

1. Innovation and entrepreneurship education in Asia-Pacific

1.1 Introduction

In a competitive context, innovation and entrepreneurship play an important role in economic growth. In the face of economic challenges, many countries hope to obtain a competitive edge through innovation, and to revitalize the economy through encouraging entrepreneurship. Compared with advanced countries in Europe and North America that have achieved rapid and prosperous development within the areas of innovation and entrepreneurship, the pace of Asia is relatively slow. According to the Global Entrepreneurship Index (GEI) Report issued by the Global Entrepreneurship and Development Institute (Acs *et al.*, 2017), GEI includes three major sub-indices, known as entrepreneurial attitudes, entrepreneurial ability, and entrepreneurial aspirations. The GEI rankings were led by the USA, Switzerland, and Canada. Within Asia, Taiwan was listed in the 17th place as the best performer followed by, Israel, United Arab Emirates, Qatar, Singapore, Japan, and Korea ranked within the top 30.

In recent years, entrepreneurship education has attracted increasing attention around the world. Governments have invested significant resources, and are willing to continue to do so, in their desire to promote the development of innovation and entrepreneurship education, especially in higher education. Innovation and entrepreneurship courses were initially designed for business schools, but have since been expanded to fields such as engineering, sociology, and regional development. Entrepreneurship education seeks to provide students with the motivation, awareness, ways of thinking, and skills that are needed for entrepreneurs, which could eventually enable them to achieve entrepreneurial success. Using students' current professional knowledge as a foundation, the core functions of entrepreneurship education are to train students on how to explore market opportunities and to develop their execution ability in order to realize economic potential. According to the 2014 Global Entrepreneurship Monitor Report (Singer *et al.*, 2014), the Basic School Entrepreneurial Education and Training project shows that Asia performed well, with Singapore, Philippines, Qatar, and Indonesia ranked in the top ten. Moreover, Malaysia, India, and Taiwan were listed among the top 30 countries.

The aforementioned reports revealed a considerable gap between Asian countries' investment in entrepreneurship education and actual achievements in entrepreneurial activity. In higher education, curricula and programs that are devoted to entrepreneurship and new-venture creation have achieved significant growth and development. There are many public resources invested in entrepreneurship education, due to the requirements of government policies; however, limited research has been done to examine the results, including the quantity and quality of graduate entrepreneurs who actually entered the economic market. In addition, some scholars believe that entrepreneurship education should help students understand the "entrepreneurial way of life." The concept "entrepreneurial way of life" can help us understand how knowledge is perceived and absorbed by entrepreneurs. This is useful in the design and teaching of relevant courses as well. However, there is a need for exploration and investigation on how to apply different theories to entrepreneurship education courses.

The guest editor of this special issue is very thankful to Dr Patrick J. Murphy and Dr Andy Adcroft, Editors in Chief of *Management Decision*, for the opportunity to organize this special issue as well as Helen Alexander from Emerald, for their support and patience during the process of development. In addition, the guest editor is very grateful to the pool of reviewers who generously devoted time to provide feedback to the authors.



This special issue offers an in-depth examination of innovation and entrepreneurship education in Asia through a wide variety of methodological approaches. Our purpose is to introduce a collection of original manuscripts that discuss unique, real-world applications for innovation and entrepreneurship education, and address the empirical research needs and questions that arise. Each article does a remarkable job of synthesizing results, summarizing themes, examining future research obstacles, and shedding light on issues surrounding innovation and entrepreneurship education in this particular region.

2. Paper selection process

The selection of papers included in the special issue addresses this issue at different levels, from country comparison, education policy in higher education at country level, entrepreneurship ecosystem, to more detailed case analysis at firm level, incorporating all the levels in between. The papers included in this special issue give an idea of the variety of approaches, techniques, issues, and contexts of innovation and entrepreneurship education in different countries.

Each paper is reviewed by the guest editor and, if it is judged suitable for this special issue, it is then sent to at least two independent referees for double blind peer review. A general reviewer selection principle is to select reviewers from the reviewer database of management decision. One reviewer is selected from the local country of the leading author while the other international reviewer is selected in an attempt to reflect local context and avoid regional/cultural bias, if any. Authors were requested to submit their original manuscript by the end of June 2016. Based on the comments of the reviewers and on the individual feedback of the guest editor, authors were asked to make several rounds of revisions submitting their final manuscript by the end of May 2016 addressing the comments from the reviewers and from the guest editor.

3. Contribution of the special issue

This special issue has received 30 submitted manuscripts excluding e-mail inquiries for suitability. Contributors are composed of authors from more than 11 economies, including Australia, China, Hong Kong, India, Malaysia, the Netherlands, Pakistan, Singapore, Spain, Sweden, Taiwan, and UK. In particular, 16 submitted manuscripts were from China (one from Honk Kong), indicating that the Chinese Government is dedicated to innovation and entrepreneurship education and this nation-wide movement and its rapid growth are quickly reflected in academic research.

In this special issue, the following six have been accepted for publication. This special issue begins with a systematic review of 75 articles based on the Scopus database from 2007 to 2016 on entrepreneurship education in Asia Pacific by Wu and Wu. In this paper entitled “A decade of entrepreneurship education in the Asia Pacific for future directions in theory and practice,” the authors look for articles addressing the issue of research trend, country development, publication outlets, leading researchers, research methodology, and teaching pedagogy. This review intends to give an overall picture of entrepreneurship education in this region.

In the second paper entitled “The factors that influence the development of entrepreneurship education: based on the case of China” by Lin and Xu, the paper proposes a theoretical framework by identifying key factors which have an impact on entrepreneurship education in China. The authors categorize key factors into two major groups- supply and demand. An interesting finding is that based on their statistical analysis, they point out that the impact of the government policy is not as significant as they projected. This paper shows that in the context of China, supply factors tend to play a more influential role than demand factors in the development of entrepreneurship education.

The third paper entitled “The impact of entrepreneurial education on entrepreneurial intention of engineering students in Hong Kong” by Sun, Lo, Liang and Wong, built upon the Theory of Planned Behavior model, investigates the impact of entrepreneurial education

on entrepreneurial intention using structural equation modeling from 200 engineering students from three universities in Hong Kong. This paper suggests that entrepreneurial intention can be enhanced through improving attitude toward entrepreneurship, subjective norm, and perceived behavioral control.

The fourth paper entitled “Who is shaping entrepreneurial experience? A multiple case study of Chinese entrepreneurial learning” by Zheng, Xu, Chen, and Dong, employs a multiple case study approach to investigate entrepreneurial experience shaped by incubator, entrepreneurship training institution, franchise store, entrepreneurship training network, and family business experience transfer. This paper based on social learning theory and human capital theory proposes a set of criteria for evaluating the ability of entrepreneurial experience providers and analyzes the efficiency of five Chinese entrepreneurial experience providers.

The fifth paper entitled “The effect of entrepreneur mentoring and its determinants in the Chinese context” by Song, Liu, and Wang performs a structural equation model analysis to investigate the relationships among mentors, mentees, mentoring interaction, and mentoring effect. The authors construct a theoretical research framework and index measurement system using data from more than 170 young entrepreneurs supported by Youth Business China to explore the mentoring effect and its determinants in China.

The sixth paper entitled “A comparative study of entrepreneurship education between Singapore and Taiwan” by Yu, Goh, Kao and Wu integrates the university-based entrepreneurship ecosystem into a four-step method: description, interpretation, juxtaposition, and comparison based on comparative education research. The authors conduct a comparative analysis of similarities and differences between Taiwan and Singapore in entrepreneurship education of four leading universities.

The six articles in this special issue only paint a rough picture of innovation and entrepreneurship education in this region. While this collection of articles could not cover all aspects of innovation and entrepreneurship education, we hope this special issue offers a valuable introduction to this new trend of innovation and entrepreneurship education for researchers, policy makers, and practitioners. It is our hope that these papers will stimulate further investigations into the many dimensions of entrepreneurship education.

Before closing the editorial for this special issue, I would like to mention an observation from guest editing this special issue. While it is no doubt that innovation and entrepreneurship education has gained overwhelming attention in Asia Pacific region and a great deal of effort and resources have been poured into this movement, still, it seems to be a challenging job for researchers to learn how to tackle this issue by conducting a well-designed study on “entrepreneurship education” instead of “entrepreneurship” only. This research subject remains to be an unexplored but promising territory for us to convert this phenomenon into a rigorous, well-grounded study. I am pleased to conclude by saying that all the papers published in this special issue will be beneficial for the whole community of scholars, practitioners, policy makers who are interested in making innovation and entrepreneurship education a real impact on our society.

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