

## Representation of the Entrepreneurship Development in the National Media of Iran: A Qualitative Content Analysis of Payesh TV Program

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**Abstract:** Mass media, especially television can play a pivotal role in transferring the values and enterperenial attitudes to the society through production of documentaries, reports, biographies and a positive image of entrepreneurship. Payesh TV program is of the few entrepreneurship-oriented programs in Iran that has attracted a lot of attention and is one of the most popular programs in this domain. This qualitative study carried out to analyze the representation of the factors affecting the entrepreneurship development from the viewpoint of the entrepreneurs invited to the Payesh program using content analysis method. To this end, 21 episodes of Payesh program were selected purposefully according to the theoretical saturation of data and the interviews with entrepreneurs were analyzed. The results showed that this program has been able favorably to represent the positive experiences of entrepreneurs, especially the role of personal and personality factors in the formation of entrepreneurship elements. In this program, the news and information, educational, identity-making and critical functions of television are more pronounced than other functions, i.e., entertainment. However, another study is required to evaluate the effect of this program on the mind and behavior.

**Key wods:** Representation, entrepreneurship development, Payesh TV program, information

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### INTRODUCTION

Now a days, entrepreneurship has become universal because it has received a lot of attention in all developing and developed countries. For example, the rates of entrepreneurial activities in innovation-oriented economies such as US and Norway are 8 and 8.5%, respectively. This is indicative of the significance of entrepreneurship for all nations and countries. Entrepreneurship development is defined as increased perceptions, trends, activity rate and entrepreneurial aspiration in countries. According to the Global Entrepreneurship Monitoring (GEM) report in 2007, there is 49-57% positive correlation among media attention to entrepreneurship, young entrepreneurship rate and stabilized entrepreneurship (Bosma *et al.*, 2008). On the other hand in today's mediated society, mass media are present in all domains of our personal and social life and reflect on, narrate, follow and analyze various events and socioeconomic issues. Media, with such functions as notification, education, entertainment and promotion of

behavioral conducts, affect the dissemination, repetition and habitualization of a behavior (Zali and Nahid, 2014).

One of the main theories in the realm of media functions is Shaw and Mccombs agenda-setting theory. It states, "media may not be successful in telling us how to think but they are very successful in telling us what to think about". The media are able to draw the attention of the public to a set of definite issues and disregard other issues and problems (Mahdizadeh, 2010).

According to the GEM indices, Iran was ranked 43 in terms of entrepreneurship from among 70 countries and gained the last rank among the countries of its own group like Bolivia, Angola and Vietnam in 2014 (GEM, 2014). However, the national TV programs including bazar and payesh technically analyze the entrepreneurship activities and employment in Iran and have a lot of audience. One of the basic themes of payesh program is talking with the top entrepreneurs of the country. The experiences of entrepreneurs are analyzed in these talks by which the problems and factors affecting entrepreneurship are discussed.

**Table 1: Studies carried out to evaluate the factors and obstacles affecting entrepreneurship development**

Researchers	Factors affecting entrepreneurship development
Rabiei and Nikravesh	In knowledge-based businesses: government policies, financial supports, research transfer and development, commercial infrastructures, social norms, free market, education, state-run programs physical infrastructures
Daryani <i>et al.</i> (2010)	Improving the legal grounds, promoting access to markets and required financial resources to start and develop companies and to improve general economic conditions of the country
Alaei (2011)	Cultural, educational, managerial, financial, technical and legal supports, among which cultural support is of more significance
Razavi <i>et al.</i> (2012)	Educational, personal, personality, supportive and legal, facilitative and communicative factors
Mizanor Rahman	The most important obstacles: Poor government policies, Lack of financial support, Lack of credit and short-term facilities, Inadequate knowledge about conditions, Communication limitations, Identification of a suitable geographical location for business, Credit sale of products, Political problem, Difficulty of supplying the raw materials, Lack of education, Problems due to inflation, Lack of knowledge about the facilities and governmental incentives

Accordingly, the current study was aimed to analyze the representation of the factors affecting entrepreneurship development in Payesh TV program. This program has gone on the air since April 2012 with 140 episodes so far, following such objectives as supporting Iranian labor and business, monitoring the business environment, job creation, entrepreneurship, clarifying economic news introducing the experiences of successful entrepreneurs in dealing with production and investment problems in Iran, tracking the problems and expectations of Iranian manufacturers of the officials, etc. The major question of the present study is that how Payesh program has reflected the factors and barriers in entrepreneurship development.

**Media and entrepreneurship literature review:** There is almost no background information about the relationship of the media with entrepreneurship. Merely, few studies have investigated this issue from which 87% have investigated how entrepreneurship can be promoted by the media and 13% have analyzed the helpful role of media as a tool to promote entrepreneurship (Hang and Weezel, 2007).

The studies conducted by Zafarian *et al.* (2011), FREC (2007) and Ali *et al.* (2012) indicate the effective role of media and TV in entrepreneurship, especially in presenting successful entrepreneurship stories, depicting the successful people and their biographies, displaying documentaries about the problems of entrepreneurs and presenting some TV programs on entrepreneurial activities.

Kokinov (2007) reported the significant effects of experiences, observing the experiences of others, especially the story of successful entrepreneurs, through newspaper and film industry, on the risk-taking ability of the people in stock exchange.

Other studies have generally been concentrated on the factors and barriers in entrepreneurship development. However, no fundamental study has been performed on representation of entrepreneurship

development in the media products. Accordingly, the results of the studies related to the factors and obstacles affecting entrepreneurship development are presented in Table 1.

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

**Sample and data collection:** The studied population comprised of 140 broadcast episodes of Payesh TV program. The “a talk with national top entrepreneurs” section was purposefully selected and analyzed because it specifically addresses the concept of entrepreneurship and the factors, conditions, obstacles and problems associated with entrepreneurship from the perspective of the entrepreneurs. However, the other parts of the program are diverse and involve different domains of economy, not necessarily entrepreneurship, afterwards through purposive sampling, 21 episodes of Payesh program were selected and analyzed. Sampling continued until the theoretical saturation of data. The theoretical saturation was fulfilled at the eighteenth sample and analysis of interviews continued up to sample 21 for the sake of certainty. The unit of analysis was the themes related to the factors and barriers to entrepreneurship in the transcripts of the interviews conducted with top entrepreneurs.

The research method was qualitative content analysis, with a posteriori approach to analysis and classification of themes. The researcher, without assuming any definition of generalization before the analysis, studied the transcripts and presented a summary of the analysis (Mayring, 2000).

First, the 21 interviews with entrepreneurs in Payesh TV program were transcribed and each transcript was given a code, e.g., K1: the interviewee or transcript 1. Then, based on predetermined categories and subcategories, items and statements were extracted from the interview transcripts and written in the second column of the table. Next, the indices (subcategories) and categories (main variables) were inserted in the third and

Table 2: A sample of encodings (extracts of interview 1 and 2)

Codes	Key statements	Subcategories	Categories
K1	“Our father had no investment, we went to market borrowed and 1500,000 or 2000,000 rials from our father’s friends and managed to run the chicken farm. Then, we sold the chickens to marketeers and paid back their money”	Supplying the primary investment	Financial-economic factor
K2	“Up to age 11, I worked more than a worker did; therefore, I studied in the night school because of work at the factory until I got my diploma. I studied at night and	Work experience in childhood	Personal-demographic factor

fourth columns. In fact, this trend helped the exact and consistent analysis of the transcripts as well as achievement of research objectives and responding to questions (Table 2).

### RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The present study investigated how the national TV represented the factors and obstacles to entrepreneurship development in Payesh TV program. To this end, several other factors were proposed including personal factors and barriers (personality and demographic) and environmental factors and barriers (sociocultural, financial-economic, legal-political and educational-skill). In the following, the most important findings of the study are described and explained.

**Personality features:** Entrepreneurs believed that from among the personal factors, personality characteristics such as love and interest in work, perseverance, correct and timely recognition of business opportunities, creativity and innovation independence and risk-taking were the most influential factors in entrepreneurship development. For example: sample 15 said “I had no investment and no chance of favoritism, I worked and saved my money. I started with a small capital. My motto was work, work and perseverance which I like to be the motto of all the youth. I believe if you work hard, you will definitely succeed”.

“Those who challenge the work and are active can continue working and present good ideas. It is not so that they sleep at night and give out ideas the other day” (sample 7).

Also, sample 2 referred to risk-taking behavior and stated “Now, no one is looking after stress. Production is hard. We were involved in this work from the very beginning and enjoyed it. Now a days, people are not ready to take too much trouble”.

**Demographic characteristics:** Work experience, work in childhood and adolescence and having a role model are the most important demographic characteristics affecting entrepreneurship development. About half of the entrepreneurs invited to Payesh program asserted that they had work experience in childhood and adolescence

as master-apprentice and had worked with their fathers at store, factory, home, village or city where they picked up with their role models. More interestingly, one fourth of entrepreneurs were involved in the same job they had experienced during childhood and adolescence but in a different and developed manner. For example, participant 6 said “I learned carpet weaving since I was four years from my father who was one of the top artists of carpet weaving and I was his top assistant. My father was my role model because he taught me all the points about carpet weaving. I have all his books and handouts and use them. Now, I am handling 700 carpet weavers professionally and I have an annual working capital of sixty billion Rials from selling and exporting carpet”.

Another participant stated “I experienced chicken farming along with my father and brother during childhood. I currently own advanced chicken farms with about 2000 personnel and a monthly payment of 20 billion Rials. I am one of the most successful Iranian chicken farmers” (interview 2).

Thus, the efficacy of previous work experience in entrepreneurship was one of the most important results of this study which is in line with the findings of cooper. Cooper found that <97% of new firms, active with advanced high tech, had at least one founder that had worked in the same industry (Drayani *et al.*, 2010).

**Sociocultural factors:** According to the entrepreneurs, family background was one of the sociocultural factors influencing entrepreneurship development. In fact, the invited entrepreneurs believed that, due to large population of families and their special lifestyle, all the children worked with their fathers as master-apprentice after school and during summer vacations. Therefore, the children got familiar with such concepts as money investment, making money, cost management and most importantly role models. As a result, they had more enthusiasm to gain independence and earn money and learned how to recognize environmental opportunities owing to their experience. For instance, one sample stated “we owe all our achievements to our father. He did not allow us to have any entertainment except production work. When we went to school, he tried to teach us to be independent. We took 2000 Rials a week for the work we did” (interview 1).

Social network was another important parameter that entrepreneurs highlighted. Social network or social relations network is a valuable source that includes financial, physical, workforce and information resources, etc. and provides the people with a social investment, giving them credit. The content of social relations including creating trust, friendship and participation among the people affects the formation of their behavior. The norms and hidden expectations in relations make the individuals help and sympathize with each other. For instance, one of the entrepreneurs reported, "My father had no capital, we went to market and borrowed 1500,000 or 2000,000 rials from my father's friends and managed to run the chicken farm. Then, we sold the chickens and paid back their money" (sample 1).

The entrepreneurs believed that failure to understand the role of entrepreneurship and entrepreneurs in the society, especially in the administrative system of the country is a major problem of entrepreneurship. That is, the authorities and people have not yet understood the role of entrepreneurship in stimulating the economy. Hence, there is no sense of empathy and convergence with entrepreneurs among the people and government. For example:

"All around the world, authorities cooperate with the industrialist hand in hand. After revolution because the industrialist were closely tied with the authorities, they were wiped out. This culture is still prevalent and we are actually strangers" (sample 7).

Also, another entrepreneur reported "the entrepreneurs are not respected in Iran. They are given no credit. For example, you have to go industries organization several times to visit the manager" (sample 21).

**Socioeconomic factors:** The interviewees reported supplying the primary capital as a significant factor from among the financial-economic factors. Financing is a method that entrepreneurs use to provide the primary capital for starting a business. This method includes personal investments and bank loans (14), financing institutions (sample 11) and borrowing from friends and relatives (sample 2 and 5).

One participant said "I had no capital to start a business. I was student and my father had passed away. I had only the idea, others provided all the capital. The investors supplied the whole capital for establishing the company. I had even no money to pay for my share which I later paid it, about 10%, from the benefit of the company" (sample 5).

Another sample stated "we needed a total of 30,400,000 rials to establish a hotel. We are four

brothers, we provided some of the money ourselves and got a loan from the bank" (sample 14). Also, another sample reported "I borrowed 1700,000 rials from my brother in law who was in Lebanon. I opened a cosmetics store in Naser Khosro" (sample 2). Further, on participant said "my father gave me 40,000,000 rials in 1985 and I opened a 2500 m workshop on Khavaran road" (ample 2). Moreover, another participant asserted "the incubation center of Shahr-e-Kord University provided me with 50,000,000 rials initial capital to make a small sample of my plan" (sample 11).

**Legal and political factors:** From among the legal-political factors, the entrepreneurs mentioned bank regulations investment security law, bankruptcy laws, administrative-legal mechanisms and cumbersome bureaucracy more than other factors like costs and company registration processes, ownership and copyright rules, customs rules and export-import rules. For instance, sample 1 considered lack of legal support of investment risks, sample 2 mentioned bank regulations and laws, sample 7 reported economic policies of government in production and sample 17 regarded bureaucracy as the factors influencing the absence of entrepreneurship development.

Sample 1 stated "in industry, the producer is not supported legally. If you fail, nobody helps you. Supports are only mottos. When someone wants to invest 40-50,000,000,000 rials, he first estimates how much he can earn if he deposits his money in the bank".

Sample 2 reported "In 1983, the restrictive policy of the central bank prevented giving and extending the loans. Later in the ninth and tenth administrations, a strong blow struck the economy of the country and <360 thousand billion rials loan was given to the early-return enterprises. If they gave my share from this money, I officially pledged to create 7000 job opportunities".

Sample 7 stated "the ministry of finance demands 9% value added tax in cash. How much should you beg to pay part of it later? This is how the producers are under pressure. On the other hand, those who smuggle pay no money".

Sample 17 said "I did everything to establish a tourism enterprise. They told me I had no adequate and related literacy. It took me two years to visit the manager of cultural heritage organization. I had to look for the certificates of two related graduates and give them money in order to use their certificates. Founding a business and company was really difficult in the past but it is easier now."

**Attainment of knowledge and new skills:** The entrepreneurs reported acquisition of knowledge and new skills as an environmental factor affecting entrepreneurship development. In fact, they believed participation in the training and vocational workshops as well as workshops on recognition of rules and regulations to use the opportunities incentives and academic education related to the specialty is of high significance. One of the participants stated “as for education, I always tried to advance in both technical and commercial dimensions. So, I studied computer network and attended entrepreneurship courses” (sample 12).

The results of this study showed that the national TV in this popular and dialog-centered TV program, highlighted the concepts, components, problems, challenges and entrepreneurial opportunities and addressed the entrepreneurial issues from the perspective of the entrepreneurs. In fact in the currently mediated world, the media have turned into a space to represent different problem-based concepts and viewpoints in the field of entrepreneurship, employment and business. This program has confirmed the lived experience of entrepreneurship in the context of Iran. Although, these media and journalistic talks are not deep enough and have not been carried out with precise research objectives, they can be analyzed and evaluated as a very rich media text. This program targeted four major groups of Iranian society.

**Public audience:** are the public who are interested in following the news on business, entrepreneurship, economic development and public welfare.

**Entrepreneurs:** Those who are working in an industry or a business and successful experiences give them more motivation or they hear their common problems from the viewpoint of their fellow businessmen and sympathize with them.

**People interested in new businesses:** This group needs to acquire new and successful experiences and become familiar with various challenges of entrepreneurship in Iran. This program contains experiences and issues that can enhance the motivation of the audience in starting a new business and relieve them from despair and disappointment.

**Policy makers and managers:** The people who are responsible for policymaking and legislation in different political, economic and cultural departments in

order to create and develop entrepreneurship and businesses. In this program, the news and information, educational, identity-making and critical functions of TV are more highlighted than other functions like entertainment.

However, this program has some weak points such as absence of authorities and policy makers in the program to address the challenges of entrepreneurship and attendance of merely experts, analysts and specialists more often. It seem that absence of authorities has made the program unbalanced. Moreover, the program is broadcast late at night (11:00 pm-1:00 am), i.e., at off-peak hours when most people are probably not watching television.

## CONCLUSION

The same as the results obtained by Shojahat, the findings of this study showed that the media play a pivotal role in promoting entrepreneurial issues via reflecting the success stories of entrepreneurs. Furthermore, as the results of Kokinov showed that observing the experiences of others and their stories through the media can affect the risk-taking ability of the people, it can be argued that the Iranian national TV favorably represented the positive experiences of entrepreneurs, especially the role of personal and personality factors in the formation and development of entrepreneurship through Payesh program.

## SUGGESTIONS

The authorities of the related ministries and other organizations are advised to be invited to a live program with the presence of the representatives of business owners to present strategies to solve the problems and challenges of businesses. It is also suggested to develop and expand programs aiming to produce educational content for the audience to use. Moreover, future studies are recommended to evaluate the effect of this program on the mind and behavior. It should be noted that preparation and access to the archive of this program at Islamic Republic of Iran Broadcasting (IRIB) was one of the limitations of this study.

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