
Entrepreneurship Education: A Systematic Review of the Evidence

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ABSTRACT:

The purpose of this article is to explore different themes within entrepreneurship education via the use of a systematic literature review (SLR). Systematic literature reviews are recognized methods for conducting evidence-based policy. The particular approach to the SLR used in this study is explained and the article explores the findings outlining a thematic framework drawn from narrative coding. The findings support the conclusion that entrepreneurship education has had an impact on student propensity and intentionality. What is unclear is the extent to which such education impacts on the level of graduate entrepreneurship or whether it enables graduates to become more effective entrepreneurs. The findings also highlight a lack of consensus on what entrepreneurship or enterprise education actually 'is' when implemented in practice.

KEY FINDINGS:

- Entrepreneurship education programs developed in response to government policy initiatives are generally narrow in focus and generally lack adequate evaluations of their effectiveness.
- Entrepreneurship programs developed by universities for commercialisation, outreach or academic entrepreneurship can help to raise awareness of enterprise opportunities for students and shape perceptions, but there is little evidence that they lead to action or the creation of new entrepreneurs.
- Education of students in entrepreneurship appears to have a positive impact on intentions to engage in enterprise, but evidence for this resulting in future action or success is weak.
- Teaching approaches (pedagogy) in entrepreneurship education have not been strongly connected to graduate entrepreneurship, recruitment or demand from employers.
- There is a lack of research into new venture creation by entrepreneurship graduates.

IMPLICATIONS FOR MANAGERS AND POLICY MAKERS:

- There is an abundance of entrepreneurship education programs that have been getting a strong level of support from government funding, but the justification for this investment is founded on rather limited evidence.
- There is a need for much better definition as to what "entrepreneurship education" actually is and what its outcomes should be.
- More research is needed to understand what works and why so that better programs can be developed and governments investing in this area also need to invest in this research.