

# Research on the Shaping Mechanism of University Innovation and Entrepreneurship Education on College Students' Entrepreneurial Identity

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**Abstract:** Driven by the dual background of economic structure transformation and labor market changes, innovation and entrepreneurship education (IEE) has become an important breakthrough point for higher education reform. But there is a paradox of "high-involvement, low-conversion-rate" in the present educational practice, which means that even if students' frequency of participation in innovation and entrepreneurship activities is raised, their deeply entrenched "entrepreneurial identity" that sees entrepreneurship as an option for their career still hasn't been improved simultaneously. This paper tries to figure out how university IEE could change from simply transferring skills and transferring value identification into deep identity formation. The article first explains what an entrepreneurial identity connotation and structure is. Subsequently it makes deep analysis on the mechanistic obstacle in current university IEE in terms of building cognitive schema, internalizing emotions and simulating social roles. It points out that IEE with curriculum homogenization, practice formalization and evaluation utilitarianism, hinders them from forming their identity. According to the above, according to the cognitive-emotional-behavior three-dimensional attitude model of interdisciplinarity, an attitude cognitive deepening mechanism is put forward, an emotion resonance mechanism based on immersion and a role internalization mechanism are put forward, based on the ecosystem. To give theoretical backing and real-life ways to boost college students' business identity and foster superior business endeavors.

**Keywords:** Innovation and Entrepreneurship Education; Entrepreneurial Identity; Shaping Mechanism; Immersive Practice.

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## 1. Introduction

With the full-scale arrival of the knowledge economy era innovation has become the prime driver of social development. As the mountains of talent training, higher education institutions undertake the task of IEE. This education carries both the short term of easing employment pressure as well as the long term of fostering high-quality individuals full of innovative thoughts and ability to start businesses. In recent years, most universities have invested a lot of manpower and financial resources on the setup of courses, the creation of bases, and the organization of competitions, greatly promoting the coverage of IEE[1]. However, in practice we find that although the awareness and enthusiasm among college students to be involved in entrepreneurship have grown, their "entrepreneurial identity"—really having a firm entrepreneurial belief and seeing entrepreneurship as a path to self-fulfillment—is still quite low[2]. A lot of students treat it just like a way to get credit or add some experience on resume. They don't see it as something to be pursued internally or as a professional lifestyle[3].

## 2. Concept Definition & Problem Representation: Lack of Entrepreneurship Identity and Education Misalignment

### 2.1. Entrepreneurially Speaking Identity Connotatively is a Psychological (Thing) Structure

Entrepreneurial identity is not just a simple label, but rather a complicated psychological construction procedure encompassing three main aspects: cognitive identity, sentimental identity, and conductive identity. Cognitive identity is the individual's rational understanding of the characteristics of entrepreneurship and the value judgment of one's own ability to engage in such activities, answering the question "what is entrepreneurship", also is the individuals' judgement on their own suitable for entrepreneurship? The emotional identity is the positive feelings brought out by taking part in the entrepreneurial activities [4]. such as achievement, Sense of passion, Belonging feeling. And also can answer that "do i love entrepreneurship." And the behavior identity is the commitment and persistence in translating entrepreneurial intention into action. The sustained efforts and persistence when facing difficulty[5]. And also can answer that " Am i willing to do it?"

### 2.2. Mechanism Obstacles in Current IEE

#### 2.2.1. Homogenization at the Cognitive Level and Solidification of Stereotypes

Entrepreneur's identity origin comes from a proper

understanding of entrepreneurship. University IEE curriculum system is very monotonous, it generally claims that entrepreneurship is equivalent to starting a business or commercial success. The knowledge taught in university is mostly trivial information like writing a business plan and going through industrial and commercial registration procedures, without exploring deeper meanings such as innovative thinking, entrepreneurship, and creating social value. This utilitarian oriented cognitive inculcation will make it easy for students to form the stereotype that, "Entrepreneurship is just for earning money," without

recognizing the true essence of entrepreneurship as a lifestyle of solving problems and creating value. For students with a non-business background, this definition is not only lack of cognitive resonance but also the generation of cognitive rejection because it creates distance. It seems that technology and commerce have no common ground [6]. Textbook cases mostly choose elite figures such as Jack Ma, Steve Jobs, etc., and do not show the real living situation of most ordinary entrepreneurs, making students feel that entrepreneurship is "unattainable", resulting in a hard time combining "entrepreneur" with their own self-concept [7].

**Table 1.** Comparison of Cognitive Modes between Traditional IEE and Identity-Oriented IEE

Comparison Dimension	Traditional IEE (Tool-Oriented)	Identity-Oriented IEE (Value-Oriented)	Impact on Identity Shaping
Core Definition	Entrepreneurship = Starting a company, Commercial realization	Entrepreneurship = Innovative thinking, Value creation, Problem solving	The former leads to utilitarian rejection; the latter promotes generalized acceptance.
Teaching Content	Business plans, Tax/Legal regulations, Fundraising roadshows	Opportunity recognition, Design thinking, Failure management, Ethical responsibility	The former reinforces technical barriers; the latter reinforces general thinking skills.
Case Selection	Focus on "Unicorns" and commercial giants	Covers micro-entrepreneurship, social entrepreneurship, grassroots entrepreneurship	The former leads to "survivorship bias"; the latter enhances "vicarious experience."
Cognitive Goal	Mastering processes and skills	Changing mental models and self-efficacy	The former stops at "Technique"; the latter goes deep into "Tao" (Philosophy).

### 2.2.2. Lacked Emotion and Frustration Buildup Experience

Emotional identity is the source of power for entrepreneurial identity, which arises from the sense of accomplishment, a sense of belonging, and enthusiasm that people obtain through the process of entrepreneurship [8]. However, the existing university IEE is often "stylish but not substantial." Many entrepreneurship competitions often fall into the trap of "PPT Entrepreneurship" or "Performance Entrepreneurship," where teams put enormous effort and resources into crafting the copy, at the expense of refining their actual products or services [9]. This kind of simulation training has no real market feedback involved, so the students

could not really experience the real pains and pleasures of entrepreneurship, it will be hard to get a strong feeling. More seriously, the single way of judging heroes based on success or failure leaves the vast majority of students who did not win a strong sense of frustration and low self-esteem. In the absence of psychological support and fault-tolerance systems, the failure of the first try is easily generalized as a complete rejection of one's competence, making students fear entrepreneurship emotionally, thus breaking the psychological chain between "making the first attempt" and "loving entrepreneurship."

### 2.2.3. Break the Role at The Behavior Level and Does Little Socialization

**Table 2.** College students' entrepreneurial identity barrier factors analysis

Identity Dimension	Key Psychological Mechanism	Realistic Educational Barriers	Negative Consequences
Cognitive Identity	Matching self-schema with professional schema	Narrow curriculum content, elite cases, lack of critical reflection	Cognitive bias, believing "I am not suitable for entrepreneurship" or "Entrepreneurship is too hard."
Emotional Identity	Positive emotional experience and value internalization	Formalized practical activities, singular evaluation standards, lack of psychological resilience training	Emotional alienation, generating fear of difficulty, lack of intrinsic drive.
Behavioral Identity	Role-playing and social interaction feedback	Closed practice environment, broken social networks, lack of real market testing	Distorted role-playing, inability to adapt to the real business environment, giving up upon graduation.

The form of Behavioral Identity is the most extreme form of Entrepreneurial Identity, as people express who they are

via actions among the group of people. Currently, although universities own platforms like incubation bases, those

platforms tend to have more "island" traits, being isolated away from real industrial ecology and social network outside the universities. Students' entrepreneurship on campus is still attached to closed, safe, low-risk paths. Not deeply involved in actual social roles such as suppliers, customers, and rivals[10]. This greenhouse environment keeps students perpetually under the "student" umbrella, unable to truly taste what it's like for resources to be scarce, decisions to be heavy, and markets to game. Because there are no embedded real social ties, they have difficulty obtaining an identity confirmation by others (i.e., them being perceived as entrepreneurs) during their behaviors. This leads to a distance and illusion between their entrepreneurial role and real life. After graduation and leaving the campus, this fragile identity will disappear immediately [11].

### 3. Mechanism Reconstruction: Educational Strategic Path on How to Set up Your Own Entrepreneurial Individual:

#### 3.1. Cognitive Reconstruction Mechanism: Build a General Entrepreneurship Knowledge Graph According to The Integration of Discipline

To eliminate cognitive obstacles, the main objective is to remake the knowledge architecture of IEE, transitioning from limited business abilities to general innovation literacy. Universities should promote the deep integration of IEE with professional education and dig out innovation genes in all kinds of disciplines. For example, Engineering major focuses on the commercial application of technological innovation. Humanities and social science major focuses on the social value of social innovation. Arts major focus on the market logic of cultural and creative products. Interdisciplinary curriculum setting allows students to realize that entrepreneurship is not the exclusive right of management students but a high-level path for all types of students to realize their professional value.

To achieve such a broad knowledge graph, education methods have to progress from classic teaching styles like

lectures toward PBL, CBR. In the PBL scenario, students are not just passive learners of business theories, they are active problem solvers of open ended problem. Learning stance changes, forcing students to think like entrepreneurs right from the start. When students were navigating complex, ill-defined problems with what they know already, they began to self-categorize as people who can be innovators and come up with solutions and not just the students of a discipline. This change in education is necessary to connect the concept of 'knowing about' entrepreneurship with the mindset of being 'an entrepreneur'. After understanding failure cases and micro-entrepreneurship stories of regular people, they will realize that being an entrepreneur is not a dream job, the cognitive threshold will be lowered and students would form the strong belief of "I can also be an entrepreneur" after a careful scrutiny of the risks.

#### 3.2. Emotional Resonance Mechanism: Building a Full-process Immersive Real Experience Field

The creation of feeling identity depends on strongimmersives. On campuses, universities need to change their teaching practices, and go from "repetition drills" to "real combat." Idle campus resources can create "Entrepreneurial Trial Zones" or "Micro-Business Streets," where students do low-cost physical businesses like a campus cultural product shop, a second-hand trading app, or a skills service studio. This real business experience forces students to face real problems such as customer complaints, inventory backlog, and capital turnover, and accumulates many small merits through solving small problems. Also "Entrepreneurial Psychology Workshops," "Peer Support Groups" need to be established and care for students' psychological changes during the process of entrepreneurship. Through regular reviews and experiences, failure experiences can become fertilizer for students' growth, guiding students to transition from worrying about results to enjoying the journey. When students win their very first recognition from a customer and earn their first profit by their own sweat and toil, their sense of identity with entrepreneurship will rise to a whole new level.

**Table 3.** The promotion of immersive experience teaching to emotional identity

Experience Stage	Instructional Design Strategy	Triggered Emotional Experience	Solidifying Effect on Identity
Project Launch	Finding pain points, forming diverse teams	Curiosity, sense of belonging, team trust	Establishing initial collective identity.
Product Polishing	Prototyping, user interviews, market testing	Focus, empathy, creative passion	Binding personal value with product value.
Market Launch	Real sales, facing rejection, handling complaints	Frustration & resilience, sense of achievement	Strengthening psychological resilience amidst emotional fluctuations.
Review & Reflection	Profit distribution, experience summary, celebrating failure	Rationality, self-acceptance, joy of growth	Sublimating emotional experiences into stable values.

#### 3.3. Role Internalization Mechanism: Building an Open and Interactive iee e Community

To turn from "student" to "entrepreneur," the campus walls

need to be broken in order to construct an open educational ecosystem. Universities should actively bring in external mentors like enterprise representatives, investment institutions, and industry associations to create a "Dual

Mentor" or "Multi-Mentor" system. The enterprise mentors offer not just techniques, much more importantly, they display pictures and behavior models of authentic entrepreneurs with their own examples, serving as exemplary figures. The same is true under the tacit assurance that students will leave the campus, to leave the campus and join an enterprise's innovation project outsourcing services, an industrial chain supporting service, or a community service project to find yourself in a real social network.

Theoretically, they base it on the idea that children join "legitimate peripheral participation" (LPP) in Communities of practice. In a good ecosystem, students start on the periphery - doing small tasks for real companies. As they grow to be more competent and more confident, they move toward the middle and start taking on bigger responsibilities as well as individual projects. This can produce a gradual, safe, and real change of identity. Unlike isolated campus simulations, with this open ecosystem both the feedback loops from the market and rejections to correct course are real. This continuous interaction and integration with the real world is irreplaceable for the formation of the entrepreneur label in the minds of students. Also, creating alumni entrepreneurship alliances, which allows succeeded entrepreneurs to return to campus and inherit the tradition of "big hands holding small hands", creating strong entrepreneurial culture atmosphere and let students do role socialization imperceptibly.

### 3.4. Evaluation Feedback Mechanism: Competency Value-added based Multi-Dimensional Evaluation System Coordination

Evaluation is a baton and a reinforcer of identity formation. Abandon the use of the single 'commercial success theory' assessment standard for a multi-dimension evaluation system based on students' growth and added value: Regarding the evaluation dimension, we should not only focus on factors like the project's profitability and awards but also pay much more attention to the evaluation weight of fundamental competitiveness such as innovative thinking, teamwork, resisting pressure, and social responsibility. As for the evaluated people, introduce various opinions from investors, industry experts, customers, and team members so that the evaluation is more objective and comprehensive. On evaluation methods, the "Entrepreneurial Growth Portfolio" system has to be set up so that the psychological journey and capability changes of students from idea conception to project realization could be recorded. Rewriting for student who shows perseverance in the entrepreneurial process but ultimately fails, we should give recognitions like "Entrepreneurial Spirit Award", which would create an institutional value orientation of "tolerating failure and encouraging exploration" at the institutional level. This value-added evaluation can let students feel their progress and transformation in the entrepreneurship process and make themselves have stronger intrinsic confidence and identity.

**Table 4.** Entrepreneur's Identity Shaping Mechanism System Integration Framework

Mechanism Name	Action Target	Core Strategy	Expected Output
Cognitive Deepening	Mental Schema	Interdisciplinary curriculum graph, case disenchantment, design thinking training	Establishing rational entrepreneurial cognition, eliminating stereotypes.
Emotional Resonance	Emotional Experience	Real micro-entrepreneurship, trial-and-error funds, psychological support workshops	Igniting intrinsic passion, enhancing psychological resilience.
Role Internalization	Social Identity	Deep embedding of school-enterprise, dual mentor system, social network linking	Completing the role transition from student to entrepreneur.
Evaluation Feedback	Value Confirmation	Competency value-added evaluation, process portfolio, multi-subject feedback	Reinforcing self-efficacy, solidifying identity.

## 4. Conclusion and Outlook

College students' form of entrepreneurship through college innovation and entrepreneurship education is a complex systematic action that involves many aspects of aspects such as cognitive remaking, emotional cultivation, behavioral schooling, and surroundings creation. thank you This study shows that to break out of a conundrum of "high involvement, low identity," we can no longer rely on traditional skill training, instead we should turn our focus towards identity education that is aimed at holistic human growth. Without such structural changes, the proposed ways of moldings of thoughts, emotions, and behaviors will be without the fertile ground in which to grow. Therefore, institutions innovation is the pre-condition of educational innovation which can cultivate entrepreneurship.

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