

# The Investigation and Analysis of Chinese University Students Current Situation of Entrepreneurship and the Countermeasures--The Reflection from a Special Investigation in Pearl Delta in China

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## Abstract

This research has chosen some students and undergraduates from 35 colleges and universities, which are national, local and professional colleges or universities with different entrepreneurship needs and different educational functions in the same area. The research reveals that the undergraduates or students are in strong desire of career establishing, but without confidence to the future of entrepreneurship. They make choice of entrepreneurship influenced by the factors of family, relationship, local cultural background and the society. There are some bottlenecks to hinder undergraduates to establish their careers, such as no enough entrepreneurship curriculum and training and slow construction of entrepreneurship information system.

**Keywords:** Undergraduates, Entrepreneurship education, Entrepreneurship

## 1. Introduction

The author has been doing this investigation and research for entrepreneurship of undergraduates from 2008 to 2010, and it has lasted for almost three years. The investigation has been engaged in 35 colleges and universities in Guangdong Pearl River Delta according to their entrepreneurship tendency with different needs and different functions in the same area. The investigation and research have been launched in different levels, stages, and planned phases. The author has visited some central cities in Pearl River Delta, such as Foshan, Zhongshan, Shengzhen, Zhuhai, Guangzhao and Dongguan. The author has gathered a mass of first-hand information and datas by consulting relevant information and documents from some government departments such as education departments, manpower and resources department, personnel market and statistics department, external trade department, and also from business associations, the entrepreneur associations, the associations for human resources and the economic development zones; then, town governments. The collected information provides important datas to support the further analysis of present situation of entrepreneurship education in the region.

The investigation has been launched in four aspects:

- 1) Investigation objects: college or university undergraduates
- 2) Investigation content: the desire and awareness of entrepreneurship of the undergraduates, their comprehension of entrepreneurship education; their need to the entrepreneurship service and current entrepreneurship support and practice.
- 3) Investigation questionnaire: "The questionnaire for undergraduate entrepreneurship education" has worked out on the basis of consulting literature and documents widely and interviewing lots of undergraduates. The questionnaire is in the form of closed questions including two parts: basic personal information and specific items.
- 4) Data collection and statistics: Data collection and statistics has been carried out in the way of mailing, investigating on web, living interviewing and personal questionnaire. 35 colleges and universities with their different departments and grades have been chosen and 8750 questionnaires were put out and 8518 taken back; 5796 were effectual, the effective percentage is 67%, including 3197 male and 2599 female undergraduates. The software SPSS17.0 is adopted in statistics. The factor analysis approach is used for analyzing reasons, it analyzes the the entrepreneurship education situation and its influential factors of undergraduates in

Guangdong Pearl River Delta. The analysis tries to ascertain which factors are stronger to the influence, and put out nichetargeting suggestions, tries to provide some recommendations or reference and proposes to the government education departments and universities or colleges which are dealing with the work of entrepreneurship education.

## **2. The Basic Situation of Undergraduates Entrepreneurship in the Pearl River Delta**

### *2.1 The Awareness and Attitude of the Undergraduates to Entrepreneurship*

The result of the investigation shows that 52% students think that establishing career is to create their own companies. 30% of them think that establishing career is to find jobs. 12% of them think establishing careers is just to create new job positions for themselves or others; 6% students make choice of "others". 48% students approve of entrepreneurship activities, they think these are approaches to achieve their ideals and to make their personal value come true; 22% of them think it is just a good choice; 18% think they should focus on learning professional knowledge at school, but not on involving in more business activities and entrepreneurship practice.

### *2.2 The Undergraduates' Desire of Entrepreneurship*

The result of the investigation shows that in 5796 questionnaires, 1010 students in a percentage of 19% don't have any ideas of entrepreneurship; 4173 students express their entrepreneurship ideas at present clearly in a percentage of 72%; 10% of the students have plans to start their careers after their graduation; 1.2% students are having some entrepreneurship or correlative business activities when they are in school.

45% students express that they would consider to establish their own careers after they have had jobs and worked for a period of time. 62% of male students and 10% of female students in all schools have consideration of entrepreneurship.

31% of the students think that the desire of entrepreneurship has not much connected with their majors in school, and the entrepreneurship items have not been associated with their majors either. They think that their majors are associated with jobs but not with career establishment, which are shown in Table 1 and Table 2. The enterpresers and the society generally regard that entrepreneurship needs some basic capabilities such as management, decision-making, communication to guide the entrepreneurship items to a right direction, and deficiency of professional ability can be trained up by employed skillful workers.

Enterprisers and ordinary people usually think there is an expanding space for entrepreneurship in kinds of jobs as art, business administration and relevant jobs. It can be classified by majors, the undergraduates who have established careers are mainly from majors of literature, engineering and administration in percentage of 58%; two-year students who establish carres are mainly from the majors of finance, electric information and manufacturing in percentage of 42%.

### *2.3 The Background Influencial Fctors of Entreprenurship of the Undergraduates*

The result of the investigation shows that 26% undergraduates make their decision to entreprenurship influenced by their families; 15% of them are influenced and propelled by social media propaganda; what should be regarded more is 22% undergraduates make their entrepreneurship choice by the influence from cultural literature and their friends.

44% undergraduates make decision to entrepreneurship with the purpose of earning money, 23% undergraduates think entrepreneurship is a way to actualize their personal value and ideals, and can also serve the society. But 63% undergraduates are not optimistic about the future of their entrepreneurship, they are purplexed by the pressure. But 16% of them are with self-confidence to establish careers.

For the areas chosen to establish their careers (look at Table 4), 53% undergraduates make choice of the developed area in economy to promote to hit the target. They think the developed economic or high-speed developing areas can provide some new business chances and opportunities for self-entrepreneurship. 23% undergraduates choose to go back home with which they are familiar, they think the assistance from their friends, relatives and local culture can make up their lack of experiences and social relationship, and can also reduce the risk of entrepreneurship. But there are 15% undergraduates choose to establish their careers in the areas of underdeveloped economic area and they think that advanture and opportunity coexit, recognizing business opportunities is much more important.

### *2.4 The Opinion on Entrepreneurship Education of Undergraduates*

88% undergraduates are interested in the entrepreneurship taining or guidance courses or activities, and 24% of them choose to take the entrepreneurship course, 14% of them choose to take part in the entrepreneurship contest, 50% of them choose to go into enterprises to practise for their entrepreneurship preparation.

The questionnaire has some detailed questions in order to know what kinds of entrepreneurship knowledge or

assistance the undergraduates need. 38% undergraduates need knowledge on enterprise operation and management; 18% on finance and economic knowledge; 13% on personal communication; 12% on law; 11% on professional knowledge and 8% on business administration and taxation.

The undergraduates think they need entrepreneurship education and assistance in some ways: 5% in lectures; 14% in contest for entrepreneurship plans; 26% in entrepreneurship practice; 21% in entrepreneurship training; 5% in entrepreneurship consultation; 29% need to be helped to apply entrepreneurship fund and professional support.

About entrepreneurship information channels (look at the Figure 2), 73% undergraduates occasionally browse some websites or web-forums about entrepreneurship information; only 6% undergraduates often look through some websites of entrepreneurship. It represents clearly that there are few successful entrepreneurship websites or web-forums, so it is a potential market to provide entrepreneurship information service.

Furthermore, 83% undergraduates are not quite sure about the employing training organs in Guangdong, only 6% of them know some organs. It accounts for that there are few entrepreneurship and employing training organs trusted by the undergraduates, on the other hand, the full-brown and normative employing training and serving organs and markets have not been set up thoroughly in Pearl River Delta yet. It is a great eager to build up some entrepreneurship training and serving organs, which can have educating function and market potential.

### *2.5 The Need of Entrepreneurship Conditions from the Undergraduates*

According to the research done before, a lack of starting fund is one of the most important reason of hindering entrepreneurship process. Therefore, in the second questionnaire, the author has chosen 2,000 samples and asked the undergraduates about their need of entrepreneurship by putting forward an assumption of providing special entrepreneurship policy and national or local government concessionary loan. The data of the investigation reveals that the undergraduates who have desire to establish their careers are in the percentage of 50.3%; the more educated the undergraduates are, the less strong attitude to establish their careers, the less educated the undergraduates are, the stronger desire and passion of entrepreneurship they have, and it is more possible for them to make choices to establish careers. (Look at the Table 5, 6)

It is worth to notice that the undergraduates give favourable comment to the entrepreneurship guidance, policy dissemination, opinion guidance done by the government. But they don't give equal choice on the item of "risk-taking investment" and "item guidance" done by the government. Comparatively speaking, the more educated the students are, the more satisfied with the government supporting they are.

The investigation reveals that the Pearl River Delta is located in the economic developed area in China, it has district advantages of being contiguous to Hongkong and Macao, and it is the first area to have set up open-economic system and become the most wide-opened regional economic area and an important open window to the outside world. It is a highly assembled area with huge population and lots economic development constituents; urbanization is developing in high speed; a group of modern cities have been formed with Guangdong characteristics, and there are a great number of enterprises in the area with a good atmosphere of economy and entrepreneurship.

## **3. Result and Analysis**

### *3.1 The Result of Investigation on the Awareness and Attitude of the Undergraduates to Entrepreneurship*

The investigation has revealed that being affected by the financial crisis nearly 50% students have become more rational and have been inclined to establish their own careers for making their values come true when some universities have put more attention to entrepreneurship education and entrepreneurship knowledge.

### *3.2 The Result of Investigation on the Desire of the Undergraduates to Entrepreneurship*

We can find out that most (above 70%) students are concerned about and eager to know entrepreneurship, but there are only 10% of them want to establish their careers when they graduate. It reveals that self-entrepreneurship is not the main choice by the undergraduates and that male students have much stronger desire than the female students to establish their own careers, and this disparity is huge.

### *3.3 The Undergraduates Who Make Decision to Entrepreneurship are Influenced by Their Families, Friends and by the Factors of Society, Culture and Media*

The background factors of families, culture, friends and relatives are nearly the same. These factors are relevant to the influence of local culture, family business in the area where the undergraduates are born and grow up. Especially, by Guangdong cultural influence of being realistic and mercantilistic in Pearl River Delta, and the entrepreneurs are bold in adventure and in creation. The profound cultural and social entrepreneurship atmosphere has exerted a favourable influence on the undergraduates to being with awareness of entrepreneurship.

### *3.4 The Undergraduates' Demand on Entrepreneurship Education*

The result of the investigation shows that over 60% undergraduates expect to get some relevant guidance and training for promoting their entrepreneurship quality and capability when they make decision to establish careers. 33% undergraduates think they need financing support, they hope to choose entrepreneurship curriculum for achieving more academic credits, achieving more knowledge, assisting themselves to establish careers, promoting their personal qualities. The undergraduates especially need the knowledge on enterprise operation and management.

### *3.5 The Undergraduates' Estimation on Entrepreneurship Conditions*

The undergraduates have different consideration on the need of situational conditions. The investigation shows that the first four needed conditions are favorable policy support from the government, family and relative support, sufficient capital and capacities needed for entrepreneurship. The people who have much more educational background take more attention on the capability of entrepreneurship and team-building; the people who have got less educational background take more attention on capital support, family, society, government and professional entrepreneurship guidance organs.

Generally, the investigation reveals that the undergraduates in the Delta have strong desire to establish careers, but they are lacking of confidence to their future. They choose to establish careers by the influence from their families, relatives, by local culture and society; the entrepreneurship education and training are deficient, the factors that the entrepreneurship service is lacking and the entrepreneurship information exchange system is slow in a process of building up are turning into some bottlenecks for the undergraduates to establish their careers.

Therefore, the research puts out some advice in some aspects with the purpose of promoting the development of Chinese university entrepreneurship education by combining the development of Chinese higher education and present university entrepreneurship education.

## **4. Recommendations on the Development of University Entrepreneurship Education**

### *4.1 Setting Goals of University Entrepreneurship Education according to Time Periods*

In our country, universities usually take note of entrepreneurship education in the period of coming graduation and it becomes a kind of emergency dealing education. Some universities regard the entrepreneurship education in narrow-minded as providing education and training for the undergraduates' practical entrepreneurship; and they don't take enough attention to entrepreneurship education because they think most undergraduates don't have good conditions and opportunities to establish their careers. Under such circumstances, the personality characteristics and intelligence factors needed by entrepreneurship are difficult to cultivate. Therefore, entrepreneurship education in China should set goals from the period of primary school to the period of postgraduate, and set certain goals in different periods. For instance, in the period of compulsory education, it is mainly to train the students to have idea of entrepreneurship and to gain basic skills of entrepreneurship. In non-compulsory period, the training target should be to assist the students to gain some methods of exploiting market and to have certain psychological quality and practical capacity of entrepreneurship.

University entrepreneurship education should set up new teaching idea as "to put students centered, to train entrepreneurship quality first and to aim at innovating education", and should promote the process of incorporating innovation education with entrepreneurship education, set up and perfect the target system of entrepreneurship education, improve classroom teaching methods, renew teaching content. Universities should carry out entrepreneurship education gradually and orderly in different levels in order to train the students being with pioneering and innovating spirit or awareness and with entrepreneurship idea, quality and skills. It is helpful to organize all kinds of entrepreneurship education activities to train students to get to the target, and cultivate a number of innovating talents for the development of the country and society.

### *4.2 Building up a Cross-Promotion Mode of University Entrepreneurship Education and Local Economic Development According to Local Conditions*

Chinese universities have been keeping traditional education mode which is mainly to impart knowledge all the time and the students have little chance to give full play to their initiative. Therefore, classroom teaching and social practice must fall together closely to get actual effect in entrepreneurship education in Chinese universities, and the development of higher education and society should be carried out cooperatively by getting to the target of entrepreneurship education. Different colleges and universities have different educational targets. Though they have similarity of imparting all kinds of knowledge to undergraduates, the different types or levels of colleges or universities share different entrepreneurship educational targets or different curriculum systems. It is proved by practice that universities should explore and establish their entrepreneurship educational targets which are cross-promoted with local economy and society.

#### 4.3 Actualize Dynamic University Entrepreneurship Educating Mode

The fundamentals of dynamic teaching mode are: analyzing the graduates' needs of knowledge, capacity and desire, adjusting teaching strategies according to the information of students' learning activities, tutoring, homework, testing, practising and the feedback from the undergraduates. The core of the curriculum is to improve the students' learning skills in the first place, to follow the educating and teaching ideas of people being oriented and to carry out the teaching principle of correlating the theory with practice. The entrepreneurship curriculum can be put into practice in three teaching methods: teaching theory in the classroom by following the teaching schedule, activities after class and emulational practice. In teaching process both teachers and students should be prompted to bring their initiative and creativity into play. The students should carry out some activities as self-analysis, business searching, social practice and investigation, group discussion and team training, interviewing simulation and entrepreneurship simulation. The entrepreneurship education teachers can come from inside and outside of school, professional teachers, technicians, trainers are from colleges or universities; the government officials and staff are from any departments of government who give lectures on entrepreneurship policies or regulations, formality of running affairs; the staff from financial institutions can give lectures on financial knowledge as loan and fund-raising; enterprisers can give lectures on how to establish careers.

#### 4.4 Construct University Entrepreneurship Cultural Atmosphere

It is necessary to use the campus media such as campus web, campus broadcasting system, bulletin boards to spread entrepreneurship knowledge among the students; to praise good undergraduate examples of entrepreneurship; to encourage students to be bold in entrepreneurship and practice. It is necessary to carry out kinds of effective practical activities such as contests for entrepreneurship schedules, lectures and forums on entrepreneurship to make everyone know about the idea and value of entrepreneurship education. It is necessary to raise the undergraduates' interest in entrepreneurship and to cultivate their entrepreneurship awareness and spirit, improve their entrepreneurship quality and skills.

#### 4.5 Engender a Multi-Principle Entrepreneurship Union of Universities, Government, Enterprises and the Society

It is necessary to build up a cooperative system among universities on entrepreneurship education, and to share teaching resources, practice bases and service information effectively. It is advantageous to some colleges or universities which are far from the developed areas to gain equal entrepreneurship resources and financial aids and to avoid wasting resources and to lighten the burden on the schools. A multi-principle union of universities, government, enterprises and the society can integrate all kinds of social resources, set up a nice entrepreneurship circumstance to push the development of university entrepreneurship education.

#### 4.6 Establish a Multi, Scientific and Effective Entrepreneurship Education Evaluation System

A perfect evaluation system is either a scientific management or a nice policy guidance. It is comparatively steady and benefit to the development of entrepreneurship education. Chinese entrepreneurship education has grown up from researching stage to developing stage, and it is important to set up a relevant evaluation system. It is essential to set up evaluating methods, criteria and the way of evaluating feedback. There are three evaluation aspects: first, the content of evaluation including the level of learned knowledge and formed skills; second, the focus of evaluation is a combination of evaluating process and result, and it lays particular stress to the process; third, the method of evaluation is a combination of being quantitative and qualitative, the level of knowledge can be evaluated in quantitative way and level of skills in qualitative way.

The perfect evaluation system should not be limited in the campus but set up a long-term evaluation and detection system by multi-body as government, enterprises, society, to evaluate the practical effect of entrepreneurship education and relevant work. Therefore the universities can adjust their entrepreneurship education schedules according to the need of the society to make Chinese university entrepreneurship education be with pertinence and effectiveness in prescribing and leading the development of entrepreneurship education.

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Table 1. Background factors of choosing entrepreneurship for undergraduates

Content	Background factors for choosing entrepreneurship				Purpose for entrepreneurship	
	Family effect	Cultural back ground	Friend effect	Society and media	Earn money	Being intelligence Serve for the society
Percentage	26%	22%	22%	15%	44%	23%

Table 2. Investigation on entrepreneurship website and forum

Content		Amount ( person )	Percentage
Browse entrepreneurship websites or forums frequently	Not	1217	21%
	Occasionally	4231	73%
	Often	348	6%

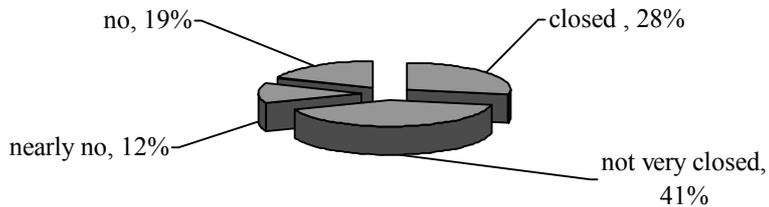


Figure 1. Comparison of relationship between entrepreneurship desire and majors

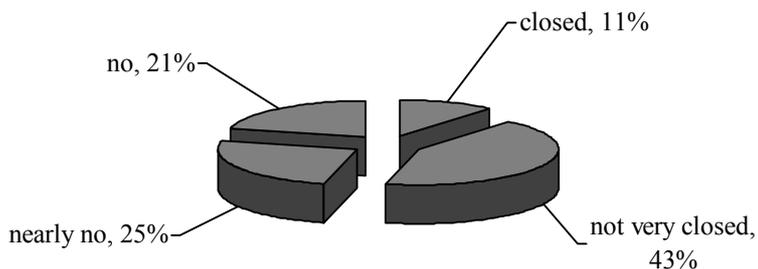


Figure 2. Comparison of relationship between entrepreneurship items and majors

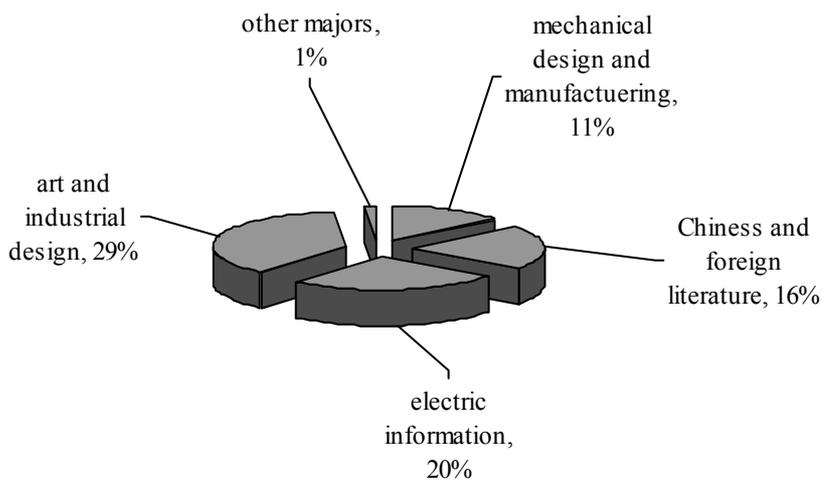


Figure 3. Types of majors with closed relationship of entrepreneurship

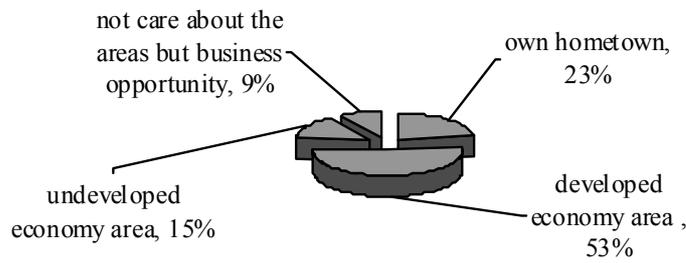


Figure 4. The areas undergraduates to choose for entrepreneurship (%)

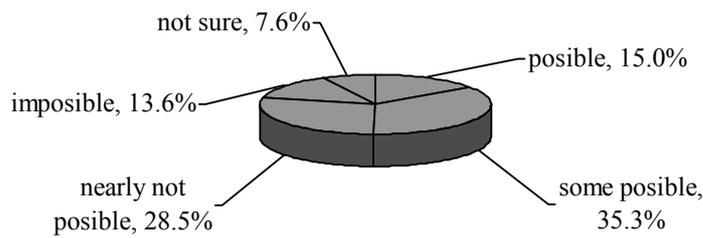


Figure 5. Undergraduates' attitude for entrepreneurship when provided by the support of entrepreneurship fund

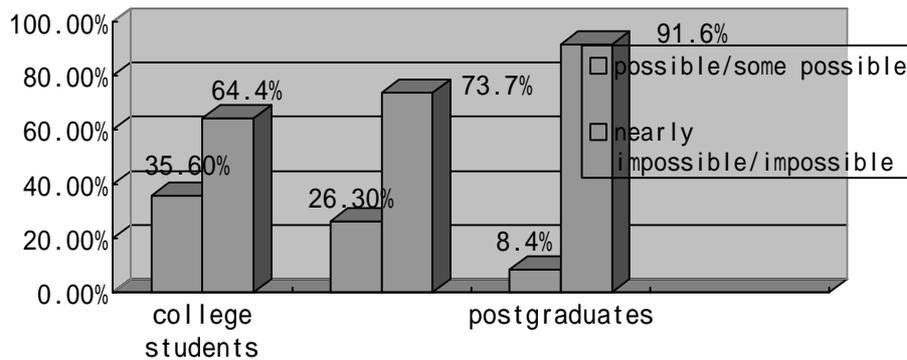


Figure 6. Attitudes of different education background students when provided by the support of entrepreneurship fund