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Reasons and Countermeasures of Lack of Education in Entrepreneurship in Universities

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Reasons and Countermeasures of Lack of Education in Entrepreneurship in Universities

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I. CURRENT STATUS OF ENTREPRENEURSHIP EDUCATION AT HOME AND ABROAD

Developed countries, especially the United States, have explored and accumulated a wealth of practical experience in entrepreneurship education. In the past 30 years, entrepreneurship has developed into the fast growing branch in business schools and engineering institutes in the United States. In 2003, there are over 2200 entrepreneurial courses opened in 180 universities and more than 100 entrepreneurship centers. Many universities offer programs of Entrepreneurship and Entrepreneurial Studies and publish over 40 kinds of academic journals related to entrepreneurship.

Many American universities have also set up a special entrepreneurship education center committed to education and research in entrepreneurship. There are a multitude of scholarly journals dedicated to entrepreneurship education and studies across the country, such as Journal of Business Venturing and Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice. Overall, entrepreneurship education in Chinese colleges lags far behind because of a late start and is in the stage of exploration. In 2005, started late, the development is very backward, still in the exploratory stage. Before the Central Communist Youth League introduced the KAB project in 2005, entrepreneurship education in China remains almost blank.

II. REASONS OF LACK OF ENTREPRENEURSHIP EDUCATION IN CHINESE UNIVERSITIES

Lack of entrepreneurship education in Chinese universities is caused by many factors. The exploration of reasons of lack of entrepreneurship education can

help deepen our understanding of entrepreneurship education.

a) *A Trend toward utilitarianism in entrepreneurship education in Chinese universities*

Utilitarianism in entrepreneurship education is manifested in several aspects. Firstly, entrepreneurship education is understood in a narrow sense and be equated simply as "the short-cut to become entrepreneur". For instance, some colleges and universities restrict entrepreneurship education to the practical aspect and believe that the goal of entrepreneurship education is to encourage students to start up a business, ignoring the great significance of entrepreneurship. Some universities and universities only deem business startup as an expedient measure to ease students' employment pressure and lack an overall strategic planning, showing an obvious value orientation toward utilitarianism. Some universities implement entrepreneurship education only to respond to the needs of the times, and aims to bring colorful elements to the school and increase population. Indeed, entrepreneurship education exists only in name, without any significance.

b) *Entrepreneurship education advocates the ideas of "High Tech, big dream, and overall plan"*

Currently, entrepreneurship education in Chinese universities tend to advocate the ideas of "high tech, big dream, and overall plan". "High tech" refers to the pursuit of high-tech contents encouraged by entrepreneurship education, which means that college graduates should follow the wave of the high-tech industry in their attempt to start up a business. "Big dram" refers to the tendency of entrepreneurship education to encourage students to have ambitious dreams and aspirations from the very outset. "Overall plan" refers to the expectation for a bright and beautiful future at the beginning of business startup and the need of large business scale, wide business scope, chain management, brand strategy and other ornate terms in the business proposal. Elite mentality causes college students and the society to have unreasonable expectations. Once reality goes against these expectations, students are very likely to suffer serious psychological conflicts and feel frustrated and anxious and disappointed at the society.

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c) *Entrepreneurship education is implemented only in a limited range of Chinese colleges and universities*

There is a low rate of entrepreneurial participation and success among college students. Even though entrepreneurship education has played a considerable role in promoting business startup and college students have a strong willingness to start up a new business, there are only a small number of graduates engaging in entrepreneurship education activities and a low rate of business startup among graduates. The self-employment rate of graduates remains a single-digit percentage, far below the double-digit percentage of developed countries. At the Round Table of College Presidents in 2008 Global Entrepreneurship Week China, college presidents in the meeting did not speak well of the success rate of business startup among college graduates. Some president pointed out that even though 59.8% college students in Shanghai showed a strong willingness to start up a new business, it would be gratifying if the success rate could reach 3% (Li Huifeng,2010).

d) *Unfavorable entrepreneurial environment results in a lack of stamina for entrepreneurship education*

Entrepreneurial environment refers to a system of various factors that influence the whole process of starting a new business. As some scholars have argued, elements of entrepreneurial environment are a set of external influential factors during the entrepreneurial process. Entrepreneurship policy is an important factor affecting the business environment, but there exist many shortcomings of entrepreneurial policies. The main problem is that even though policymakers have good intentions, when these policies are implemented in real situations there is always a great deviation from the original intention, resulting in the failure of policy implementation. As a result, entrepreneurial college graduates need to take great efforts to address practical problems, and do not want to receive theoretical education on entrepreneurship. For instance, many preferential policies have now been introduced to support students' entrepreneurial attempts, but there are still quite many problems faced by entrepreneurial college graduates.

III. MEASURES AND WAYS TO PROMOTE THE HEALTHY DEVELOPMENT OF ENTREPRENEURSHIP EDUCATION IN CHINESE COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES

a) *To build a ability-oriented, multi-objective system of entrepreneurship education*

Nei L•Rudenstine, president of Harvard University, once pointed out that "Universities should provide such an education that not only gives students more professional skills but also make them good at observation, active in thinking and brave to explore,

creating and shaping them a complete person. " Entrepreneurship education in universities should cover all educational activities around the school. Every student is a potential future entrepreneur, therefore, universities should set up entrepreneurship courses with different educational objectives according to the characteristics and needs of different students. Entrepreneurship education is an educational means full of potentials, and its objectives should be multi-faceted. From the very outset, entrepreneurship education should be positioned to explore the entrepreneurial potential of students, develop their courage and ability to face difficulties, equip them with entrepreneurial and interpersonal skills, make them good at seeking chances and accumulating resources from the society to acquire the ability for self-development, and cultivate them into brave pioneers with entrepreneurial capability and passion. All these are the core focus, the highest objective, the starting point and destination of entrepreneurship education in Chinese universities.

b) *To construct a curriculum system of innovation and entrepreneurship education*

Entrepreneurship courses should be opened as compulsory in schools. Building a scientific and rational curriculum system plays a very important role in cultivating innovative talents. Schools should increase the proportion of elective courses to meet the interest and needs of students, give them more room for choices, and create the conditions for independent learning. Students should have the freedom to choose courses, rather than having all courses arranged by the school. As part of foundation courses, innovation and entrepreneurship courses such as Students KAB Entrepreneurship Foundation, Entrepreneurship, Creative Thinking, Mathematical Thinking and Innovation etc. should be opened in colleges and universities.

The design of entrepreneurship education curriculum in Chinese universities can draw on the Babson College model in the United States, and incorporate modules, such as Entrepreneurship, Entrepreneurship Education, Introduction to Entrepreneurship Education, Entrepreneurial Legal Basis, Business Management, and Study of Successful Business Cases, as required basic courses. Schools should gradually integrate entrepreneurship education into public courses, blend entrepreneurial ideas into the ideological and political theory courses, and actively seek for common grounds for sharing points between ideological and political theories and entrepreneurship education. Schools can thus enhance students' entrepreneurship spirit and develop their entrepreneurial abilities by processing the teaching content of relevant courses, designing corresponding teaching approaches and building teaching bases, so as to achieve a successful docking of ideological and political theory courses and entrepreneurship education, and make an

educational reform in education, employment and entrepreneurship(Chai Xudong,2010).

c) *To strengthen the training of teaching staff in entrepreneurship education*

The key to running an excellent school lies in its faculty. To implement the concepts of entrepreneurship education and to achieve the teaching objectives of entrepreneurial courses also needs a team of outstanding teachers. Colleges and universities should make efforts to build a team of teachers who have keen insights and pioneering spirit and arrange teachers with profound theoretical knowledge to offer entrepreneurship courses. Chinese colleges and universities should also draw on the staffing experience of American universities and consider teachers from management schools and business schools, who have rich theoretical knowledge in corporate management and marketing, as the main teaching body of entrepreneurship courses.

d) *To guide and to cooperate with college students to engage in entrepreneurial practice*

Entrepreneurship education stems from practical needs and should eventually return back to various educational activities to further promote the entrepreneurial practice of college students. This reflects the practice-to-practice virtuous circle. Entrepreneurial activities are the best way to enhance students' entrepreneurial abilities.

Students should participate in entrepreneurial practice to get firsthand business knowledge and experience, rather than sitting and listening to teachers' inculcation like in a culture course. There are two great difficulties in the world. The first is how to pocket the money from others' wallets. The other is how to learn things from others' head. What entrepreneurship education needs to do is to tackle these two difficulties, which is extremely difficult. To promote entrepreneurship education needs to establish a special innovation and entrepreneurship lab for college students and open it to all students participating in innovation and entrepreneurship training programs. For students who have good project ideas but no fund support, the school should actively coordinate and strive to offer software and hardware support for the incubation and upgrading of projects, so that more and more student entrepreneurs and entrepreneurial projects can come to the fore. Entrepreneurship attempts of college students should not only be a big priority of educational authorities and higher educational schools, but also a cause in need of wide participation and support of the society. We hope that all departments and organizations concerned can join hands with colleges and universities to attach more importance to entrepreneurial education and promote work related to business venturing of college students to a new high level.

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