

Entrepreneurial Orientation Of Fashion Design And Fashion Business 'S Students, Dhurakij Pundit University To Drive The Entrepreneurs In Fashion Industry

คุณลักษณะของการเป็นผู้ประกอบการของนักศึกษาหลักสูตรการออกแบบและธุรกิจ
แฟชั่น มหาวิทยาลัยธุรกิจบัณฑิตเพื่อการขับเคลื่อนการเป็นผู้ประกอบการใน
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Abstract

The purpose of the study was to analyze the major subjects of Fashion design and Fashion Business Program's students and graduates, Faculty of Fine and Applied Arts, Dhurakij Pundit University whether 1) they have been provided the Entrepreneurial Orientation(EO) in each dimension ; Autonomy, Innovativeness, Proactiveness, Competitive Aggressiveness and Risk Taking which is important to drive the entrepreneur in fashion industry or not. 2) The program has focused on Innovativeness and Proactiveness which are important in the embryonic stage of entrepreneurs or not. A census survey of 72 questionnaires were distributed to graduates and students who have studied on the last curriculum development. 50 questionnaires responded plus 5 in-depth interview were used as tools to evaluate the dimensions of EO that have been provided from the program. The results shown the participants' opinions in having been provided EO, each dimension is in the high level measuring by Likert's scale (3.59-3.90) but Innovativeness and Proactiveness have not been obviously focused. The improvement from the results can be guidelines to contribute more EO to the students in the future. But from the research found that only EO is still not enough to drive the entrepreneurs. There are some other factors which are needed for future research.

Keywords: 1. Fashion business 2. Entrepreneurial orientation 3. Fashion entrepreneur

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บทคัดย่อ

การวิจัยครั้งนี้มีจุดประสงค์เพื่อทบทวนรายวิชาหลักในหลักสูตรการออกแบบและธุรกิจแฟชั่น มหาวิทยาลัยธุรกิจบัณฑิต ในปีระแค้นที่ 1) หลักสูตรช่วยพัฒนาคุณลักษณะของการเป็นผู้ประกอบการในแต่ละมิติให้กับผู้เรียนได้เพื่อขับเคลื่อนให้เกิดความเป็นผู้ประกอบการในอุตสาหกรรมแฟชั่นได้หรือไม่ โดยอ้างอิงจากทฤษฎีคุณลักษณะการเป็นผู้ประกอบการ (Entrepreneurial Orientation) ซึ่งประกอบด้วย ความเป็นอิสระในการบริหารงาน การสร้างนวัตกรรม การทำงานเชิงรุก ความสามารถในการแข่งขัน และการเผชิญความเสี่ยง 2) มิติของการสร้างนวัตกรรม และการทำงานเชิงรุกได้ถูกเน้นย้ำกับผู้เรียนมากกว่ามิติอื่นหรือไม่ เนื่องจากเป็นด้านที่จำเป็นที่สุดสำหรับผู้ประกอบการใหม่ในระยะจัดตั้งธุรกิจ การเก็บข้อมูลใช้แบบสอบถามกับนักศึกษาและบัณฑิตที่สำเร็จการศึกษาจากหลักสูตรทุกคนที่เรียนในช่วงปีที่มีการปรับหลักสูตรครั้งล่าสุดจำนวน 72 คน และการสัมภาษณ์เชิงลึกบัณฑิตที่มีกิจการเป็นของตนเอง 5 คน แม้ผลการวิจัยจะแสดงให้เห้นว่านักศึกษาและบัณฑิตได้รับการพัฒนาทักษะความเป็นผู้ประกอบการในแต่ละมิติอยู่ในระดับดี (3.59-3.90) แต่ในมิติด้านการสร้างนวัตกรรมและการทำงานเชิงรุก ยังไม่ได้ถูกเน้นย้ำอย่างเพียงพอ การสัมภาษณ์เชิงลึกทำให้ได้แนวทางเพื่อพัฒนาหลักสูตร และทำให้เกิดค่าการวัดผลในลักษณะเดียวกันนี้ที่สูงขึ้นได้ในอนาคต แต่เมื่อพิจารณาผลการศึกษาพบว่า การให้ความสำคัญแต่เพียงในประเด็นคุณลักษณะของการเป็นผู้ประกอบการ (Entrepreneurial Orientation) ยังไม่เพียงพอในการผลักดันให้นักศึกษาและบัณฑิตสร้างธุรกิจของตัวเองขึ้นมาได้ ยังมีปัจจัยอื่นๆที่จะส่งผลและช่วยเป็นแรงขับเคลื่อนให้เกิดผู้ประกอบการในอุตสาหกรรมแฟชั่นซึ่งเป็นเรื่องที่ต้องทำการศึกษาในการวิจัยครั้งต่อไป

คำสำคัญ : คุณลักษณะการเป็นผู้ประกอบการ ธุรกิจแฟชั่น ผู้ประกอบการแฟชั่น

Introduction

In 2017, Dhurakij Pundit University has been transformed in response to the policy of the country “Thailand 4.0” underneath the concept “successful even before graduation” to build up students to be new entrepreneurs.

Fashion Design and Fashion Business Program (FB Program), Faculty of Fine and Applied Arts, Dhurakij Pundit University is the program which focuses on fostering creative design together with entrepreneurship. The program had a chance to be a project operator “New Entrepreneur Creation for fashion industry (NEC)” Project funded by Ministry of Industry for 3 years continually since 2014. FB Program realized that SMEs are considered as the spine of Thailand Economy as they are playing a significant role in generating employment opportunities, poverty reduction and contributing towards creation of better standard of living.

Moreover in fashion industry, Thai fashion products currently account for 700 billion baht a year in export revenue, whereas a target has been set to increase their export value to at least 1 trillion baht a year in the next five years (Sibunruang, 2016), the ministry of industry

has kicked off the project “International Fashion Co-Design: Ride the power of Asia” to develop the potential of Thai entrepreneurs in the textile and fashion industries.

Therefore this study is a step towards to revise the curriculum of fashion design and fashion business program (FB Program) in the encouragement of entrepreneurship in fashion business and self-employment in response to the policy of the university and the country.

This study was limited to focus on the major subjects in the program, not other factors. The subjects in Fashion Design and Fashion Business program (FB program) which are provided for the students are separated in 3 groups: major subjects, elective subjects and general education subjects. This study has been analysed only the first group to meet the objective whether the major subjects have provided the students and the graduates the Entrepreneurial Orientation (EO) enough to drive them to be entrepreneurs.

Literature Review

The theoretical base of this study is founded by reviewing the literature about entrepreneur and entrepreneurial orientation

1.1 Definition of Entrepreneur

Definition given in investopedia (2017) for entrepreneur is an individual who, rather than working as an employee, founds and runs a small business, assuming all the risks and rewards of the venture. The entrepreneur is commonly seen as an innovator, a source of new ideas, goods, services and business/or procedures.

An entrepreneur is innovative, employs strategic management practices, and manages his business for the purpose of profit and growth. A business owner establishes the enterprise to follow personal goals. In focusing on innovative behaviour, this definition follows Schumpeter (1935) who emphasized the creative activities of the innovator. Some other writers use risk-bearing as the key factor to define entrepreneurs (Mill, 1984; Palmer, 1971; Liles, 1974; Rauch and Frese 2000).

Murphy (2010) conceived an entrepreneur as a person who is dynamic and continues to seek opportunities and/or different methods of operation and will do whatever it takes to be successful in business.

Thus, from the review, entrepreneurs are business persons who identify the existence of business opportunities and based on this they create new products, new production methods and new markets to satisfy customers need mostly at a profit

1.2 Definition and the dimensions of Entrepreneurial Orientation

Entrepreneurial orientation (EO) is defined by Lumpkin and Dess as “the strategy-making processes, structures and behaviors of organizations characterized by autonomy, risk taking, innovation, proactiveness and competitive aggressiveness, facilitating the pursuit of opportunities” (Lumpkin and Dess, 1996 ; Murad 2014). EO has become a central concept in the domain of entrepreneurship that has received a substantial amount of theoretical and empirical attention (Covin, Greene, & Slevin, 2006; Rauch, Wiklund, Lumpkin & Frese 2009)

Schillo(2011) suggested that The most widely used definition of EO is based on work by Miller (1983), developed further by Covin and Slevin (1989) and many others, and augmented by Lumpkin and Dess (1996). This conceptualization has been used in over 200 studies focusing not only on entrepreneurship, but ranging from management and marketing to healthcare (George and Marino, 2011). Murad (2014) concluded that the literature (Lumpkin and Dess 1996, Covin and Slevin 1989, Xu and Xu 2012, Yang 2008) suggests that a high degree of entrepreneurial orientation (EO) affects the business performance in a positive way.

The five components of entrepreneurial orientation (EO) are



Figure 1. Entrepreneurial Orientation Diagram

1. Autonomy refers to "the ability and will to be self-directed in the pursuit of opportunities" (Lumpkin and Dess, 1996 p.140 ; Krauss, 2003). It's the independent action of an individual or a team in bringing forth an idea or a vision and carrying it through to completion" (Lumpkin and Dess, 1996; Hughes and Morgan 2007)

2. Innovativeness relates to a firm's tendency to engage in, and support new ideas, novelty, experimentation, and creative process which may result in new products, services, or technological processes(Lumpkin and Dess, 1996;Lee Lim 2008) innovativeness is the

predisposition to engage in creativity and experimentation through the introduction of new products/services as well as technological leadership via R&D in new processes (Miller 1983, Rauch et al. 2009)

3. Proactiveness relates to a forward-looking perspective where companies actively seek to anticipate opportunities to develop and introduce new products to obtain first-mover advantages and shape the direction of the environment (Hughes and Morgan, 2007) Schillo(2011) presented that proactiveness are both in terms of products or technologies and in terms of markets and consumer demand (Lumpkin and Dess, 1996). It is the process which is aimed at “seeking new opportunities which may or may not be related to the present line of operations, introduction of new products and brands ahead of competition and strategically eliminating operations which are in the mature or declining stages of the life cycle” (Venkatraman 1989, p. 949; Kraus, Rigtering, Hughes & Hosman. 2012). Translated to the level of the firm, proactive companies are leaders in the market, rather than followers (Schillo, 2011)

4. Competitive aggressiveness refers to the company’s way of engaging with its competitors, distinguishing between companies that shy away from direct competition with other companies and those that aggressively pursue their competitors’ target markets (Schillo, 2011) Highly competitive aggressive owners attempt to keep competitors from entering the same market and try to outperform rivals. This helps to secure a higher market share and should, thereby, lead to success.

5. Risk-taking reflects an acceptance of uncertainty and risk inherent in original activity and is typically characterized by resource commitment to uncertain outcomes and activities (Lumpkin and Dess, 1996; Hughes and Morgan, 2007). It originally referred to the risks individuals take by working for themselves rather than being employed, but has since been widely applied to companies, for example, when managers make decisions that commit large amounts of resources to projects with uncertain outcomes. (Schillo, 2011)

As literature review above, Entrepreneurial orientations (EO) are related effectively to the performance of an organization and showed significant positive relationship between EO and business performance. A high degree of entrepreneurial orientation (EO) affects the business performance in a positive way.

From this information leads to question 1 to be addressed in this study:

“Are all five dimensions of Entrepreneurial Orientation (EO) framework has been fostered enough to the students and graduates through studying in the major subjects of FB Program?

However the dimensions of EO can vary independently and proposed that each dimension might not necessarily contribute to business performance in each instance (Lumpkin and Dess, 1996; Kraus et al.2012)

According to Hughes and Morgan (2007), they suggested that for emerging young firms with limited resource endowments, understanding which of the five EO dimensions are most valuable to securing improved performance at their potentially vulnerable stage of development is an important priority. The results of their study support the concerns of Lumpkin and Dess at the embryonic stage of firm growth that only proactiveness and innovativeness have a positive influence on business performance.

In keeping with the studies above, Murad (2014) also suggests that the dimensions of entrepreneurial orientation that appear to contribute the most to high business performance are proactiveness and innovativeness. Risk taking, competitive aggressiveness and autonomy also have some effect but not as significant as the first two.

From this information leads to question 2 to be addressed in this study:
“Are Innovativeness and Proactiveness have been focused on the students through studying in the major subjects?”

1.3 Fashion Design and Fashion Business Program (FB Program)

Fashion Design and Fashion Business program, Faculty of Fine and Applied Arts, Dhurakij Pundit University has been established for 12 years. The program is designed to meet the objectives to build up creative fashion design skill and provide business skill of individual students by means of training through the project assignments. It is expected that after completion of the four year degree program, the students will be encouraged of fashion entrepreneurship working in the economy and also be provided a source of knowledge to work in the entrepreneurial enabling environment in the fashion industry.

There are 42 subjects in the programs for all students to take 132 credits. The subjects provided for the students are separated in to 3 groups which are general education, elective subjects and 12 major subjects. This study focuses with limitation only on the 12 major subjects of FB Program as in the figure2



Figure 2. 12 major subjects of FB program

The major subjects which are provided for

Year 1: Conceptual design for fashion

Year 2: Fashion Design 1, Pattern Making & Tailoring Techniques, Overview to Fashion Business, Consumer Analysis in Fashion Business.

Year 3: Fashion Design 2, Creative Textile Design, Fashion Collection Planning, Fashion Brand Management, Business Plan

Year 4 : Accessories design, Senior project

From the last curriculum development (2011-2015), there are 51 graduates and 34 students in the third and fourth year. From the survey, each year there are less than 30% of graduates who have started their own business. This makes a point for the author to revise the major subjects in the program whether they contribute participants' entrepreneurial orientation (EO) or not.

Methodology

The study is using a combination of qualitative and quantitative research. Qualitative research is from literature review and 5 participants in-depth interview selected from the recent graduates each year who already had their own business. Quantitative data is a census survey collected from all the current senior students and graduates who have studied all 12 major subjects through the last curriculum development. As figure 3, the amount of three

years graduates and current senior students are 72, all participants were distributed on line questionnaires. The questionnaire was made from the literature review, identify each EO as defined by the topic 1.2 Definition and the dimensions of Entrepreneurial Orientation.

50 persons returned the questionnaires which is 70% response rate. The reliability of each EO are Autonomy(0.85), Competitive Aggressiveness(0.90), Innovativeness(0.87), Proactiveness(0.92) and Risk Taking(0.81) Participants

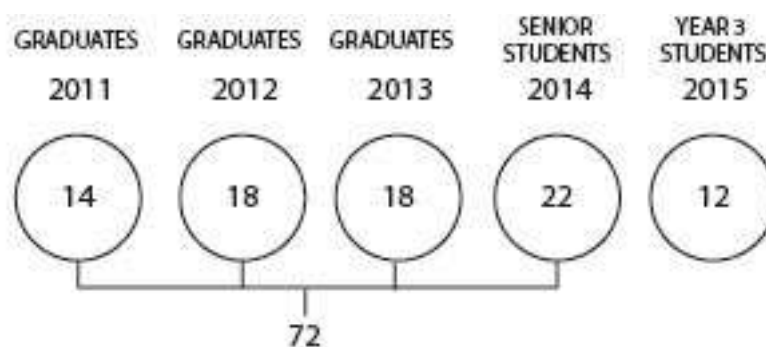


Figure 3. The number of students and graduates in the last curriculum development (2011-2015) Note. The year 3 students have not studied all 12 the major subjects of FB Program yet, so they are not counted as part of participants.

The five point Likert scale was used for a questionnaire (code as 5=strongly agree and 1= strongly disagree). Then used Interval Scale to interpret the average score of the participants' opinion that they agree on having been provided each dimension of EO from studying each major subjects. Entrepreneurial Orientation (EO) was measured one another by autonomy, innovativeness, proactiveness, competitive aggressiveness, risk taking related to the acquisition of knowledge from 12 major subject of FB programs.

The author can classify the meaning of agreement scale as follow:

4.21 – 5.00	The highest level of agreement
3.41 – 4.20	High level of agreement
2.61 – 3.40	Moderate level of agreement
1.81 – 2.60	Low level of agreement
1.01 – 1.80	The lowest level of agreement

In each dimension of EO, participants are required to rank the rating scale for each subject. with the topic

“Studying in this subject has provided you the “Autonomy” Orientation” (Innovativeness, Proactiveness, Competitive Aggressiveness and Risk-Taking Respectively)

Results

Results of the questionnaire are as the table 2

Table 2. Results of the questionnaire

From the results as table 2, the students and graduates' opinions in having been provided entrepreneurial orientation (EO) each dimension from studying the major subjects in FB Program. They are in the same range which are high level (3.41-4.2). The numbers show the answer "Yes" for Question 1: "Are all five dimensions of Entrepreneurial Orientation (EO) framework has been fostered enough to the students and graduates through studying in the major subjects of FB Program?"

"Autonomy" Orientation is ranked first with the average measure 3.90 while "Risk Taking" Orientation is ranked last with the average measure 3.59.

"Innovativeness and Proactiveness" Orientation are not the highest average measure even though many studies concluded that these are the 2 important dimensions at the stage of firm growth. The results show the answer "No" for Question 2 "Are Innovativeness and Proactiveness have been focused on the students through studying in the major subjects?"

The numbers show that the program provided for students and graduates did not focus on these two dimensions obviously so they are ranked in the second and third position.

The in-depth interview 5 graduates can explain the result in the table:

Subjects	Autonomy	Innovativeness	Proactiveness	Competitiveness	Risk-Taking
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Respondent 3 stated: We have been practiced by working through many project assignments in each subject

Conceptual Design for Fashion	4.08	3.98	3.68	3.4	3.54
Fashion Design 1	3.68	3.74	3.5	3.44	3.4
Fashion Design 2	3.82	3.98	3.74	3.6	3.64
Creative Textile Design	3.64	3.68	3.5	3.2	3.4
Accessories Design	3.54	3.54	3.4	3.16	3.26
Pattern Making&Tailoring Technique	3.6	3.6	3.16	3.04	3.4
Senior Project	4.12	4.12	3.98	3.74	3.98
Fashion Collection Planning	4.08	4.06	3.92	4.06	4.12
Branding	4.22	3.98	4.08	4.04	4.02
Overview to Fashion Business	3.8	3.88	3.78	3.78	3.64
Consumer Analysis in Fashion Business	4.2	3.98	4.06	4.06	4.06
Business Plan	4.02	3.74	3.74	3.6	3.74
Mean	3.90	3.86	3.71	3.59	3.68
Level	High	High	High	High	High

From this, might describe that "Autonomy" is ranked first.

Almost respondents described that though they have studied the fundamental of fashion business, having practiced from the assignments in these subjects; fashion collection planning, fashion branding and fashion business plan etc. It would never be as enough as dealing with the uncertainties surround in the business real life. Graduates still not feel confident to face the real world pressure. So it might show the result that “Risk Taking” is ranked last.

In term of “innovativeness and proactiveness” which are ranked the second and the third respectively even though they should be focused more, can be explained from these respondents’ opinions below,

Respondent 1 stated: The fundamental knowledge from the design and pattern making subjects are well prepared to start a business. But for me, as a boutique fashion brand owner, to create new fashion silhouettes, I need to practice more and more or take advance courses to increase the potential. These can help me make the unique and innovative pieces. Respondent2 stated: For me, Innovativeness is something which does not exist. Although we had classes to explore the inspirations and develop our own details, textile and prints. But there is still the limitation. It would be great if we can develop our idea with the factory to create something which does not exist in the market.

From these, might describe “innovativeness” is not ranked first.

Similar to respondent 3 stated: To finish the project assignments from most of the subjects, students worked with the mass materials and facilities in the existing markets. Without working with the industry while studying, students would not have chance to widen their world view. New material sourcing, suppliers matching and market channels testing are important to open their visions for the business and production possibilities. Having no trial and error, graduates will not dare to make differences or seek for the new opportunities. From this might describe “innovative and proactiveness” are not ranked first.

Besides, there are some other interesting points from the in-depth interview which are useful for the curriculum development.

-Passion and self-motivation are very important for someone to start a business. With any kinds of problems, he/she can do anything to get through them.

-No matter how intense of the subjects in the program, students would not get and realize what would be essential as when they start a business. So after graduated when they

have faced the real situation, it would be useful for them to have a consultancy or any advance courses to take to solve the problems they are confronting.

-The program provided students and graduates the whole process in theoretical and practical. But it didn't allow them to implement the projects to the industry to get real experience.

-To deal with other people in the real business efficiently, interdisciplinary studies can help students to see the different points of view and opinions among fashion design students, business students or any other students from different fields. Besides it can help them to gain more problem solving skills while working together.

Discussion/Conclusion

The results from Likert scale are indicated in the high level but it's still not enough to drive the FB Program's students and graduates to have their own business. From the results, it is shown that there is no problem with the major course content. The students and graduates are provided the fundamental knowledge that contributes towards EO enough. The results from literature review and in-depth interview are the guideline to improve the curriculum development. The improvement can help the average measurement to be at the highest level and provide the students to have more EO as well. But we still cannot guarantee that if we make a development, it can drive more students and graduates to start their own business. It seems to be not only entrepreneurial orientation is the key but there are still many factors to consider.

From analyzing the major subjects, contents are not the main point to improve but the learning method along each subjects are important. Changing the teaching methods, process development and project assessment would improve the learning outcome and might be factors that drive entrepreneurs. The result accords with the article of Papaikan Innoi et al. (2016: 65) which found that the support of curriculum and teaching activities affect the avidity for learning behaviour. The instructors or the representatives of various extra-curricular activities have to aware of providing students the activities to seek the knowledge by their own more than just getting the knowledge.

Collaboration with fashion industry would be more beneficial for the students to complement the design skills with production technology and entrepreneurial performance. The collaboration is not only to broaden the worldview to see the opportunities but also allowing the students to get the real experience in professional working. This is consistent with

the article of Chanasith Sithsungnoen (2018 : 19) which mentioned that to achieve outcomes that are truly mandatory and necessary for students requires changes on learning methods. Teachers should plan and facilitate the learning approach that allows students to learn from real-world issues that are related to them. These will encourage entrepreneurship in the fashion industry.

Interdisciplinary studies can change the learning atmosphere and can be helpful for fashion design students to study business skill with the business students. The teamwork and problem solving competencies are absolutely improved. Moreover it's probably a chance to find business partnership even before graduation.

From the interview, there are some important contents in-depth which are needed for the fashion design entrepreneurs both in design skill and business skill. But the program cannot provide all the topics for the 4 -year- program. A post graduate program as short courses would be optional, customize learning and coaching to clarify the problems that entrepreneurs confront.

Limitations and Future Research

This article based on Entrepreneurial Orientation which was provided in the major subjects of the program. The solution can help to contribute entrepreneurial orientation in each dimension.

However, not only about the education program to provide EO, the future study is needed to analyze the environment factors such as business incubator, fashion entrepreneur ecosystem, fashion and alumni network which are the factors to contribute fashion students and graduates' entrepreneurial orientation as well. Moreover, it is also needed to understand the individual factors such as family background, entrepreneurial intention, entrepreneurial motivation and the challenges of fashion entrepreneurship which are all the topics needed to drive entrepreneurs in the fashion industry.

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