

# A Study on the Functional Positioning and Optimization Development Path of Entrepreneurship Education Organizations in Vocational Colleges

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**Abstract:** The organization of entrepreneurship education in vocational colleges aims to cultivate entrepreneurial talents. Entrepreneurship education organizations should have functions such as overall planning, integration of expertise and innovation, resource gathering and cultural guidance. Presently, vocational college entrepreneurship education organizations face problems such as insufficient understanding of entrepreneurship education concepts, lack of specialized institutions and institutional guarantees, imperfect curriculum teaching and practical systems, as well as insufficient integration of entrepreneurship education and professional education. Strengthening the research on the concept of entrepreneurship education in vocational colleges is the starting point for optimizing the organizational function of entrepreneurship education. Improving policy guarantees and support mechanisms, and creating an entrepreneurial culture atmosphere are important guarantees for optimizing the organizational functions of entrepreneurship education in vocational colleges.

**Keywords:** Vocational colleges; Entrepreneurship education; Functional positioning; Optimizing development

**Online publication:** July 29, 2024

## 1. Introduction

In recent years, with the support of national education reform policies, various universities have gradually established organizational structures responsible for entrepreneurship education. These organizational structures have entered a stage of rapid development driven by upgrading social industries. However, at the same time, entrepreneurial education organizations in universities also face many development bottlenecks. For example, ways that vocational colleges, as an important component of higher education institutions, effectively play the role of entrepreneurial education organizations remained unclear. It is believed that to solve the development bottleneck of vocational college education organizations, the urgent task is to clarify the functional positioning of vocational college entrepreneurship education organizations.

## **2. The positioning and function of entrepreneurship education organizations in vocational colleges**

Australian scholar Jones C (2016) pointed out that entrepreneurship education enables students to acquire entrepreneurial knowledge, thereby gaining entrepreneurial wisdom and being able to discover themselves in life, besides maintaining excitement in learning while fearlessly facing failure and being able to create opportunities for self-satisfaction during and after graduation <sup>[1]</sup>. The concept of “Innovation and entrepreneurship education” was not officially proposed in China until 2010. Subsequently, under the active guidance of national policies, entrepreneurship education has been incorporated into the organizational management of various universities in various forms, such as setting up entrepreneurship colleges in the enrollment and employment office, student office and other departments or adding entrepreneurship education teaching and research offices. Currently, entrepreneurship education organizations in universities can be divided into independent, dependent and collaborative types, among which there are both standardized and structured organizational types, as well as loosely structured and less structured organizational types. In terms of titles, Entrepreneurship College, Innovation and Entrepreneurship College, Entrepreneurship Education Guidance Center, Entrepreneurship Education Management Office, and Innovation and Entrepreneurship Education Teaching and Research Office all belong to entrepreneurship education organizations. In terms of organizational attributes, it includes various types such as secondary colleges, administrative structures, teaching and auxiliary institutions, functional departments, etc. <sup>[2]</sup>

### **2.1. The positioning of entrepreneurship education organizations in vocational colleges**

As a higher education institution, the cultivation of students’ entrepreneurial awareness and entrepreneurial practice is an essential aspect of university education, especially in vocational colleges that focus on technical skill development. Therefore, the positioning of entrepreneurship education organizations in vocational colleges should be very clear. We believe that vocational colleges should first focus on cultivating entrepreneurial talents in entrepreneurship education organizations. The essence of entrepreneurship education is a comprehensive education of “people,” aimed at cultivating their innovative ability, practical ability and entrepreneurial spirit. The organization of entrepreneurship education in vocational colleges should focus on cultivating entrepreneurial talents as the core goal and take the growth laws of talents as the basis for carrying out work while planning and promoting innovation and entrepreneurship education from the perspective of cultivating entrepreneurial talents. Secondly, vocational college entrepreneurship education organizations should actively respond to national development strategies. Entrepreneurship education organizations in vocational colleges should become a new battlefield for the ideological education of college students. Entrepreneurship education is an important way for universities to achieve “moral education” and implement “whole process comprehensive education.” Therefore, vocational college entrepreneurship education organizations should become a new battlefield for the ideological education of college students in the new era <sup>[3]</sup>.

### **2.2. The function of entrepreneurship education organizations in vocational colleges**

Generally speaking, the organizational structure of innovation and entrepreneurship education in universities should serve as the highest management authority for innovation and entrepreneurship management of college students, capable of macro management and overall planning of the school’s innovation and entrepreneurship education activities <sup>[4]</sup>. Vocational college entrepreneurship education organizations should become the overall organization for entrepreneurship education in schools. Based on the positioning of vocational college innovation and entrepreneurship education organizations, entrepreneurship education organizations should have at least the following four functions:

- (1) Overall planning function. As an organizational structure dedicated to promoting entrepreneurship education, vocational college entrepreneurship education organizations are, first and foremost, think tanks and drivers of the entire implementation of entrepreneurship education. They need to coordinate and plan entrepreneurship education's design, planning and institutional mechanisms. Secondly, based on the overall planning of entrepreneurship education in schools, entrepreneurship education organizations are also the bearers of entrepreneurship education practice. Specifically, the practical content mainly includes the aspects of entrepreneurship education and teaching, entrepreneurship park management and implementation of entrepreneurial education and practical activities <sup>[5]</sup>. In addition, entrepreneurship education organizations also need to play the role of service providers, providing various support services to promote the development of school entrepreneurship education, teachers and students who plan to start their own businesses, including building platforms, gathering resources, sharing information and providing professional guidance.
- (2) Specialized innovation and integration function. The close integration of professional education and entrepreneurship education is the necessary path for the development of entrepreneurship education. The Implementation Opinions on Deepening the Reform of Innovation and Entrepreneurship Education in Higher Education Institutions issued by the General Office of the State Council clearly states that entrepreneurship education should be closely integrated with professional education. From the perspective of epistemology, professional education is the imparting of knowledge or vocational training in a specific field of expertise to students, with education tailored to different disciplines. For general education, entrepreneurship education provides a way to combine theory and practice. For professional education, the interdisciplinary and practical nature of entrepreneurship education helps to integrate specialized disciplines and different knowledge fields <sup>[6]</sup>.
- (3) Resource aggregation function. As a type of higher education, vocational colleges aim to cultivate technical and skilled talents for the frontline needs of production, construction, service and management <sup>[7]</sup>. Vocational colleges have their own typological characteristics in terms of talent cultivation goals, faculty construction, professional development, teaching methods and management models, and evaluation methods. Specifically, in terms of target positioning, vocational college entrepreneurship education organizations should establish training goals for technology innovation and entrepreneurship talents rather than technology innovation and entrepreneurship talents. In terms of training methods, it is necessary to fully utilize the extensive foundation of school-enterprise cooperation, internship and training bases that vocational colleges have already formed and build a practical-oriented and ability-based teaching model for entrepreneurship education in vocational colleges.
- (4) Cultural leadership function. Famous American scholar Huntington S (2018) interprets cultural connotations from a purely subjective perspective, believing that culture is a set of values, attitudes, beliefs, orientations and widely held beliefs within a society <sup>[8]</sup>. Undoubtedly, culture is the sum of values and behavioral norms universally recognized and followed by members of society <sup>[9]</sup>. Vocational college entrepreneurship education organizations, as the core institutions and leading practitioners of entrepreneurship education, were the first to receive the infiltration of entrepreneurial education ideas and form a recognition of entrepreneurship education in the process of practice.

### **3. The problems faced by entrepreneurship education organizations in vocational colleges**

Since the concept of “Innovation and entrepreneurship education” was proposed in 2010, the organization

of entrepreneurship education in Chinese universities has gone through more than a decade of formation and development, accumulated certain practical experience and formed a unique entrepreneurship education model. According to relevant data from the Ministry of Education, as of the end of 2018, more than 28,000 specialized courses on innovation and entrepreneurship education were offered in universities across the country, with over 27,000 full-time teachers in innovation and entrepreneurship education. There were also 13,000 on-campus innovation and entrepreneurship practice platforms.

### **3.1. Insufficient understanding of the concept of entrepreneurship education**

Most vocational colleges have not yet included entrepreneurship education as part of the talent training program system, which is detached from the teaching plan, resulting in some vocational colleges lacking attention to the organizational structure of entrepreneurship education. They are only established to meet the national promotion and have not truly exerted importance to and played the role that entrepreneurship colleges should play. The research shows that some vocational colleges lack a clear understanding of the target positioning of organizational structures for entrepreneurship education for college students and lack systematic research on their functional effectiveness. They only position them as employment guidance centers or entrepreneurship project service centers, blindly encouraging students to start their own businesses, lacking sustainable support and have a clear utilitarian value tendency.

### **3.2. Lack of specialized institutions and institutional guarantees**

Some vocational colleges and departments are conducting entrepreneurship education, but the multi-party competition between different departments makes it difficult to form a cohesive force. Entrepreneurship education is a systematic project that requires multiple factors, such as an institutional system, institutional guarantee, talent team and social support. However, the fragmentation of management departments often leads to low administrative efficiency, resource dispersion and policy management conflicts.

### **3.3. Incomplete curriculum teaching and practical system**

The entrepreneurship education courses commonly offered in vocational colleges mainly include Entrepreneurship Management, Introduction to Entrepreneurship, Employment Guidance, etc. However, most of them are only elective courses and the teaching content is limited to business and skill levels, resulting in a disconnect between entrepreneurship education and professional education as well as practical applications. In addition, due to educational funding issues, some vocational colleges have a narrow coverage and beneficiaries of entrepreneurship education, lacking long-term effectiveness and sustainability. Entrepreneurship education has become a “survival” and “elite” education rather than a quality education for all students. This is disconnected from the requirement of striving for equal entrepreneurial opportunities for every entrepreneur<sup>[10]</sup>.

## **4. The optimization and development path of the organizational function of entrepreneurship education in vocational colleges**

It is believed that strengthening the research on the concept of entrepreneurship education in vocational colleges is the starting point for optimizing the organizational function of entrepreneurship education in response to the problems existing in the process of exerting the organizational function of entrepreneurship education in vocational colleges. Building a virtuous ecosystem and governance pattern of collaborative interaction between government, school, industry and enterprise is the path choice for enhancing the organizational function of entrepreneurship education. Improving policy guarantees and support mechanisms and creating

an entrepreneurial culture atmosphere are important guarantees for optimizing the organizational functions of entrepreneurship education in vocational colleges.

#### **4.1. Research on strengthening entrepreneurship education in vocational colleges with technological skill innovation as the core**

To further develop entrepreneurship education, it is necessary to focus on differentiated research. For vocational colleges, it is essential to strengthen entrepreneurship education research with technological skill innovation as the core. Firstly, establish specialized entrepreneurship education research centers in vocational colleges to promote the integration of entrepreneurship education theory and practice. Entrepreneurship education research institutions are the foundation and platform for the study of entrepreneurial education concepts. They play an important role in setting goals and implementing efficient actions for entrepreneurial education organizations and should be given sufficient attention. Secondly, vocational colleges need to encourage frontline teachers to participate in research on entrepreneurship education and deepen the research on the concept of entrepreneurship education in vocational colleges with technological skill innovation as the core. American scholar Bryman A (2004) once said that theoretical arguments must be supported by both logical and empirical aspects, where empirical evidence originates from the real world <sup>[11]</sup>. Besides, it is also important to encourage interdisciplinary design and interaction of entrepreneurship education organizations in vocational colleges.

#### **4.2. Building an ecosystem and governance pattern of collaborative interaction between government, school, administration and enterprises**

From the essence of entrepreneurship education, its fundamental purpose is to promote human development and improve the quality of life. Therefore, entrepreneurship education is aimed at all students and education aimed at all students cannot be achieved solely by a single entrepreneurship education organization. Collaboration between entrepreneurship education organizations, various training departments, management and service departments of schools, as well as diverse entities such as government, industry and enterprises, is essential. On the one hand, encouraging diverse entities to participate in entrepreneurship education in vocational colleges and build an ecological cycle chain of “Industry learning training research innovation.” On the other hand, clarifying the responsibilities and rights of multiple subjects in entrepreneurship education practice, such as government, schools, and enterprises, and forming a diversified collaborative governance pattern, can help maintain the standardization, stability, and long-term nature of the behavior of each subject <sup>[12]</sup>.

#### **4.3. Improve policy guarantees and support mechanisms to create an entrepreneurial culture atmosphere**

The emphasis on policy has promoted the vigorous development of entrepreneurship education in universities. However, the situation of “Hot schools and cold teachers and students” has become a practical dilemma that cannot be ignored in the development process of entrepreneurship education in vocational colleges <sup>[13]</sup>. The vocational college entrepreneurship education organization serves as the management institution for entrepreneurship education in universities, with the following improvements:

- (1) Highlight policy guarantees. Vocational colleges implement entrepreneurship policies through various forms, scientifically guide the entire process of cultivating and incubating entrepreneurial projects;
- (2) Establish an entrepreneurial risk-sharing system that includes financial support, professional guidance, risk assessment, etc., to share entrepreneurial risks;
- (3) Continuously improving the support mechanism for entrepreneurship in the base. Based on professional and classified guidance, reshape the entrepreneurial culture suitable for the educational ecology of

the school based on the school and academic situation, achieve “cultural education,” and promote the transformation of vocational colleges from “Campus entrepreneurship” to “Entrepreneurial campus” [14].

- (4) Create a distinctive “maker space”, condense the entrepreneurial spirit of college students with contemporary connotations, leverage the incentive and demonstration effects of role model education and peer education and enhance the entrepreneurial awareness of college students.

Unlike other types of education, entrepreneurship education aims to guide students in their entrepreneurial awareness and interest. Learning relevant knowledge and skills in innovation and entrepreneurship can nurture their creativity, help college students create social value and realize their value to self [15]. Therefore, entrepreneurship education should return to the essence of cultivating human nature and meet the individual’s aspirations and needs for change, innovation and creation from the perspective of individual life growth. Based on this fundamental goal, the functional positioning and full play of entrepreneurship education organizations in vocational colleges is a topic worthy of repeated consideration in the development process of entrepreneurship education in China.

## Funding

Phased Achievement of the Zhejiang Province Chinese Vocational Education Research Project “Research on the Function and Implementation Mechanism of Entrepreneurship Education Organizations in Vocational Colleges” (Project No.: ZJCV2023C36)

## Disclosure statement

The author declares no conflict of interest.

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