

Entrepreneurship Education For Chinese Disabled College Students In The New Era

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Abstract

The study aims to evaluate entrepreneurial education for disabled students in China in the context of the modern era. For this purpose, a quantitative methodology has been adopted for the collection of data and the positivist paradigm with a deductive approach has been used for the purpose of data analysis and guiding the researcher over the different steps involved in the execution of the study. Moreover, purposive sampling has been used for the selection of 150 respondents from 15 disabled colleges located in three different provinces of the country including Fujian, Zhejiang, and Guangdong provinces of China. The collected data has been analyzed using different statistical analysis approaches that include independent t-test, variance analysis, Shapiro-Wilk, and Kolmogorov-Smirnov tests, whereas the dependent variables were derived from the mean score of ATE test. The findings suggest that the provision of modern technologies in disabled education institutions, teaching methodologies, educational level, and business experience has a significant impact on the disabled student's attitude and inclination toward entrepreneurial education. It has been provided that the modern era has brought about significant facilities and technical assistance tools for disabled students in China to make them capable of improving their learning outcomes. The study suggested some policy implications for the government and management of disabled educational institutions, and also provided recommendations to future researchers to overcome the limitations of this study in the future and reach more informed insight into the subject of this research.

Key Words: Entrepreneur, entrepreneurial education, disabled students, modern era, technological assistance tools, teaching methodologies.

I. Introduction

Entrepreneurs are the group of individuals who evaluates, exploit, and discover opportunities to

turn them into profitable ventures by establishing business ventures and production facilities. They tend to explore such opportunities and activities,

which enable them to incorporate transformation or newness in the existing business models or strategies, the way marketplaces are perceived and dealt with traditionally, and creating opportunities for growth and productivity (Cardella, Hernández-Sánchez and Sánchez García, 2020). Entrepreneurs are responsible for executing management functions whether directly getting involved or through managing or controlling effective delegation of their authority. With the increasing quest for globalization and expanded growth of emerging markets, the trends of entrepreneurship and especially entrepreneurial inclination (EI) studies have got immense fuel or support from all across the world, which encourages students of business studies to indulge in such activities that create opportunities for self-employment instead of posing burden to the already available employment opportunities in the market (Koh, 1995). EI refers to the willingness or increase in interest of the students towards becoming entrepreneurs after completion of their education instead of joining employment in other corporations. A number of studies have been conducted in past focusing upon the implications of increasing EI in universities to evaluate and persuade their strategies for adopting courses or activities that can enhance EI among university students and enable them to utilize the available opportunities in the market to become effective entrepreneurs. For instance, the study by Krueger and Brazeal, (1994); Hong al., (2012), and Hou, Su, Lu, and Qi, (2019) evaluated the impact of self-efficacy on entrepreneurship inclination (EI), Laviolette, Radu Lefebvre, and Brunel, (2012) explored the impact of role models on EI, and Kolvereid and Isaksen, (2006) evaluated how subjective norms affects the EI of university students. However, the majority of these studies have been conducted on the evaluation of the factors influencing EI in a general context, and, therefore, lack implications of results on specific groups or communities. Dakung et al., (2019)

state that there are certain individuals or groups, who have limited chances to think about becoming entrepreneurs due to their underprivileged socioeconomic status or physical disabilities. Therefore, in order to address the prevailing research gap and explore the available opportunities in this modern era, this study specifically attempts to explore entrepreneurship education for Chinese disabled college students in the new era.

Moreover, in order to facilitate disabled students and ensure the provision of equal education opportunities to them, the Constitution of the People's Republic of China through its several amendments has ensured that disabled students should be provided with equal opportunities for learning and developing different technical skills whether it be related to entrepreneurship or other technical fields of study. It further states that disabled students should be provided with material assistance to make them capable of achieving a similar level of education and other opportunities in a professional context as effectively as can be availed by normal students. Furthermore, Krüger and David, (2020) state that with the advent of technology and the introduction of advanced assistance tools, the learning activities and facilities have been transformed significantly, and it becomes possible for disabled students to learn and develop different skills as efficiently as normal students can do. Therefore, this research study attempts to answer how technological advancement affects the entrepreneur education of Chinese disabled college students. Moreover, the findings of the present study would bring two-fold implications; first, it provides an extensive pool of literature that can help academicians and future researchers to build a better understanding and insight into the subject matter, second, it would enable the management of colleges and other educational institutions to make necessary changes in the facilities and assistance tools that

are designed to help the disabled college students learn entrepreneurship in an effective manner.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Overview of Entrepreneurship and Entrepreneurial Education in China

In China, the task of promoting and facilitating entrepreneurship in terms of providing financing, and strategic and operational support has been given to the local government. The Chinese local governments keenly observe the activities of the key agents concerning the innovation process or bringing innovative ideas, whereas the bureaucrats present in both the local and central administrative authorities construct policy agendas for the entrepreneurs concerning the presentation and evaluation of new ideas, market feasibility of the business idea, the extent to which administrative resources would be allocated, operational procedures and approvals from the relevant stakeholders (Muñoz, et al., 2019). The objective of the Chinese government is to establish a highly supportive environment that can help the existing entrepreneurs to grow and attract new entrepreneurs to help the country in addressing unemployment and poverty-related issues. Ahlstrom and Ding, (2014) state that the economic transition of China since the early 1980s has caused a significant growth in the establishment of private enterprises and encouraged entrepreneurship activities in the economy. The authors also state that from 1992 onwards, the private sector enterprises of the country surpassed the state-owned enterprises in terms of growth and progression. Yang and Li, (2008) state that China's economic transition was categorized into three stages that include marketization, globalization, and decentralization, which caused a significant boom in entrepreneurial activities, and therefore, entrepreneurs in China have faced extensive opportunities along with great uncertainties as

compared to any other developing countries in the region. Owing to such a boom in entrepreneurship, the educational institutions of China have also started offering entrepreneurship education and training programs in order to meet the extensive demand in the market, and also ensure the development and passing out of quality and effective entrepreneurs.

Li and Li, (2015) revealed that traditionally Chinese entrepreneurship was more focused upon the impartment of theoretical knowledge and understanding among the students while having less focus on practical education and building quality-oriented entrepreneurship practices among the students, which causes a shortage of practice ability and enthusiasm among the students during their studies and afterward in a professional context as well. The authors also evaluated that in 2003, a need was felt to make reforms into entrepreneurial education and integrate quality-oriented practical coursework or curriculum so that students can establish better skills and come to the market with extensive professional capabilities to help the economy grow and develop. Similarly, in another study conducted by Shi, (2021) it has been found that, unlike the western countries' demand-oriented model, entrepreneurial education in China is supply-oriented, and therefore, it has been integrated into the national initiatives toward the establishment or construction of an innovation-driven society. The author also evaluated that entrepreneurial education has been made compulsory in higher educational institutions and due to the advancement of technology, students have been provided ample opportunities to learn and polish their skills with practical case studies or scenarios. Whereas Liu, et al., (2020) conducted an evaluation on primary participants by collecting responses through pre-structured questionnaires and performed Chi-square automatic interaction detector (CHAID) approach to evaluate the collected data. The

authors found that there is a medium level of tendency among the students concerning the entrepreneurship inclination and tendency to start a new business. It is also suggested that most of the students were found risk-averse, who raised claims like lack of sufficient opportunities, resources, and especially finances for starting a new business venture. Moreover, Dou, et al., (2019) suggests that three factors have a significant impact on the entrepreneurial intentions and motivation among the students which include the curriculum design, socio-cultural and environmental resources, and regulatory arrangements. The authors further suggested that curriculum design and regulatory arrangements have been found more significantly associated with entrepreneurial inclination, as compared to socio-cultural and environmental factors. However, due to the special requirements for disabled students, entrepreneurship education for these students has remained under-addressed in the Chinese entrepreneurial education context. Whereas several studies including the study by Muñoz, et al., (2019); Krüger and David, (2020); Dakung, et al., (2017), and Maulida, Nurbaity, and Utami G. P., (2020), have conducted an evaluation of the entrepreneurship education for disabled students in colleges and universities. These studies were mainly focused on teaching strategies and mechanisms for imparting both theoretical and practical knowledge among the students; however, the implications of technological advancements and advanced assistance tools have been ignored.

2.2. Entrepreneurial Education for Disabled Students in China

Disabled students include all such students who are suffering from certain long-term disabilities that include mobility disability, psychiatric or psychological disability, mental illness, hearing loss, loss of speech or vision, and other chronic health disorders. Such students require significant attention and special care in order to make them

capable of learning something or making them compatible with the needs and demands of the professional world (Minotti, et al., 2021). Lipka et al., (2020) conducted an evaluation on the extent of adjustments made by normal students and students with disabilities to the higher education system. The findings of the study suggest that students with disabilities usually find it difficult to adjust to the demands and nature of the higher education systems these challenges include difficulty in comprehending the course material, lack of infrastructural facilities necessary to assist the disabled students in learning professional and practical skills, and lack of appropriate teaching methodologies that are suitable for teaching students with disabilities. Furthermore, Han, Cumming, and Strnadová, (2021) conducted an evaluation of the quality of educational facilities for disabled people in rural areas of China. The authors argued that with the drastic development in technology across China, a significant improvement has been observed in the provision of facilities to disabled college students; however, there are still certain areas that remained unaddressed. For example, the rural education system lacks competent teachers that can make effective utilization of the resources and facilities provided by the government for ensuring improved or effective outcomes from the learning activities of disabled students. Similarly, the lack of infrastructure in these areas possess significant hurdles to the effective implementation of quality resources and learning practices for disabled students.

Moreover, with respect to professional and technical education, especially the entrepreneurial education for disabled students in China, Zhang, et al., (2018) revealed that disabled students are most affected by the negative attitude and biased behavior of their teachers towards them. The majority of the higher education institution across the country have implemented rules and regulations to discourage the

stereotypical attitude of teachers and peers toward disabled students, but even then a higher number of disabled students drop their college or university due to facing stress and psychological uneasiness posed by the attitude of tutors and other fellow students towards them. Whereas Wang and Qi, (2020) argue that the sense of deprivation and negative emotions are usually built up among disabled students from their primary school age because of the stereotypical attitude of society as a whole towards them. They are considered useless human beings and a burden on their families and society, which causes demotivation among such students that negatively affects their morale and confidence in their professional endeavors throughout their life.

2.3. Entrepreneurial Inclination

Entrepreneurial inclination refers to the desire or need of becoming an entrepreneur among the students at the college and university levels. Chaudhary, (2017) states that entrepreneurial inclination develops among the students due to both social and cognitive capabilities or stimuli the students. The author argues that most of the time the profession of parents or any other family member who has a sophisticated lifestyle is embraced by children as their ideal personalities, and they tend to struggle or change their lifestyle to become like them. Therefore, mostly children belonging to business owners' families have a greater inclination towards entrepreneurial activities later in their professional endeavors. Whereas Cromie, (2000) argued that the inherent personality traits in an individual have a significant impact on his/her entrepreneurial inclination. The study also suggests that entrepreneurial inclination is significantly linked with the cognitive capabilities of an individual; for instance, some people are inherently risk-takers and bold; therefore, they tend to perform or execute new and innovative ventures in their lives. Moreover, Lim, et al., (2012) suggests that the educational background of an individual also

has a significant influence on his/her entrepreneurial inclination; for instance, business management students have relatively more entrepreneurial inclinations as compared to engineering or any other professional education. The authors also contended that the physical and psychological well-being of an individual also has a significant impact on his/her entrepreneurial inclination; for instance, a healthy and mentally sound individual would have more active concentration towards making up his/her professional life as compared to a disabled or psychopath.

Furthermore, studies have also revealed that entrepreneurial inclination is found relatively higher among normal students as compared to students with disabilities. It is because of the fact that students suffering from certain disabilities are mostly ignored by society and even their family members, which establishes a sense of deprivation among them and negatively affects their self-esteem (Dakung, et al., 2019). Krüger and David, (2020) revealed that during the past decade a significant development has been witnessed in the infrastructure and facilities that are provided to students with disabilities in colleges and universities. However, despite such increased attention from the government and other non-governmental organizations towards imparting equal educational facilities to disabled students, the number of entrepreneurial ventures from such students has not increased at the same pace. The authors stated that it is because of the fact that the majority of disabled students are inherently unable to cope with different challenges and market externalities concerning entrepreneurial ventures. Moreover, Muñoz, et al., (2019) states that entrepreneurial education among disabled students is significantly compromised and ineffective as compared to normal students. There are several factors responsible for such differences that include lack of standard teaching facilities, infrastructural facilities, support from families of such students,

social support, compromised cognitive capabilities of the students, etc. The authors also provided that despite the increasing integration of technology in disabled students' educational facilities, very little change has been observed in the outcomes associated with such students.

3. Research Methods

Since entrepreneurial education approaches are significantly diversified across the world ranging from theoretical approaches to building rational understanding among the students regarding entrepreneurial ventures, linear planning and approaches that focus upon the establishment of student's mindset and activity-based learning that incorporates different methodical approaches to train and teach the students (Morselli, 2018); therefore, there is no standard or consistent model that can be used to gauge the entrepreneurial education to Chinese disabled students in the new era. However, the present study attempts to evaluate the entrepreneurial education among disabled college students in China in a new era; therefore, the ATE (Attitude Towards Enterprise) model presented by Athayde, (2009) has been employed in the present study. To further simplify the analysis an orthogonal or balanced model has been employed. The model assists in measuring the attitude of the young disabled students towards entrepreneurial ventures, and also helps in building understanding regarding the possible implication of contemporary facilities and practices on such attitudes. For the purpose of data collection, a quantitative methodological approach under a positivist paradigm has been adopted, while 150 participants were selected through purposive sampling methodology from 15 colleges located in Fujian, Zhejiang, and Guangdong provinces of China, i.e., five from each province. The sample includes both students and teachers, where 120 participants were students and only 30 teachers

were selected to participate in the study. Responses were collected from both the students and teachers through a pre-structured, self-administered questionnaire, which was distributed through emails and follow-up calls were made to confirm the receipt of a questionnaire and remind them about filling the questionnaire within the due time of one month. Online data collection was performed due to the covid-19 and social distancing restrictions imposed by the government.

Moreover, the entrepreneurial inclination and extent of involvement of the disabled students in conducting entrepreneurial activities have been measured by considering their attitude before and after completing their college education through the consideration of a dummy variable for education, which was defined as education level. Individual experiences of the students and teachers have also been measured by incorporating a dummy variable as business experience, whereas the impact of infrastructural development in the new era and curriculum development have been checked with independent variables like modern facilities and teaching methodologies. Similarly, dummy variables for family background, entrepreneur parents, and type of physical disability have also been incorporated into the analysis. Furthermore, demographic variables were used to measure the demographic profile of the participants. The mean ATE score has been selected as the dependent variable, whereas for ascertaining the disability characteristic, variance analysis has been conducted. Moreover, the relationship between the independent and dependent variables was measured with the independent t-test.

4. Results

The demographic profile of the participants is presented in Table – 1 below:

Table – 1: Demographic Profile of the Participants

Variables	Measures	Description	N
Disability	0	Blindness	10
	1	Hearing Loss	42
	2	Physical Disability	80
	3	Psychological Disability	18
Location	1	Rural	65
	2	Urban	85
Sex	1	Male	110
	2	Female	40
Business Experience	1	No	125
	2	Yes	25
Education Level	1	Before Education	30
	2	After Education	120
Entrepreneur Parents	1	Yes	45
	2	No	105

The demographic profile of the participants shows that about 6.67% of participants were with blindness disability, 28% were with hearing loss disability, 53.34% were with a physical disability, and only 12% were with some sort of psychological disability. It is found that the majority of the participants were having a physical disability, because of the involvement of teachers in the sample, and also physically disabled people are found less challenging as compared to other disabilities. Whereas in terms of other variables, about 56.67% of respondents were from urban areas, and the rest from rural areas, similarly, 73.34% were male and only 40 respondents out of 150 were female, it is because of the fact that mostly females with disabilities are not encouraged to get an education, especially the professional or entrepreneurial education in the country. Moreover, with respect to the other three dummy variables, it has been found that the

majority of the respondent's parents are not entrepreneurs, similarly, most of them have no prior experiences, and also the majority of them have started some entrepreneurial ventures after completion of their education.

Furthermore, table – 2 below shows the analysis of variance that is conducted to evaluate the relationship of the two independent variables, along with three dummy variables with the dependent variable of the study which is the mean score of ATE test. Just like the independent t-test, the variance analysis has also been regarded as quite fair considering the violation of normality, especially when the sample size is larger than 30. However, in order to get a more effective evaluation, this study has conducted the Shapiro-Wilk and Kolmogorov-Smirnov tests of normality along with the test of homogeneity of variance in tables – 3 and 4, respectively.

Table – 2: Variance Analysis

Variables	F	Significance	ETA Square
Modern Facilities	13.182	0.001**	0.032
Teaching Methodologies	10.096	0.030*	0.004
Entrepreneur Parents	0.783	0.486	0.101
Educational Level	18.103	0.003**	0.013
Business Experience	13.936	0.000*	0.006

** Significant at 0.01 level, * Significant at 0.05 level

Table – 3: Normality Test

	Shapiro-Wilk			Kolmogorov-Smirnov		
	Statistic	Df	Significance	Statistic	df	Significance
Mean ATE Test Scores	0.831	150	0.121	0.028	150	0.189

Table – 4: Levene's Equality Test for Measuring Error Variances

F	Df1	Df2	Significance
0.863	38	111	0.483

Results of the multiple statistical tests performed on the collected data have revealed that both the independent variables have a significant positive relationship with entrepreneurial education and the attitude of disabled students towards acquiring entrepreneurial education, which means that an increase in the provision of modern facilities, and improvement in teaching methodologies positively contributes towards the

entrepreneurial education among the disabled college students in China. Similarly, among the three dummy variables education level and business experience have been found to have a significant positive relationship with entrepreneurial education among disabled college students in China. Moreover, with respect to the two independent variables of the study, the mean ATE scores are provided in table – 5 below:

Table – 5: Mean ATE Scores

Variables	Measures	Score
Provision for Modern Facilities	Yes	4.28
	No	3.13
Teaching Methodologies	Effective	4.01
	Non-Effective	3.28

The results revealed that students and teachers having easy and effective access to modern facilities have reported higher scores on the ATE test. Similarly, teachers who employ effective teaching methodologies have a positive impact on

the student's learning capabilities and entrepreneurial inclination. In addition to that, it has been found that disabled students need more attention and special treatment, which must be

reflected in the teaching methodologies of the teachers in such institutions.

5. Discussion

The findings of the study suggest that the quality of entrepreneurial education for disabled college students in China is dependent upon several factors that include the provision or accessibility to modern education facilities, improved teaching methodologies, business experience, and educational level. It has been evaluated that due to the technological advancement and development of advanced assistance tools in the modern era, the quality of entrepreneurial education, especially for disabled college students has been significantly improved. Disabled students need special assistance from their teachers and also in terms of technical facilities that can aid them in learning new and advanced skills in an effective manner.

The study suggests that the business experience of disabled college students has positive implications on their inclination towards entrepreneurship or entrepreneurial learnings, which are in line with the findings of Lim, Lee, and Cheng, (2012), who suggested that students with either direct or indirect experience of doing business have a greater inclination towards entrepreneurial education and entrepreneurship. Similarly, Wang and Qi, (2020) suggested that students, who had any prior association or experience in doing business usually have a positive attitude towards entrepreneurial education. Furthermore, the study also suggests that the provision of modern facilities and assistance tools to the students and teachers has a significant positive impact on entrepreneurial education. Shi, (2021) supports the findings of this study by suggesting that disabled student needs significant care and assistance to learn practical and professional education, which can only be possible by integrating advanced technological assistance tools into the higher education of a country. Similarly, Dou, et al.,

(2019) suggested that the advent of technologically advanced teaching and learning tools has significantly improved the learning outcomes among disabled students in China, which is one of the belling of the modern era for such students. In addition to that the study of Han, Cumming, and Strnadová, (2021) revealed that teaching methodologies in rural education institutions in China are relatively outdated, which negatively affects the learning outcomes of the students, whereas in urban education institutions there is proper training and development mechanism in place for developing effective methodologies and curriculum guidelines. Whereas Lipka et al., (2020) suggested that the education level or prior qualification of a student has insignificant implications on his/her inclination towards entrepreneurial education, which challenges the findings of the present study. Similarly, Maulida, Nurbaity, and Utami G. P, (2020) revealed that disabled students are mostly depressed and psychologically underrepresented in their communities; therefore, teaching methodologies of such institutions should be student-focused instead of curriculum or content-focused. The evidence highlighted from past studies revealed that the findings of the present study are mostly in line with the past evaluations; however, with regard to some dummy variables, past studies have revealed different evaluations.

6. Conclusion

The study aimed to evaluate the entrepreneurial education for disabled college students in China in the modern era. For this purpose, data has been collected from 15 disabled colleges located across three provinces of China through a questionnaire, and statistical analysis has been performed to evaluate the possible relationship between the independent and dependent variables of the study. The findings of the study revealed that teaching methodologies, provision of advanced technologies and facilities to the

students and teachers in disabled education institutions, educational level of the students, and business experience have a significant positive relationship to the attitude of disabled college students towards entrepreneurial education and entrepreneurship. It is evaluated that the modern era has brought about significant changes in teaching methodologies and facilitated both the teachers and students in disabled education institutions, which in turn improved the student's learning outcomes. Since disabled students need more attention and care; therefore, the integration of technical assistance tools in such institutions has significantly improved their cognitive and professional capabilities. It is also provided that the family background of students has little to no effect on their motivation and attitude towards pursuing entrepreneurial education.

Moreover, in terms of implications, this study has brought about two-fold implications; one for the academia by bringing discussion on an extensive pool of literature concerning the entrepreneurial inclination and opportunities for disabled students in entrepreneur education institutions in China, second it has also provided extensive policy insight to the management and administrators concerning the establishment of such policies that can help improve the learning outcomes of disabled students and makes them capable to participate in the economic development of the country just like the other normal students or citizens. In terms of policy implications, the study suggested that disabled educational institutions should integrate advanced technical assistance tools to make the learning and teaching process easy and effective. In addition to that, the government should give subsidies on such technical assistance tools so that educational institutions can be encouraged to implement them in their organizations. Furthermore, there should be countrywide training and development programs, along with the implementation of similar standards, so that

the difference between rural and urban disabled education can be removed.

Though the scope of the present study is quite comprehensive, and findings would greatly be generalized across the entire country because it has considered data collection from three different provinces and also incorporated both the teachers and students in the data collection process. However, still, the implacability of its findings is limited because the study has only considered quantitative evaluation, whereas variables like teaching methodologies and business experience are qualitative in nature. Therefore, an extensive insight might not be taken into consideration while collecting of data from the participants. It is, therefore, recommended to the future researchers to consider a mixed-method methodology for the collection of data in future studies so that more informed insight and evaluation can be obtained. Furthermore, future researchers should conduct a comparative analysis between the disabled students and normal students to evaluate the extent of effectiveness brought over time into the entrepreneurial education practices for the disabled students.

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