrepreneurship of the respondents.

Table 7: Respondents acquire the Knowledge and Information about Entrepreneurship

S. No.	Sources	Percentage
1.	Mass Media Exposure	36
2.	Through journals/articles/magazines	22
3.	Through friends/relatives	41
4.	Relationship with other entrepreneurs	36
5.	Through visit to similar industries	18
6.	Social participation	30
7.	Imbibed through education	23
8.	Tradition	25

(Source: Primary Data)

From the above table it is found that the majority of the respondents acquire knowledge and information about entrepreneurship through friends/relatives (41%), mass media exposure (36%), relationship with other entrepreneurs (36%) and social participation (30%).

Necessary Characteristics for successful Entrepreneur

Table 8: Necessary Characteristics for successful Entrepreneur (Percentage)

Sl. No	Entrepreneurial Characteristics	Highly Important	Important	Not Important
01	Hard working & Risk taking ability	81	18	1
02	Initiative	45	50	5
03	Desire for high achievement	52	42	6
04	Creative and Innovative ability	59	36	5
05	Foreseeing the challenges and	42	52	6

	opportunities			
06	Motivation for success	52	43	5
07	Marketing efficiency	43	50	7
08	Highly optimistic & Openness to change	33	55	12

(Source: Primary Data)

As is seen from the above table, the study has discovered that “Hardworking and Risk taking ability (81%)”, “Creative and Innovative ability (59%)”, “Desire for high achievement (52%)” and “Motivation for success (52%)” are main desirable characteristics for successful entrepreneur.

Contributions of the existing educational system towards entrepreneurship development

Entrepreneurship education, in any country, is aimed at providing the students with knowledge, skills and attitude towards engaging in entrepreneurial activities. Any academic programme designed in entrepreneurship is expected to encourage the students to become successful entrepreneur and thereby contribute to the economic growth of the country. In many of the developed countries, entrepreneurship education is being offered at all levels of schooling from primary, secondary schools and in higher education institutions (Davis, 2011). The researchers attempted to identify the contribution of existing educational system towards entrepreneurial development and result is presented in the following table:

Table 9: Contributions of the existing educational system towards entrepreneurship development (Percentage)

<i>S. No</i>	<i>Personality changes</i>	<i>SA</i>	<i>A</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>DA</i>	<i>SDA</i>
01	Fostering the entrepreneurial spirit	31	40	24	4	1
02	Encouraging innovative thoughts	29	47	18	5	1
03	Developing risk taking ability	32	31	29	6	2
04	Developing self-efficacy	28	41	20	9	2
05	Behavioural changes	29	36	26	6	3
06	Attitudinal changes	25	40	24	8	3
07	Developing ethical and traditional value	23	34	27	12	4
08	Self-management	41	34	16	6	3

(Source: Primary Data)

From the above table, the main contribution of existing education system in Oman are: self-management (41%); developing risk-taking ability (32%); fostering entrepreneurial spirit (31%); encouraging innovative thoughts (29%) and Behavioural changes (29%)

B. Henry Garrett Ranking Technique

In this part of the report, the researchers have used Hendry Garrett Ranking Techniques for analyzing the importance of entrepreneurship in terms of knowledge and skills and the importance of educational system for enriching entrepreneurship.

Importance of knowledge for Entrepreneurship

An entrepreneur is expected to undertake various decisions at different stages of entrepreneurial activities. Right decision at the right time facilitates an entrepreneur to be successful in the chosen field of business. In the present day electronic era, an entrepreneur is able to develop a dependable database for information which in turn, facilitates enhancing the decision making capabilities of an entrepreneur (Guiso, Pistaferri and Schivardi, 2015). The researchers have identified the important entrepreneurial knowledge to be possessed by entrepreneur for achieving success in the chosen field of business.

Table below indicates that knowledge towards goal-setting stands to be the most essential knowledge (Rank I) followed by the knowledge seeking opportunities (Rank II). Knowledge of current market trends is the third desirable knowledge (Rank III) followed by knowledge of systematic planning (Rank IV), knowledge of innovation and creativity (Rank V).

Table 10: Importance for Entrepreneurship

S. No	Entrepreneurial Knowledge	Total Score	Mean Score	Rank
01	Knowledge to seek opportunities	408	54.3	II
02	Knowledge towards goal-setting	440	58.6	I
03	Knowledge on current market trends	407	54.2	III
04	Knowledge on systematic planning	397	53.0	IV
05	Knowledge on networking	357	47.6	VI
06	Knowledge on legal and commercial issues	305	40.7	VIII
07	Knowledge of innovation and creativity	387	51.6	V
08	Knowledge on internal and external factors affecting entrepreneurship	331	44.2	VII

(Source: Primary Data)

Importance of Skills for Entrepreneurship

Entrepreneurs are innovative and usually have a great passion for commercial development. Unfortunately, passion without skills cannot guarantee the success of a business. As an entrepreneur, one has to possess both these attributes and still has the drive to translate the passion to pragmatic business skills. The success of any organization necessitates more than industriousness, resilience, and proficiency in chosen field of business. The researcher have identified desirable skills for successful entrepreneurial activities and presented in the following table:

Table 11: Skills in terms of Importance for Entrepreneurship

S. No	Entrepreneurial Skills	Total Score	Mean Score	Rank
01	Interpersonal skills	379	50.5	IV
02	Leadership skills	456	60.8	I
03	Technological skills	381	50.8	III
04	Analytical skills	353	47.1	VI
05	Communication skills	411	54.8	II
06	Problem solving skills	372	49.5	V
07	Cognitive skills	266	35.5	VII

(Source: Primary Data)

The above table indicates that the three most desirable skills required by an entrepreneur are leadership skills (Rank I); Communication skills (Rank II) and Technological skills (Rank III).

SUGGESTIONS

It could be found from the research findings that majority of the MBA students in Sultanate of Oman wish to enter into business in future and they are interested during their study period. It is recommended that the department heads and college management can increase the entrepreneurship level of MBA students through self-evaluation method like GET (General Entrepreneurial Tendency) combined with the direct contact and comparison with live entrepreneurs, which may enable the students to make sense of the concept of entrepreneurship and relate it to themselves. It can thus initiate and increase the entrepreneurship among of the students of MBA in HEIs in Oman easily. Also the authorities which are responsible for framing the curriculum for entrepreneurship education in Oman should add creativity test so that the students pursuing for MBA programmes could possibly identify the level of creativity. This would help them to potentially utilize academic support in increasing their entrepreneurial abilities.

It could be found from the research finding that students who are not getting training from the institution are quite insufficient to enrich their skills. Hence, it is recommended to the institutions to increase the training so as to develop entrepreneurial traits among the MBA students in HEIs in Oman. As the environmental forces are likely to impede or enhance their growth, the students must explore their family and professional history and should compare it to that of the live entrepreneur, when their previous social and economic experiences which would help them to shape and adopt the entrepreneurial behaviors in Oman.

More than 80 percent MBA students are possessing risk taking and hardworking ability to become successful entrepreneurs and are very much eager to study the entrepreneurship development based education. It is strongly recommended to the HEIs, to play a more proactive role by introducing a special entrepreneurial short course to students, in particular, to the final year students. This can be served as groundwork for the students that emphasize the pre-start and start-up stages of business creation as these are the most challenging stages when someone embarks on a business venture.

CONCLUSION

MBA students are human capital and are considered as one of the prime important assets in most business and increasingly so, in business society. The potential graduate's antecedents, characteristics and subsequent actions to start up a new venture can be further explored, i.e. whether they are starting up a new venture because of interest or due to certain life intricacies. A longitudinal study of business entrepreneurs, their subsequent motivators, obstacles and challenges faced must be studied as it may yield better insight into budding entrepreneurs.

The importance of entrepreneurship is being increasingly recognized in generating a resilient of Oman economy. This study provides a platform for both educator and government to cultivate, develop and train a more entrepreneurially-oriented and proactive MBA students in HIEs who will be able to launch business ventures upon graduation, accordingly to the contemporary trends. This effort can be achieved by providing a comprehensive entrepreneurship education by equipping the students with a range of entrepreneurial knowledge and skills and thereby to encourage higher interest in the area of entrepreneurship.

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Appendix

Questionnaire

I. Personal information: (Tick in appropriate boxes, wherever necessary)

- 1.1 Name: _____
- 1.2 Age: _____
- 1.3 Gender: (a) Male () (b) Female ()
- 1.4 Name of the HEI (along with the name of affiliating university) in which MBA course is being pursued: _____
- 1.5 Do you have any family business? : (a) Yes () / (b) No ()
- 1.6 Present status: (a) Student () (b) Employed () (c) Own Business (d) Any other (specify _____)

II. Environmental Factors as sources and Motivations:

- 2.1 Do you have any relative/ friend/ mentor who is an entrepreneur?
(a) Yes () / (b) No ()
- 2.2 Have you undergone any business training/ entrepreneur development?
(a) Yes () / (b) No ()
- 2.3 Who among the following motivated you towards entrepreneurship?
a) Family Member
b) Role model of entrepreneurs;
c) Teacher;
d) Fellow students;
e) Dreams and Desires
f) Others, specify: _____
- 2.4 What type of business you wish to enter in future?
a) Manufacturing () b) Trading () c) Providing services d) Others (specify _____)

2.5 Where do you acquire the knowledge and information about entrepreneurship?

S. No	Sources	Tick Appropriate boxes
01	Mass Media Exposure	
02	Through journals/articles/magazines	
03	Through friends/relatives	
04	Relationship with other entrepreneurs	
05	Through visit to similar industries	
06	Social participation	
07	Imbibed through education	
08	Other sources (specify_____)	

III. Factors assessing entrepreneurial mindset:

3.1 Prioritize the following characteristics necessary for a successful entrepreneur:

Sl. No	Entrepreneurial characteristics	Highly Important	Important	Not Important
01	Hard working & Risk taking ability			
02	Initiative			
03	Desire for high achievement			
04	Creative and Innovative ability			
05	Foreseeing the challenges and opportunities			
06	Motivation for success			
07	Marketing efficiency			
08	Highly optimistic & Openness to change			

IV. Factors assessing entrepreneurial skills and knowledge:

4.1 Rank the following knowledge in terms of importance for entrepreneurship:

S. No	Entrepreneurial knowledge	Ranking
01	Knowledge to seek opportunities	
02	Knowledge towards goal-setting	
03	Knowledge on current market trends	
04	Knowledge on systematic planning	
05	Knowledge on networking	
06	Knowledge on legal and commercial issues	
07	Knowledge of innovation and creativity	
08	Knowledge on internal and external factors affecting entrepreneurship	

4.2 Rank the following skills in terms of importance for entrepreneurship:

S. No	Entrepreneurial skills	Ranking
01	Interpersonal skills	
02	Leadership skills	
03	Technological skills	
04	Analytical skills	
05	Communication skills	
06	Problem solving skills	
07	Cognitive skills	

V. Educational system towards entrepreneurship development

5.1 Indicate your opinion on the contribution of the existing educational system towards entrepreneurship development:

SA – Strongly Agree; A- Agree; N- Neither Agree nor Disagree; DA – Disagree; SDA – Strongly Disagree.

S. No	Personality changes	SA	A	N	DA	SDA
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01	Fostering the entrepreneurial spirit					
02	Encouraging innovative thoughts					
03	Developing risk taking ability					
04	Developing self-efficacy					
05	Behavioral changes					
06	Attitudinal changes					
07	Developing ethical and traditional value					
08	Self-management					

5.1 Does the current education system train and equip the students for entrepreneurship?

a) Yes () b) No () c) Can't say ()

--End of questionnaire-----