

## Students' Evaluation Towards the Malaysian Polytechnics Entrepreneurship Program

<sup>1</sup>Norasmah Othman and <sup>2</sup>Norfadhilah Nasrudin

<sup>1</sup>Faculty of Education, Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, Malaysia

<sup>2</sup>Institute of Teacher Education, Technical Campus, Malaysia

---

**Abstract:** Engaging in the entrepreneurship programs whilst studying will cultivate an interest in entrepreneurship, improve knowledge, skills and entrepreneurial experience of students. Therefore, stakeholders should play a major role in ensuring that students have a strong entrepreneurial behavior after graduation. This study aims to assess student evaluation on the entrepreneurship program in polytechnics. The sample consisted of 296 students from five zones and participated in entrepreneurship programs. Survey design was used for evaluating the program. Questionnaire was designed to gauge the evaluation on institutional dimensions which include the level of support by management, the influence of family and community, the knowledge and entrepreneurial skills of students the implementers. The study found that the students' assessment is at the level between moderately high and high. The highest mean value derived from the knowledge and skills of implementers, followed by management support and the knowledge and skills of the students. However, the lowest mean value obtained from the influence of family and community. Thus, several aspects need improvement by the stakeholders and aspects which show higher mean values should be retained or refined.

**Key words:** Entrepreneurship, program evaluation, entrepreneurial behavior, stakeholders, entrepreneurship education

---

### INTRODUCTION

According to Hytti and O'Gorman (2004), three important objectives in entrepreneurship education are firstly to promote a better understanding of entrepreneurship. Secondly, to enhance entrepreneurial skills. Thirdly, to create more entrepreneurs. Specifically, the objectives of the entrepreneurship program in Malaysia are to develop and strengthen the values and culture of entrepreneurship among students to provide an exposure to and knowledge of business management to provide information about potential business opportunities and entrepreneurship and to encourage students to take entrepreneurship as a career choice after graduation. Consequently, the main goal of the Entrepreneurship Development Policy of Higher Education 2010 is a translation from the country's efforts towards the realization of human capital development of excellence and quality with a thought, attributes and values of entrepreneurship. Secondly, the next goal is to produce more entrepreneurial graduates who will act as a catalyst for economic transformation. Besides formal education, extra-curricular activities are also implemented in higher education including polytechnics in various forms such as participation in entrepreneurial clubs,

entrepreneurship carnival, incubation, automotive entrepreneurial workshops, kiosks for the purpose of business related projects and so on. Therefore, the implementation of the entrepreneurship programs in the polytechnics should be evaluated and explored to ensure that the mission to create more entrepreneurs among students and graduates of polytechnic can be realised. Thus, this study aims to evaluate the institutional dimension of entrepreneurship programs in the polytechnic institutions in terms of management support, family and community influences, knowledge and skills of entrepreneurship among the students and the instructors using the Objective-based Evaluation Model Hammond in 1971.

### MATERIALS AND METHODS

This study used a survey design using program evaluation model (Worthern and Sanders, 1973). The population consisted of all polytechnic students who are involved in entrepreneurship club and researchers used purposive sampling to explore the different view of the student from various zones. Thus, a total of 360 questionnaires were distributed by post to five polytechnics zones such as Borneo, Southern, Northern,

Table 1: Mean scores interpretation

| Mean score | Interpretation       |
|------------|----------------------|
| 1:00-2:00  | Low (L)              |
| 2:00-3:00  | Moderately Low (ML)  |
| 3:01-4:00  | Moderately High (MH) |
| 4:01-5:00  | High (H)             |

Eastern and Central. However, only 296 questionnaires were returned which is 82.2% above the response rates suggested by Cohen *et al.* (2011). This questionnaire was adapted from the preceding (Norasmah, 2002; McLarty *et al.*, 2010). It consists of two main parts, namely the student demographics and four institutional dimension item that is the management support, family and community influences, knowledge and skills of entrepreneurship of the students and the instructors. The instrument uses 5 point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly not agree) to 5 (strongly agree). Data gathered was analyzed using descriptive analyses of mean and Standard Deviation (SD) score using the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) version 18.0. The interpretation of the mean score of each dimensions is shown in Table 1. The overall Cronbach Alpha value is between 0.815 and 0.948 which are above the minimum value of reliability recommended by Sekaran (2007).

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

**Students' profile:** Based on Table 2, majority students are female (65.9%) with parents not from business background (69.3%). The findings showed that most students are in the 3rd year of study (46.6%) while students from the 2nd year was 33.4% and 1st year students was 19.9%. More than half of students are majoring in business (72.0%) while the rest are from other areas such as engineering and technical fields. Frequency of students who have experience in business was 84.8% while the rest never had a similar experience. Almost all the students who studied, 92.2% had a keen interest in entrepreneurship compared with only 7.8% of students who are not interested in entrepreneurship.

**Administrators' support:** The study found that administrator support for entrepreneurship programs is high. Supports given including encouragement and set priority, showing interest and appreciation, having knowledge about the process, manage and monitor the entrepreneurship programs. The mean value is between min = 4.24-4.03 (Table 3). Item 5 showed the highest mean score (mean = 4.24, SD = 0.772). However, the lowest mean scores is on item 12 (mean = 3.95, SD = 0.796). This finding supports studies by Ab-Rahman *et al.* (2011) and Othman *et al.* (2012) in which the leadership style of the leaders in organizational management, control,

Table 2: Students' profile

| Aspects                      | Category        | Frequency | Percentage |
|------------------------------|-----------------|-----------|------------|
| Gender                       | Male            | 101       | 34.1       |
|                              | Female          | 195       | 65.9       |
| Year of study                | 1st year        | 59        | 19.9       |
|                              | 2nd year        | 99        | 33.4       |
|                              | 3rd year        | 138       | 46.6       |
| Major                        | Business        | 213       | 72.0       |
|                              | Non business    | 83        | 28.0       |
| Course attended              | Attended        | 251       | 84.8       |
|                              | Never attend    | 45        | 15.2       |
| Parental background          | Businessmen     | 91        | 30.7       |
|                              | Not businessmen | 205       | 69.3       |
| Interest in entrepreneurship | Yes             | 273       | 92.2       |
|                              | No              | 23        | 7.8        |
| Business experience          | Have            | 251       | 84.8       |
|                              | Don't have      | 45        | 15.2       |

supervision and effective monitoring will ensure the smooth implementation of the entrepreneurship program and will improve the quality and quantity of entrepreneurial activities undertaken.

**The influence of family and community:** Table 4 shows the evaluation towards the influences of families and communities on students' option for entrepreneurship career. They are identified as individuals closed to the students such as parent, immediate family members, close friends or other external parties such as community in polytechnics, alumni, local communities, industries, the government and private sectors. The highest mean score was for item 1 (mean = 4.44, SD = 0.666) and the lowest mean score obtained from item 9 (mean = 3.76, SD = 0.844). This findings implies that cooperations, influences and encouragements shown by above mentioned parties will help build the students confidence to enter entrepreneurship ventures.

**Implementers' and students' entrepreneurial knowledge:** Table 5 refers to the evaluation of the entrepreneurial knowledge and skills possessed by the students and the instructors. This assessment is important because students and implementers must have basic knowledge of entrepreneurship and business management in order to meet customer needs do not rely on others to market products or services and build business networking and to create a unique business strategy (Pholphirul and Bhatiasevi, 2012; Buang and Agil, 2011).

Knowledge of entrepreneurship in this study is divided into three sub-constructs comprise of marketing knowledge (A), financial management knowledge (B) and basic knowledge of business management (C). The highest mean score for the implementers is at the sub-constructs of C (mean = 4.32, SD = 0.495) followed by sub-constructs B (mean = 4.26, SD = 0.566) and sub-constructs A (mean = 4.23, SD = 0.522). While the

Table 3: Evaluation on the administrators' supports

| Suggestions  | Mean | SD    | Level |
|--|------|-------|-------|
| Give priority to the entrepreneurship program at the polytechnics  | 4.11 | 0.781 | H     |
| Encourage students to give feedbacks towards the program activities  | 4.12 | 0.661 | H     |
| Show interest and commitment to improve the quality of the program   | 4.19 | 0.740 | H     |
| Always give credits to all who contribute towards improving the quality of education and entrepreneurship program      | 4.21 | 0.712 | H     |
| Always ensure that all facilities are appropriate and working  | 4.24 | 0.772 | H     |
| Know how to manage financial efficiently   | 4.22 | 0.686 | H     |
| Have detailed knowledge of the implementation process of entrepreneurship programs                                     | 4.11 | 0.682 | H     |
| Know the needs of students involved in the program   | 4.06 | 0.746 | H     |
| Monitor the activities of entrepreneurship programs from time to time  | 4.11 | 0.704 | H     |
| Evaluate the entrepreneurial behavior and skills of students after the activities                                      | 4.14 | 0.675 | H     |
| Have experience in managing Entrepreneurial programs organized by external parties such as Mara, the institute, MASMED | 3.97 | 0.829 | MH    |
| Experienced in entrepreneurial internal program or within ministry   | 3.95 | 0.796 | MH    |
| Experienced working with the industrial sectors  | 4.03 | 0.768 | H     |

Table 4: Evaluation on the influence of families and communities

| Parameters                 | Min  | SP    | Tahap |
|----------------------------|------|-------|-------|
| Mother, father or guardian | 4.44 | 0.666 | H     |
| Immediate family           | 4.24 | 0.740 | H     |
| Close friend               | 4.17 | 0.800 | H     |
| Community in polytechnics  | 4.12 | 0.758 | H     |
| Local community            | 3.94 | 0.790 | MH    |
| Government and agencies    | 3.97 | 0.821 | MH    |
| Private sector             | 3.82 | 0.797 | MH    |
| Industrial sector          | 3.94 | 0.736 | MH    |
| Alumni                     | 3.76 | 0.844 | MH    |

Table 5: Evaluation on implementers and students' entrepreneurial knowledge

| Types                              | Description  | Implementers |       |       | Students |       |       |
|------------------------------------|--|--------------|-------|-------|----------|-------|-------|
|                                    |  | Mean         | SD    | Level | Mean     | SD    | Level |
| Marketing knowledge (A)            | Pricing strategy for a product or service  | 4.22         | 0.629 | H     | 4.20     | 0.607 | H     |
|                                    | Identify target market of a product or service (e.g., through market research)                             | 4.25         | 0.613 | H     | 4.22     | 0.609 | H     |
|                                    | Identify the strengths and weaknesses of competitors' products or services                                 | 4.23         | 0.596 | H     | 4.19     | 0.654 | H     |
|                                    | Overall mean   | 4.23         | 0.522 | H     | 4.21     | 0.494 | H     |
| Financial management knowledge (B) | The process of preparing the financial statements of business (e.g., record revenue, earnings and profits) | 4.26         | 0.676 | H     | 4.04     | 0.782 | H     |
|                                    | The procedures of preparing a business plan  | 4.30         | 0.596 | H     | 4.21     | 0.682 | H     |
|                                    | The procedures of preparing a cash budget  | 4.25         | 0.657 | H     | 4.06     | 0.693 | H     |
|                                    | Know how to manage daily business expenses (e.g., recording of expenses in cash book)                      | 4.24         | 0.628 | H     | 4.12     | 0.731 | H     |
| Basic knowledge of business        | Overall mean   | 4.26         | 0.566 | H     | 4.11     | 0.594 | H     |
|                                    | Identifying consensus in the business  | 4.29         | 0.626 | H     | 4.07     | 0.724 | H     |
|                                    | How to take care of business   | 4.33         | 0.593 | H     | 4.26     | 0.585 | H     |
| Management (C)                     | Have good means of communication   | 4.34         | 0.571 | H     | 4.36     | 0.595 | H     |
|                                    | How to manage time (e.g., the right time to order and add stock trading)                                   | 4.34         | 0.602 | H     |          |       |       |
|                                    | Overall mean   | 4.32         | 0.495 | H     | 4.23     | 0.520 | H     |

highest mean scores for students are in sub-constructs of C (mean = 4.23, SD = 0.520) followed by sub-constructs A (mean = 4.21, SD = 0.494) and sub-constructs B (mean = 4.11, SD = 0.594). However, most of sub-constructs remained at a high mean score.

**Implementers and students entrepreneurial skills:** The appropriate management practices such as financial management, basic management, marketing, organizational management and record keeping by the entrepreneurs are the most important determinant of business success (Zaidatol and Habibah, 2008; Buang and Agil, 2011; Azmi *et al.*, 2012).

Table 6 shows the entrepreneurial skills assessment of the implementers and students, consist of three main sub-constructs, namely marketing management skills (A), financial management skills (B) and basic business management skills (C). The highest mean score for entrepreneurial skills possessed by the implementer is in the sub-constructs of C (mean = 4.25, SD = 0.545) followed by sub-constructs B (mean = 4.24, SD = 0.536) and sub-constructs A (mean = 4.18, SD = 0.566). For the students' entrepreneurial skills, the highest mean score was obtained from sub-constructs A (mean = 4.12, SD = 0.526) whilst the lowest mean score derived from the sub-constructs B (mean = 3.98, SD = 0.573). This means

Table 6: Evaluation on the implementers' and students' entrepreneurial skills

| Skills                          | Description  | Implementers |       |       | Students |       |       |
|---------------------------------|--|--------------|-------|-------|----------|-------|-------|
|                                 |  | Mean         | SD    | Level | Mean     | SD    | Level |
| Marketing skills (A)            | Pricing strategy for a product or service  | 4.20         | 0.660 | H     | 4.16     | 0.647 | H     |
|                                 | Identify target market of a product or service (e.g., through market research)                             | 4.17         | 0.649 | H     | 4.17     | 0.619 | H     |
|                                 | Identify the strengths and weaknesses of competitors' products or services                                 | 4.16         | 0.661 | H     | 4.12     | 0.663 | H     |
|                                 | Overall mean   | 4.18         | 0.566 | H     | 4.12     | 0.526 | H     |
| Financial management Skills (B) | The process of preparing the financial statements of business (e.g., record revenue, earnings and profits) | 4.22         | 0.666 | H     | 3.96     | 0.733 | MH    |
|                                 | The procedures of preparing a business plan  | 4.29         | 0.612 | H     | 4.02     | 0.661 | H     |
|                                 | The procedures of preparing a cash budget  | 4.22         | 0.646 | H     | 3.94     | 0.686 | MH    |
|                                 | Know how to manage daily business expenses (e.g., recording of expenses in cash book)                      | 4.23         | 0.649 | H     | 3.99     | 0.713 | MH    |
|                                 | Overall mean   | 4.24         | 0.536 | H     | 3.98     | 0.573 | MH    |
| Basic                           | Identifying consensus in the business  | 4.22         | 0.646 | H     | 3.90     | 0.723 | MH    |
|                                 | How to take care of business   | 4.24         | 0.632 | H     | 4.08     | 0.677 | H     |
|                                 | Have good means of communication   | 4.28         | 0.642 | H     | 4.16     | 0.656 |       |
|                                 | How to manage time (e.g., the right time to order and add stock trading)                                   | 4.26         | 0.620 | H     |          |       |       |
|                                 | Overall mean   | 4.25         | 0.545 | H     | 4.05     | 0.569 | H     |

Table 7: The implementers' managerial experiences

| Implementers' managerial experiences                                     | Mean | SD    | Level |
|--|------|-------|-------|
| Manage entrepreneurship program at the zone level                        | 4.09 | 0.658 | H     |
| Manage entrepreneurship program at the national level                    | 4.04 | 0.688 | H     |
| Conducting entrepreneurial projects with external parties such as INSKEN | 4.08 | 0.741 | H     |
| Monitor the development of entrepreneurial activities from time to time  | 4.23 | 0.651 | H     |
| Evaluate their performance prior to program implementation               | 4.28 | 0.667 | H     |
| Evaluate the performance of the implemented program                      | 4.28 | 0.603 | H     |
| Overall score  | 4.17 | 0.525 | H     |

that the students and the implementers have strong entrepreneurial skills of all except for the students remained at a moderately high level of financial management skills.

**The implementers' managerial experiences in the program:** Table 7 shows the results of a study on evaluation of entrepreneurship program management experiences of the implementers. All items obtained high mean scores between 4:08-4:28. The highest mean score for item 5 (mean = 4.28, SD = 0.667) and item 6 (mean = 4.28, SD = 0.603). However, the lowest mean score was for item 2 (mean = 4:04, SD = 0.688). However as a whole the mean score of the evaluation of managerial experience by implementer is still high with mean score of 4.17 and standard deviation 0.525.

**Conclusion on the institutional dimension:** Table 8 shows that the students have different views on the role and influences of all stakeholders being evaluated. Overall, the role of stakeholders such as the administrators' support, the implementers, families and communities as well as the students showed a high level of commitment. This is clearly derived from the findings of the highest mean for item 4 (mean = 4.23, SD = 0.429) and lowest mean was for the item 2 (mean = 4:04, SD = 0.522). While for item 1 and 2, the mean scores remain the same with the mean value of 4.1 (SD = 0.509) and the mean

Table 8: Overall evaluation on the institutional dimension

| Items                | Mean | SD    | Level |
|----------------------|------|-------|-------|
| Administrator        | 4.11 | 0.509 | H     |
| Family and community | 4.04 | 0.522 | H     |
| Students             | 4.11 | 0.441 | H     |
| Implementer          | 4.23 | 0.429 | H     |

score of 4.11(SD = 0.441), respectively. This shows that students have a high agreement of the role indicated by the four stakeholders in the entrepreneurship program at the polytechnic, respectively. The findings confirmed that training and intervention courses in entrepreneurship programs play a very important role in assisting an entrepreneur to be more experienced, efficient and skilled (Henry *et al.*, 2005; Ganesan *et al.*, 2002).

## CONCLUSION

In general, the level of student evaluation on the institutional dimensions of entrepreneurship programs in terms of administrators' support, family and community influences, entrepreneurial knowledge, skills and experiences of the implementers are at a satisfactory level. However, there are gaps that need to be repaired and given due attention by the parties involved. It requires planning and immediate action to overcome the shortcomings and weaknesses that might arise. Aspects such as hands-on and practical experiences especially in financial management, record keeping, accounting and business planning need to be taught to the students so

that they have high confidence and possess positive attitude towards running a business in future. Furthermore, the students need to be exposed and experience dealing with the outsiders such through collaborations with local communities, alumni, industry experts, government and private sectors in order to be fully equipped and ready to face the real world of entrepreneurship. Accordingly, the strength and advantages derived from this study should be maintained and refined so that the implementation of entrepreneurship programs in achieving the objective of producing students with strong and quality entrepreneurial behavior a reality.

### REFERENCES

- Ab-Rahman, M.S., N.S. Roslani, S.M. Zain, A.K.A.M. Ihsan and A. Zahrim *et al.*, 2011. Effective supervision strategies in improving the quality and quantity of research. *Int. Bus. Manage.*, 5: 312-318.
- Azmi, A.M., O.N. Hairi, K.Y. Lee and I. Fauziah, 2012. Entrepreneurs success in business: Some critical factors. *Int. Bus. Manage.*, 6: 369-373.
- Buang, N.A. and H. Agil, 2011. The level of business management practices of the malay women entrepreneurs and its relationship with their business performance. *Int. Bus. Manage.*, 5: 303-311.
- Cohen, L., L. Manion and L. dan Morrisson, 2011. *Research Methods in Education*. 7th Edn., Routledge, London, pp: 405-406.
- Ganesan, R., D. Kaur and R.C. Maheswari, 2002. Women entrepreneurs: Problem and prospects. *J. Entrepreneurship*, 11: 75-84.
- Henry, Colette, F. Hill and C. Leitch, 2005. Entrepreneurship education and training: Can entrepreneurship be taught? *Educ. Train.*, 47: 98-111.
- Hytti, U. and C. O'Gorman, 2004. What is enterprise education? An analysis of the objectives and methods of enterprise education programmes in four European countries. *Educ. Training*, 46: 98-111.
- McLarty, L., H. Highley and S. Alderson, 2010. Evaluation of enterprise education in england research information. *Research Reports DFE-RR015*, England.
- Othman, J., J. Lawrence and K.A. Mohammed, 2012. Review of factors that influence leadership styles among top management in small and medium size enterprises. *Int. Bus. Manage.*, 6: 384-389.
- Pholphirul, P. and V. Bhatiasavi, 2012. Challenges and obstacles of small and medium enterprises under a creative economy: The case of Thailand. *Int. Bus. Manage.*, 6: 356-368.
- Sekaran, U., 2007. *Research methods for business: A skill building approach*. 4th Edn., John Wiley and Sons, India, pp: 307.
- Worthern, B. and J. Sanders, 1973. *Educational Evaluation: Theory and Practice*. Wadsworth Publishing Company Inc., Ohio, pp: 157-170.
- Zaidatol, A.L.P. and E. Habibah, 2008. *Keusahawanan dan Motivasi Diri*. Universiti Putra Malaysia, Serdang.