

Research Paper

Surveying the Challenges in Realization of Rural Women's Business Ideas

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ABSTRACT

In recent years, the Vocational Training Center has played an important role in realizing the ideas of villagers, but there is a bulk of evidence to suggest that only a few of these ideas have reached an operational stage. This study aims at the challenges in operating business ideas from the viewpoint of female rural students. The research method was qualitative and based on a fundamental theory. The statistical population consisted of rural women and girls participating in the courses held by the technical and vocational organization of *Kermanshah* province. Fifty of these people were selected through qualitative purposeful sampling. The data were collected through participatory and non-participatory interviews, individual interviews, and the formation of 10 groups. The findings of the research showed that the expertise and experience required for making a business plan, marketing, knowledge of laws, lack of personal funds for investment, lack of access to information and information resources, lack of comprehensive support from the beginning to the end of the process of idea operationalization, low risk-taking, fear of failure, and family barriers are the most important challenges for operating business ideas.

Key words:

Skill training, Operationalization, Rural areas, Entrepreneurship

Extended Abstract

1. Introduction

In recent years, the Vocational Training Center has played an important role to make the ideas of villagers operational, but numerous pieces of evidence suggest that just a few of those ideas have reached an operational stage. To delve into this issue,

the present research examines the challenges of operating business ideas from the point of view of female rural students.

2. Methodology

The research was conducted by a qualitative methodology based on a fundamental theory. The study population included 50 rural women and girls attending the training courses held by the technical and professional organiza-

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tion of *Kermanshah* province. The participants were selected through the qualitative targeted sampling method. The sampling continued until theoretical saturation was reached and repeated information was provided by the participants. The data were collected through participatory and non-participatory interviews, individual interviews and the formation of 10 groups.

3. Results

The data were analyzed in three stages including open coding, axial coding and selective coding. In this regard, first, from the original interviews, the code related to the topic was identified. Then, in a continuous comparison of several codes, one concept was extracted. In this way, other codes became concepts until 42 concepts were finally obtained. In the course of open coding, the obtained concepts were carefully examined and compared in terms of their similarities and differences. The concepts that were essentially the same or semantically related were identified and grouped in categories. Then, from the extracted categories, one appeared as a central, or nuclear, category which, along with 23 others, formed the components of the underlying theory derived from the research. Subsequently, since the task of linking the main categories and the secondary ones to the axial coding process was complicated and difficult, the researchers used a paradigm model to sort them out and structure the relationships that emerged. In this way, by identifying the features, dimensions and patterns involved, the framework and the initial structure of the paradigm model were provided. The paradigm components in this study included phenomena, causative conditions, background conditions, interventional conditions, actions / reactions, and outcomes.

According to the findings, the main reason for the failure of job creation by the technical and vocational organization was that the ideas were not operationalized. Indeed, the problem arose from the gap between the ideas and action.

This study was also partly given to the analysis of background conditions (e.g. personal and family limitations, low-level skills, literacy and adequate experience, multi-tasking of rural women, low risk tolerance and fear of failure, rural women's isolation, lack of self-confidence, dependence and lack of independence of women in decision-making, low social and economic status of woman in rural communities), causative conditions (e.g. lack of proper access to information channels, lack of information necessary to start a business, lack of understanding of new business opportunities in the region, lack of a business plan, length and cost of start-up work processes, lack

of access to up-to-date information and education), interventional conditions (e.g. cultural and traditional values in the society, low social capital, difficulty in obtaining permits and administrative procedures, drafting of plans, lack of proper market accessibility, limited competition among rural businesses, inappropriate nature of communication infrastructures, high cost of transportation and communication), strategies (e.g. failing to operationalize rural business ideas, lack of motivation to participate in training classes, resorting to state aids to solve problems, reliance on informal and informal information resources, losing opportunities and wasting the potentials available in the village), and the implications of this phenomenon (i.e. unemployment, migration from villages especially by the youth, loneliness, isolation, and physical and psychological problems).

4. Discussion

Many studies (e.g. Papazan et al., 2011; Alvinia and Shahmoradi, 2014; Abdullahzadeh et al., 2015; Karimi, 2015; Ehsanifar et al., 2018) have indicated that the level of knowledge increases in all areas after engagement in technical and vocational training programs. Although knowledge boosting as an objective is fulfilled, the training programs have not been effective enough to develop necessary skills in the trainees.

5. Conclusion

The findings of the research showed that the most important challenges for operating business ideas include the expertise and experience required for making business plans, marketing, knowledge of laws, lack of personal funds for proper investment, lack of access to information and information resources, lack of comprehensive support from the beginning to the end of the process of idea operationalization, low risk-taking, fear of failure, and family barriers.

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Conflict of Interest

The authors declared no conflicts of interest