Journal of Entrepreneurship, Business and Economics
ISSN 2345-4695
2023, 11(1), 63–101

A DIAGNOSTIC STUDY OF ENTREPRENEURIAL EDUCATION READINESS IN THE HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES IN PALESTINE

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Received December 2022; accepted March 2023

Abstract
The humanities majors are plummeting worldwide. Experts believe that the main reason for the down drop in demand in majors like History, Archaeology, tourism, social sciences, and even foreign languages can be partially attributed to the fact that the designed curriculum no longer lives up to students' expectations or satisfies the market's evolving needs. In Palestine, these disciplines are confronted with the crisis of low enrolment. This diagnostic study aims to assess entrepreneurial readiness in the colleges of humanities in Palestine in order to assist education leaders in making informed decisions about the struggle of low demand and high unemployment rates. To that end, the study espoused a mixed-method approach to assess the scale and the scope of introducing Entrepreneurship Education within the Colleges of Humanities in Palestine. The researchers collected study data through focus group interviews with the deans and administrators and through surveying a random sample of the humanities teachers. The results show there is a sufficient number of teachers who use efficient teaching approaches like competency-based education or problem-based learning. Nonetheless, humanities curricula does not involve students directly in the entrepreneurial process. Current practices display lack of emphasis on training 'For' building entrepreneurial competencies or 'Through' experiential, process-based approaches that link education to the outside business environment. Incubation services and work spaces are available on campus, but they are rarely utilized by the teachers or students from the humanities disciplines. The in-class induction strategies and the assessment methods remain very orthodox. Finally, this study provides ample evidence to support deans, administrators, and faculty members who want to systematically bring entrepreneurship into their discipline, and to deepen staff expertise in entrepreneurship education.

Research paper

Keywords: Entrepreneurship Curriculum, Humanities, Social sciences, Higher education, Palestine

Reference to this paper should be made as follows: Daragmeh, A., & Halabi, A. (2023). A Diagnostic Study of Entrepreneurial Education Readiness in the Humanities and Social Sciences in Palestine. *Journal of Entrepreneurship, Business and Economics, 11*(1), 63–101.

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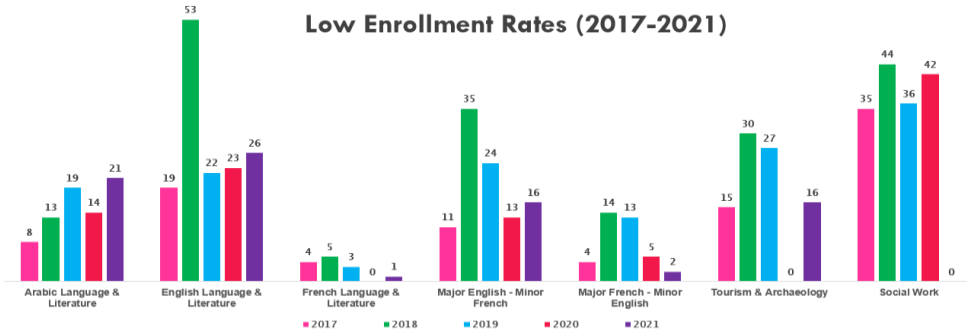
Introduction

Over the past 5 years, the demand on the humanities and social sciences in Palestinian universities has dropped sharply, a situation which has forced many important disciplines in the humanities and social sciences to confront the crisis of low enrolment. Students are deserting programs such as psychology, sociology, tourism and archaeology, and foreign languages. Interest in these programs is fading; as a consequence, many of them are facing the danger of closing down. Based on the statistics we collected on employability rates and our informants' testimonies, we attribute this decline to low market demand on the graduates of these programs. As reported by our informants, these programs are labelled as 'not practical' and as programs that 'do not lead directly to securing a job,' while the sciences are perceived as majors that yield better job prospects. The following chart presents the enrolment rates in the Humanities and Social Sciences between 2017-2021:



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Over the past few decades, many funding and research agencies in Palestine have invested time and resources to strengthen the universities' role

in boosting the country's economic growth and social progress (Tajpour et al., 2022). The Erasmus+, USAID, Swiss, German, Canadian funds have all initiated projects to encourage university market linkages and to stimulate innovation and entrepreneurship education as a means to affect growth by stimulating innovation. Many universities collaborated with scientific institutions to respond to these calls by creating a close correlation between the university research in science and technology and the market demands by launching dual studies programs and by investing in the creation and equipment of business incubators and innovation hubs. This has created an upsurge in entrepreneurship within the natural sciences and technology, often to the total neglect of the humanities and social sciences. Durand and Henseler in their recently released book (2023) address this gap in the humanities entrepreneurship education; they state that " Across all levels of education, students are given the message that to change the world - or make money - the arts and humanities are not the subjects to study". However, the authors have demonstrated through a collection of perspectives from the humanities entrepreneurs and educators that the humanities has a crucial role to play in enterprise and the economy as well as in developing essential skills such as critical thinking skills, cultural awareness, and ethical decision making in any entrepreneurial education.

In Palestine, donor funds channelled into the country have not targeted entrepreneurship education from psychology, sociology, early education, tourism and archaeology, or languages. In a low income country where women, children, and other socially vulnerable groups are experiencing violence, poverty, and restrictions on mobility, programs like psychology and sociology are essential for supporting the social and psychological wellbeing

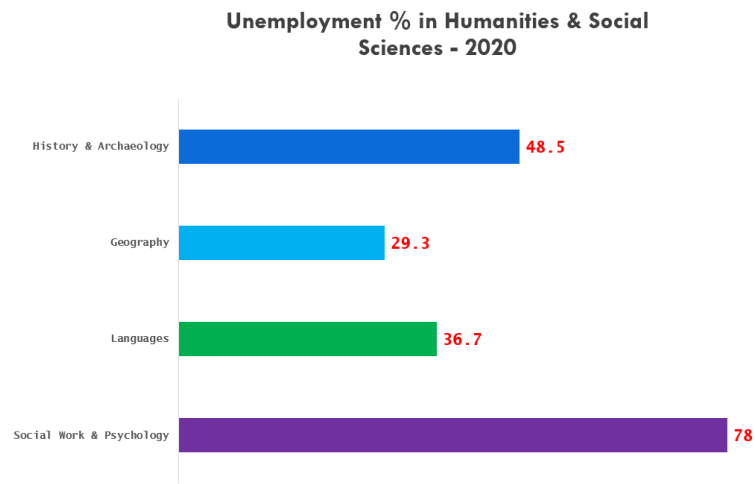
of these vulnerable groups while the archaeology and tourism sectors are equally important because they significantly contribute to employability and economic development. The current situation in these disciplines necessitates transforming the curricula and delivery modes, building staff capacity in entrepreneurial education, and enhancing the ecosystem both inside higher education institutions as well as in the many innovation hubs in Palestine (NGate, PICTI, technoparks). This study demonstrates that interventions at these levels must be deployed with urgency to mitigate the serious impact of this neglect on many key disciplines in the humanities and social sciences (Dana, 2022, Dana et al., 2022). With that in mind, we have designed our diagnostic study with the aim to examine employability, skill-based education and entrepreneurship in the human and social sciences in Palestine. We study the readiness of humanities fields of study for entrepreneurial education, readiness of educators for designing and implementing entrepreneurial curricula, as well as students' entrepreneurial readiness. Our study targets four programs that are hosted in the Colleges of Humanities and Social Sciences, namely tourism, psychology, sociology and foreign languages. By means of introducing the readers to the study context, we initially present recent statistics about employment rates in these programs. The methodology section defines the themes around which we collected data from program administrators and educators. The discussion section identifies the current practices, gaps and needed interventions at the levels of teacher capacity enhancement, teaching and learning practices, the assessment of learning and the utilization of available incubation services to support student entrepreneurship in the humanities. The study findings and their implications for the launching of entrepreneurial curricula in the humanities are stated in the conclusion.

Why Entrepreneurship in the Humanities?

Academic entrepreneurship can simply be defined as the involvement of all academics from all majors and organizations in relevant activities to boost the economy through industry-university partnerships, university-based incubators and hubs, university-based venture funds, and startups by students (Farsi et al., 2014; Salamzadeh & Kirby, 2017; Salamzadeh, 2018). The growth and development of entrepreneurship ecosystems around the world is a well-researched topic (Radović-Marković et al., 2012). The drive behind its timely and imperative narrative, especially in Palestine, is the increase in youth unemployment which has been attributed to the unpredictability, uncertainty and instability surrounding the country's economy. Self-initiated job creation is thus seen as key to alleviating youth unemployment and improving the performance of the economy (Pereira et al., 2021). With the global emphasis on entrepreneurship, entrepreneurs are increasingly becoming role models in society, and entrepreneurship as a career choice has risen in popularity. The term has become part of everyday language and is often associated with economic growth and, in socio-economic terms, the well-being of societies (Achampong, Harber, Falk and Lee-Wolf, 2017; Kew, Herrington, Litovsky and Gale, 2013; Dana and Salamzadeh, 2022). If entrepreneurship contributes to economic growth and employment, then more youth should be trained to become entrepreneurs. The studies that underpin this belief indicate that entrepreneurship is generally considered a positive opportunity for youth, rather than simply a means of escaping unemployment. Entrepreneurship can help alleviate socio-economic challenges through the promotion of business formation and self-employment as a viable career option (Kawamorita &

Salamzadeh, 2021). It helps youth build interpersonal skills, and non-cognitive skills such as perseverance and it motivates and empowers youth in other life circumstances, including coping with poverty and adapting to adversity (See Dhaliwal 2016; Salamzadeh, 2014; Toma et al., 2014). In the developing countries, Margolis (2014) emphasizes that over half of all workers in these countries are self-employed. Although some self-employment is chosen by entrepreneurs with well-defined projects and ambitions, roughly two-thirds results from individuals having no better alternatives. Entrepreneurship and self-employment are becoming a necessity in these countries because there are limited employment opportunities in the private or public sectors.

Promoting entrepreneurship education is especially important in the context of Palestine, a country with a small economy that is driven mainly by micro and small business, government employment rates have dropped sharply over the years.In this respect, the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics reports show that the unemployment rates among these majors in Palestine in 2020 are significantly low (as per the below chart).



Source: the authors

Unemployment rates among humanities graduates are alarmingly high, reaching 36.7% for foreign language graduates, 78% among psychologists and social workers, 48.5% in history and archeology. Such a situation requires universities to become more responsive to these realities, adjusting curricula to assist students in identifying market opportunities in their areas of specialization and then coaching them so that they may become self-employed as one possible destination (Karaki, 2021). In this context, our study will assist education administrators and education leaders to make informed decisions as they struggle to address the grim facts of low demand and high unemployment rates in the humanities disciplines.

Research Methods

A mixed-method approach (quantitative and qualitative) was used to assess the scale and scope of entrepreneurship activities within the colleges of Humanities. The use of mixed methods allowed information to be analyzed in multiple ways. We used the data collected through questionnaires and focus groups in order to generate a foundation for the layered analysis and the critical recommendations.

The researchers conducted semi-structured focus group interviews with the administrators of the major and minor programs in the College of Humanities (4 single specializations and 12 minor programs in total). An online survey was then used to collect information from teachers and administrators on the four main themes for this study, namely the infrastructure readiness, the curricula and learning methodologies, levels of engagement with the market, and the teacher training needs.

A preliminary meeting with the Deans and department chairs was conducted in order to investigate the root-causes of the downdrift of demand on humanities and social sciences. As a focus group, the informants reported that the current learning practices have zero work placement and zero entrepreneurial dimensions that are deemed as imperative learning tools in the 21st century. Besides, students have very low-esteem when it comes to their major in any of the humanities and social sciences fields. People consider these fields unworthy and non-feasible as opposed to STEM fields, which guarantee decent job opportunities to students through entrepreneurial activities, work placements, and partnerships with NGOs and private-sector companies.

The results of this meeting informedour diagnostic situation analysis survey study which aimed to assess the existing conditions at the time the study was conducted, April, 2022. We randomly sampled 250 staff members from twenty universities that make up the total number of higher education institutions with humanities and social science programs in Palestine. The study aimed to identify opportunities and gaps in the ecosystem elements for entrepreneurial education. Specifically, we assessed 5 levels pertaining to learning and teaching practices, integration of entrepreneurial skills in the curricula, engaging entrepreneurs in the teaching and learning processes, academic staff capacity enhancement, and finally the infrastructure needed to support any curricula transformation to reflect entrepreneurial components.
We focused our evaluation on 5 levels:

Enhanced infrastructure: What types of support service and facilities (work spaces, Innovation hubs, incubators) are being offered by the university to support entrepreneurial education? Are these services being used by the humanities staff and students?

Learning environments: What are the teaching and learning methodologies that are commonly used in the humanities?

Behavior: Do teachers in the target programs have the knowledge and skill to design and implement entrepreneurial courses? Are there any specific training needs that would help them to do so?

Curricula and assessment: Are there any courses in the target programs that are specifically focused on entrepreneurship education? To what extent do assessment practices in the humanities promote entrepreneurial learning?

Market linkages: To what extent is the curricula in the target programs connected to the market? At which levels is this connection taking place? What roles do market professionals play in the coaching of humanities students?

These levels allowed us to identify the needed interventions to enhance the entrepreneurial education ecosystem elements. With a view to supporting the development of the education quality and the future career prospects for students from the humanities and social sciences, it was essential to understand the existing activity, institutional capacity, and appetite for engagement and to capture activity within the institution and perception around the delivery of entrepreneurship development.

Data Collection

The combination of the multiple data points (quantitative and qualitative) enabled triangulation of results and depth of explanatory meaning. The authors conducted a thorough analysis of the data components and used this analysis to inform the recommendations resulting from this study. Of course, we fully acknowledge the diversity and unique nature of the fields of study provided by the colleges of humanities and has adapted our approach accordingly. With an array of different types of majors/fields of study, including foreign languages, sociology, social work, history, tourism and archaeology, entrepreneurship education development can be diverse in its objectives and methodology. This means that it could be very different among majors, because practical work methods and the market opportunities may vary considerably depending on the aims of the programs and the offered courses. However, entrepreneurship orientation may also vary depending on the talent of the students irrespective of their major of specialization. Accordingly, the researchers maintained some sort of balance to allow for discipline specific entrepreneurial opportunities as well as the more generic ones that reflect the entrepreneur's own preferences for their future career paths.

Given each of the program's approaches and objectives and the academic staff's experience and gender, the data was presented and processed to meet the overall aims of this diagnostic research, which, in turn, ensures a diversity of responses and approaches to issues and agendas such as entrepreneurship. This research reflects this diversity; it accounts for the varied approaches and encapsulates them within the series of recommendations.

Program Administrators' Focus Group

A preliminary brainstorming session has been conducted with the Deans of the Faculty of Humanities and the chairs of departments in order to investigate the root-causes for the downdrift in demand on humanities and social sciences. Brainstorming is a widely applied technique, usually used for generating and collecting criticism-free ideas on a certain topic or problem in a group (Osborn, 1963). The group of participating administrators had the predetermined conceptual basis for the idea generation process (adapted from Béchard & Grégoire, 2005). The participants testified that the current learning practices in most major and minor programs (4 single and 12 major and minor programs) have no workplacement and no entrepreneurial dimensions. There is only one elective, an introductory, one credit hour course with that title 'Entrepreneurship Education' which educates students about entrepreneurship in a large hall auditorium setting. Besides, the department chairs attributed the low demand on the humanities to the students' low-esteem when it comes to their major in any of the humanities and social sciences fields. Students consider these fields unworthy and non-feasible as opposed to STEM fields, which guarantee decent job opportunities to students through entrepreneurial activities, work placements, and partnerships with NGOs and private-sector companies. With regard to the teacher readiness to lead entrepreneurship courses, the focus group participants reported that the vast majority of humanities teachers need intensive preparation and training before they can lead courses with entrepreneurial orientations. Only a few courses integrate opportunities to engage with the surrounding communities while most of the learning takes place inside the classroom. The program administrators testi-

fied that the whole concept of market engagements and entrepreneurial preparation is a new concept in the humanities and so is the idea of organizing boot camps to support students and boost their entrepreneurial skills.

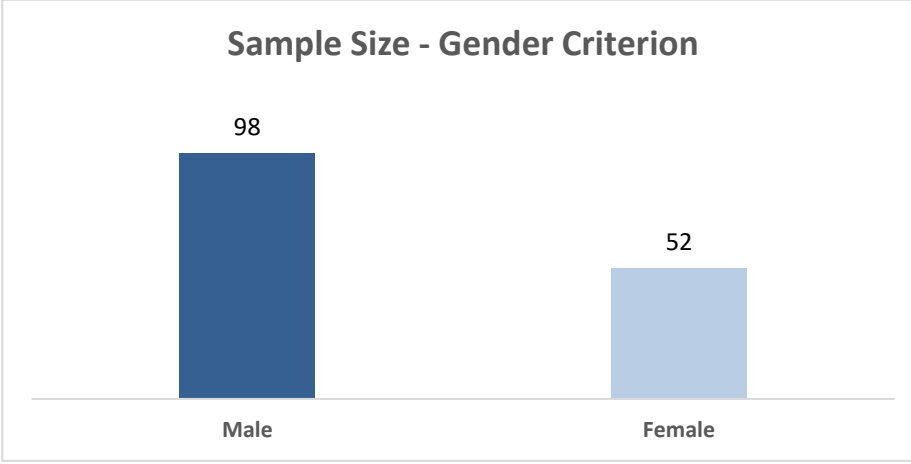
As a result of this 2-hour semi-structured session: a) the needs and/or problems in the target programs and 5 dimensions (pedagogy, curricula, infrastructure, market engagements, teachers' capacities) were identified; b) the key topics to be addressed in the survey were agreed upon. These dimensions informed the teacher survey we used to collect a large amount of data from the educators' themselves.

Teacher Survey

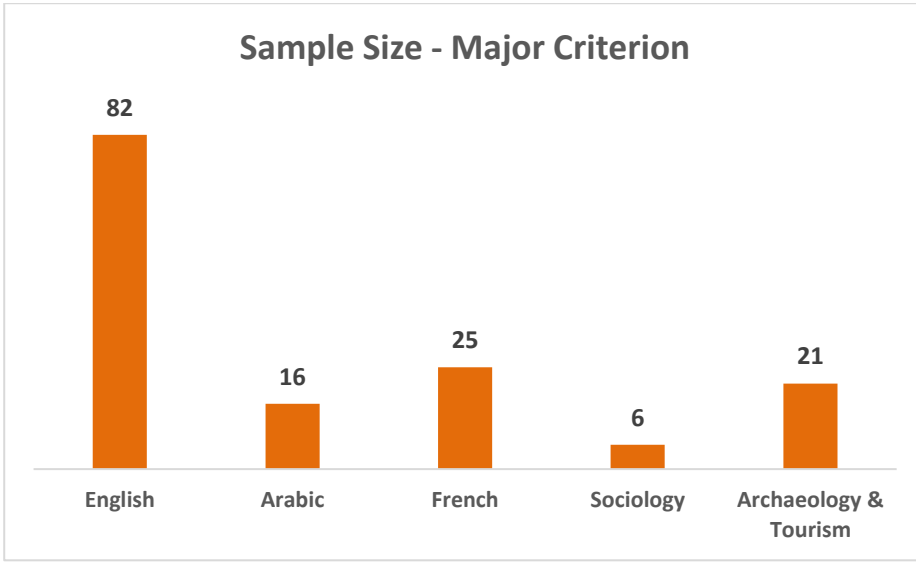
The survey was created by the research team on April 2022. The survey consisted of 4 sections with 31 prompts related to the 4main dimensions which pertain to the design and implementation of entrepreneurial curricula. The last section in the survey was used to determine the teachers' training needs. The survey was distributed to a list of 250 academics working at the Faculty of Humanities in 20 universities in the West Bank and Gaza. The participants completed the questionnaire electronically. The questionnaire email requests were distributed among the academics using a different email thread for each program. The questionnaire was initiated in April 2022 with around 150 respondents from all 20 universities. With a total of 150 completed responses out of a potential 500 educators, this reflects a 30% response rate, which is within the expected boundaries of a research of this nature.

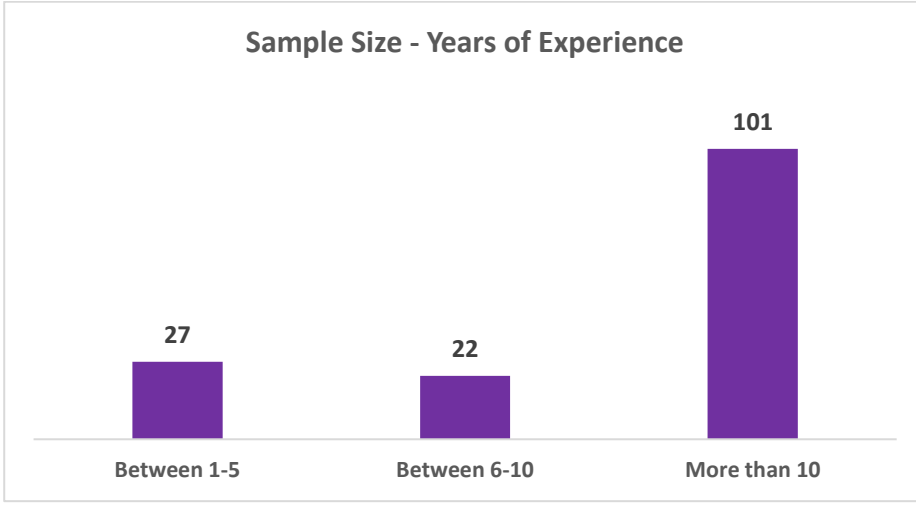
Sample Size & Respondents

Respondents were classified according to gender, program/field of study, and years of experience (Rahman et al., 2022). The researchers aimed to ensure that the study sample represents both male and female teachers from all areas of specialization with varied levels of experience in higher education. The distribution of the respondent per each domain is presented in the below charts:



Source: the authors





Source: the authors

According to the above charts, the majority of the respondents are male (gender criterion), from the Department of English/Language Center (major/field of study criterion), and with more than 10 years of experience in teaching (years of experience criterion). The response rates are proportional with the numbers of faculty in each discipline (84 English; 21Arabic; 14

French; 21 tourism and archeology; 10 social science). Thus the study sample proportionately represented both genders and all disciplines within the colleges of humanities in Palestine.

Discussion and Results

As mentioned under the methodology section above, data was collected using both quantitative and qualitative approaches. The quantitative data was used to form the baseline and foundation for a mapping exercise that identified activity, processes, and the relevance and implementation of strategies within the colleges of Humanities. Where questions solicited a personal response, these were collected from the academic staff and reported based on gender, program/fields of study, and years of experience within the survey. This data was presented in aggregate, both to protect the anonymity of the individuals, and to provide sufficient data to develop patterns and understanding. The authors reviewed and critically analyzed the qualitative and quantitative data against the initial research aims, with a view to providing explanations for the development of recommendations. The purpose of this research was not only to map current levels of entrepreneurship activity, but to ground these within context, expectations, and capacities of staff. In this regard, the project was guided by the following key questions and areas of interest:

1. Types of activity in place (what is taking place; where does it sit within the college structure?)

2. The processes by which entrepreneurship education is delivered within the humanities (instances of good practice; information around opportunities and challenges; roles of instructors and market stakeholders and their levels of engagement)

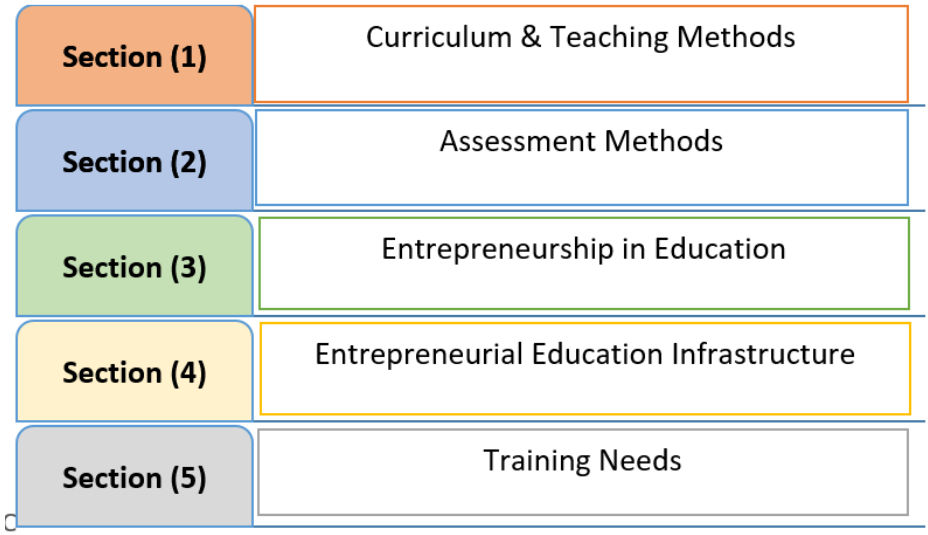
3. Availability and utilization of resources with college and university such as work spaces, incubators, business hubs)

4. Effectiveness of entrepreneurial activity (education and training); exploration of challenges and barriers; measures and tools in place to determine success).

5. College culture of support and institution ecosystem (are students encouraged to engage? What internal elements are in place to provide support for student projects?)

Study Dimensions

As a direct result of individual input, and driven by the data gathered, the researchers employed aggregate data reporting by gender, program, and years of experience for several of the key thematic areas, as outlined below. This allowed the research findings to be examined more broadly in order to avoid reducing the study to a ranking system of achievement.



Source: the authors

The results for each theme are interpreted in relation to the guiding questions listed above. Conclusions and recommendations for future actions are added after discussion with the aim of showing how to utilize existing strengths and how to overcome existing challenges. The diagnostic findings and the recommendations will help identify needed interventions on all 5 levels and will, therefore, aid administrators in making decision on the integration of entrepreneurial activity in the curricula.

Section 1: Curriculum and Teaching Methods

The use of learning centered methods such as problem and project based methods is crucial for building entrepreneurial skills such as time management, team work, project planning, technical design, and scenario building; while the market connected curricula (work placement, market mentoring, coaching, authentic assignments) reinforces another set of key skills that are deemed essential for enhancing market knowledge, negotiation skills, project scoping, client needs, and social media literacy. The 13 questions under the category curriculum and teaching methods solicited responses on aspects that are related to pedagogical practice and levels of the field engagements in the curriculum.

The results for each type of activity are reported in charts below followed by interpretations of the aggregated responses. Conclusions and recommendations for future actions on this dimension are added at the end of this section.

Table 1. Pedagogies

Item	Never	Rarely	Some-times	Of-ten	Al-ways
Using lectures as the main teaching method	3%	3%	12%	64%	18%
Using problem-based methodologies	12%	12%	18%	18%	40%
Using project-based methodologies	18%	12%	27%	34%	9%

Lectures are predominantly used as the main teaching and learning strategy with a total of 82% reporting that they always or often use lecturing and only 6% who rarely or never use it as the main learning and teaching strategy. The extensive time allocated for lecturing will necessarily mean that coaching and mentoring student receives less attention than the imparting of knowledge. This emphasis on in class teacher-based education compromises the potential to involve market clients, incubator mentors, or new startup owners in the learning process. However, when prompted on the use of problem- and project-based learning approaches, a significant number of respondents reported that they always/often/sometimes use these approaches (70% use projects and 76% use problems). These results represent a good potential for the university, the academic staff, and the students to adopt unorthodox and creative methods in teaching and learning, which might also be a positive signal for the academic staff and the students' readiness to introduce entrepreneurship in education.

Data from Table (2) reveal that little or no time is allocated to the use of important techniques for teaching entrepreneurship, such as inviting guest speakers, inviting entrepreneurs and new business owners, or using the services of coaches and company mentors to assist them in creating ideas, producing designs, applying them.

Table 2. Market relevant methods

Item	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always
Inviting guest speakers to train students	9%	33%	58%	0%	0%
Inviting entrepreneurs and business experts to train students	39%	43%	12%	6%	0%
Sending students to NGate incubator or other companies to receive training	36%	21%	21%	15%	6%

Table (2) shows evidently low responses on allocating time in the syllabus to use exemplars and models from new business owners and successful entrepreneurs from the humanities and social sciences. Teachers rarely or never (82%) invite entrepreneurs or business experts to speak to students; rarely or never (57%) refer students to the incubator and business consultation services available through on campus incubators. Unsurprisingly, 50 respondents from the department of English, Archaeology, and Sociology answered that they rarely use this approach as the current syllabi of the courses do not require that. Apparently, the value of outsourcing/ inviting experts/entrepreneurs to extend consultancy and training services to students is underemphasized in the teaching and learning practices at the moment of conducting this study.

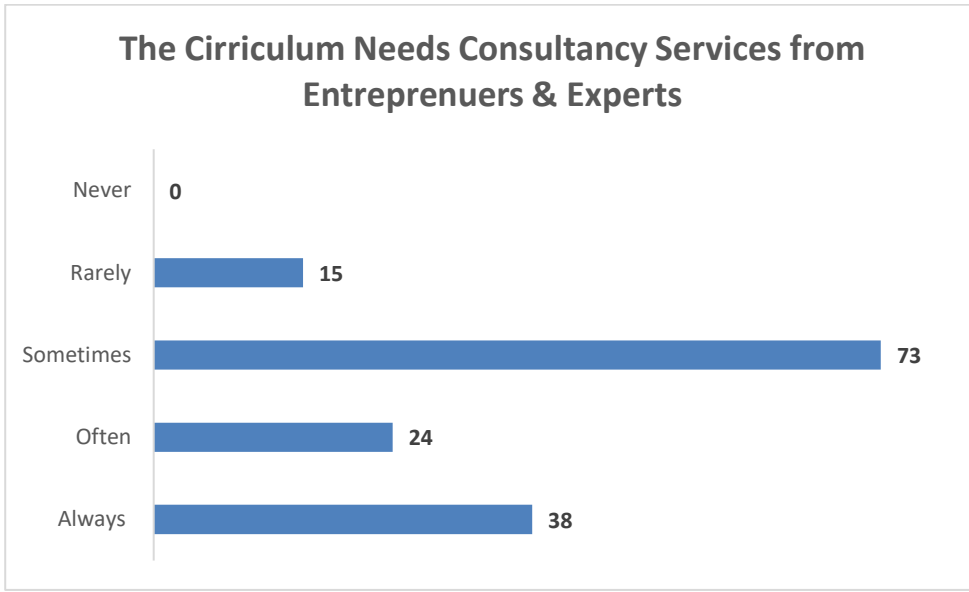
Studies on entrepreneurial education emphasize the importance of exposing learners to the experiences of entrepreneurs from the world of business. Similarly, entrepreneurial models can also influence learners' perception of entrepreneurship. In relation to this theme, Hartshorn and Parvin (1999, p. 82) propose a training program that includes mentorship provided by local entrepreneurs. In this program, a mentor is assigned to each student, enabling the student to take part in all business decisions (83). This type of training offers students the opportunity to get a more precise knowledge of what an

entrepreneur is, as well as the opportunity to be introduced as a potential future entrepreneur into a local business environment (84).

Byabashaija and Katono (2011, p.86) believe that using case studies of local entrepreneurs in teaching entrepreneurship can be instructive regarding the feasibility of entrepreneurship as a career option. Van Auken, Fry and Stephens (2006, p.87) studied the impact of specific activities, in which role models and students, as potential entrepreneurs, might be involved in the students' desires to own their own businesses. They found the activities of role models related to the respondent's involvement in professional activities, employment in the business, and discussions about the business to be significantly related to the interest in starting a business (54). Karimi et al. (2013, p.56) propose other ways to include local entrepreneurs in the entrepreneurial education process, namely, teachers can invite entrepreneurs to take part in question and answer sessions with students, present their success stories, and share their experiences. Invited entrepreneurs can provide real-life examples of how small businesses are created and run, giving students a clearer sense of the real world of entrepreneurship and a better understanding of the challenges and opportunities they may face as entrepreneurs. According to Urbano et al. [88], universities are ideal scenarios for joining people with entrepreneurial experience to those who want to create a new venture. Guerrero and Urbano 2012, p. 89) recommend seminars, business meetings, and labs as places for the interaction between potential role models and the university students. The results of the study conducted by Karimi et al. (56) suggest that entrepreneurship education programs should consider including contact with entrepreneurial models as part of their curriculum as these models can stimulate student confidence in their ability to start a business and improve their

attitude towards entrepreneurship. On long-term, Urbano et al. [88] propose that scenarios where experienced entrepreneurs interact with potential entrepreneurs should be created to enhance the entrepreneurial attitudes and motivation toward entrepreneurship within the university community.

Interestingly, the study participants concur on the significant contributions that experts and early entrepreneurs can bring to learning experience. When prompted on whether they believe that the current syllabi/study plans do need the support/ consultancy services from other experts and entrepreneurs in the field to create links with the market, 48% believed that these components are important in some cases and 10% voted that they should be often emphasized as shown in the chart below:



Source: the authors

Optimistically, a quite significant number of the respondents are aware of the importance of integrating entrepreneurship into the curriculum,

and this is evident in acknowledging the value on campus incubators and other local companies can bring to training students and preparing them to be able to run their own businesses in the future.

With regard to the first study dimension related to curricula and current learning practices, we conclude that a significant percentage among humanities teachers realize the importance of introducing entrepreneurial elements in to the curricula. This attitude communicates positive signs to program administrators regarding the integration of entrepreneurship in the curriculum. However and though other methods like problem- and project-based learning are being sometimes used, the humanities staff are over reliant on lectures in planning and delivering the curricula. Finally, no or little time is allocated for linking the curriculum to the market by means of inviting guest speakers or using mentoring services available through company mentor or business incubators.

Section 2: Assessment Methods

The existing literature on the assessment of entrepreneurial education rarely mentions exams as a reliable method to assess student work. Rubrics used for this purpose include an explicit focus on the elements of learning that are relevant to the assessment of entrepreneurship education outcomes.

In the literature, there is a considerable gap concerning the assessment of entrepreneurial education (Pittaway & Edwards, 2012). Mwasalwiba (2010) focuses on studies that measure the impact on learners as a consequence of attending tertiary courses in entrepreneurship education. He states that because of the selection of success indicators, the outcomes tend to be

biased to favor the learning outcomes on entrepreneurship. New venture creation is the most important indicator of success, followed by the students' academic standards and changes in their perception: interest, attitudes, self-confidence, self-efficacy and entrepreneurial skills. However, if examined closely, most questions on attitudes concern the students' intention to open their own business, the major rationale of which is to make profit.

Pittaway and Edwards (2012) provide a review of assessment practices in entrepreneurial education at tertiary level. Although the programs that are surveyed concern the making of profits rather than wider educational entrepreneurship, the methodology they apply helps shed light on the assessment practices especially in the USA and in UK. The overwhelming majority of courses which Pittaway and Edwards (2012) inspect make use of 'about' forms, while only one-tenth utilised 'through' forms, and only 3% 'embedded forms'. A major implication of this finding is that most of the courses under review do not prepare the students for entrepreneurial activities. Instead, their aim is to provide knowledge and give an initial introduction into the world of entrepreneurship. In 60% of the cases, 'about' forms of entrepreneurship training are underpinned by learning outcomes such as knowledge and understanding. 'Educating For Entrepreneurship' types are equally divided into attainment of understanding and knowledge, as well as the development of skills and competences. 'Through' approaches concentrate on relationships, empathy and competences. The majority of assessment methods used in this type are business plans and reports, with presentations and in-class assessments being the second most common. The traditional methods by contrast—such as tests, exams and essays—are being used far less frequently.

Some of the most common criteria from the literature that features in rubrics include: 1) Basic Academic Skills, such as logical reasoning, communications, digital skills, technology, team work. 2) Business Planning, such as the financial and marketing aspects. 3) Risk Management, such as the focus on student ability to take calculated risks based on sound research and relevant information, including economic analysis. 4) Personal Interest and Investment, such as the focus on business feasibility, size and scope, in which the entrepreneurs are personally invested, and in a manner that is significant to them. 5) Market relevance, including the understanding of basic economic concepts such as cost, revenue, supply and demand. Often reliable assessment for such elements requires the involvement of market mentors, community clients, or incubator staff. Academic staff who have little experience in these concepts, and who have no entrepreneurial experience themselves are not well positioned to judge the value of prototypes or business plans without the help of people who have such experience.

To gauge assessment practices in the colleges of humanities, the researchers developed prompts to solicit staff responses to statements which aimed to identify the most commonly used assessment tools and the level of involvement of relevant stakeholders in assessing the quality of student projects. Results are reported in table (3).

Table 3. Assessment methods

Item	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always
I use exams only to assess student performance	0%	15%	21%	58%	6%
I use projects to evaluate student performance.	18%	18%	48%	16%	0%
I evaluate project feasibility and relevance to the market.	15%	9%	37%	24%	15%
I evaluate innovation and creativity in project ideas.	15%	12%	43%	18%	12%
I invite market mentors to evaluate quality of student projects.	46%	21%	21%	9%	3%
I invite community clients to evaluate quality of student projects.	52%	15%	21%	12%	0

Expectedly, around 85% of the respondents confirmed that they always/often/sometimes use exams as the main assessment method. This might be attributed to the fact that until very recently the quite common institutional culture/policy requires exams as the main tool to assess students' performance. Also, this might be due to the currently enforced policies that consider summative written final exams as the only exit assessment tool in undergraduate courses. Although the academic staff confirmed earlier that they use creative approaches in teaching and learning (problem/project-based learning approach), their experience is still fresh, and they reported that they need more time and training to start allocating a bigger portion of the assessment on problem-solving skills, project management, critical thinking skills, leadership, innovation, team work, etc.

The results point to a growing tendency among the academic staff to use projects as an assessment tool (48% sometimes; 16% often). A fairly good percentage reported that they evaluate project feasibility and market rele-

vance (37% sometimes, 24% often, 15% always). Although the results seemingly point to the use of modern learning methods, they are still not satisfactory in terms of the frequency or quality of project-based curricula design. When the majority of staff are still using exams to assess student learning, this practice indicates that the attention given to coaching students throughout the process of project development, i.e. formative assessment sessions on project progress, remain underemphasized. However, this practice can be enhanced by changing the current policies, training the staff on project based curricula development, formative assessment, and project assessment based on pre-defined rubrics.

These conclusions are reinforced when we examine teacher's responses to the prompts on the involvement of market mentors and community clients in the assessment of student projects. The results here are quite indicative of the modest roles played by experts or experienced entrepreneurs in guiding student work. 65-70% reported that they never involve anybody from the market in the assessment of student work.

The main findings from the survey on assessment methods show that the humanities educators are using projects to assess student performance. This finding is a positive, emerging trend which needs to be consolidated and reinforced through training on project coaching and curriculum development. The low involvement of market stakeholders in the formative and summative assessment points to a gap in linking student learning to authentic market experiences. Such gap will need to be bridged when college administrators embarks on a transformative change with the aim to better connect its curricula to the market.

Section 3: Integration of Entrepreneurial Skills in The Curricula

This section solicits responses on the integration of the entrepreneurial cycle in the curricula from project selection, ideation, scoping, business planning, business modeling, digital marketing, etc.). These questions target two objectives for entrepreneurial education: 1) to equip students with entrepreneurial skills, which can be deployed in a work setting, the best way is to provide education and training that enable students to get involved directly in the entrepreneurial process, such as worksite training. 2) to prepare students to act as entrepreneurs, the most effective technique here is to facilitate experiments by trying entrepreneurship out in a controlled environment by working through the process. According to Kirby (2002), entrepreneurship education needs a different teaching instructive, hence, there are studies trying to relate entrepreneurship education to work related learning (Dwerryhouse, 2001); experiential learning (Kolb, 1984); action-learning (Smith, 2001), and entrepreneurial training (Gibb, 1999). In other words, entrepreneurship education is more than business management; it is also about "learning", which practically means learning that integrates experience, skills and knowledge to prepare learners' to start with a new venture if they choose to do so. Entrepreneurship education, therefore can be defined as a formalized form of education that is intended to equip students with the needed skills and knowledge to help them recognize business opportunities, search customer's insights, understand the needs of the market, create business ideas, develop the business plan, run own business, and evaluate environmental, and institutional and political issues.

Responses to the prompts on the integration of entrepreneurial education in the humanities are recorded in Table (4).

Table 4. Prompts on the integration of entrepreneurial education in the humanities

Item	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always
My students work in teams to develop ideas for their entrepreneurial projects.	30%	22%	24%	21%	3%
I give my students the space to choose project ideas that fit their preference.	0%	6%	24%	49%	18%
I ask my students to use course knowledge to develop innovative solutions.	10%	6%	18%	42%	24%
I devote classes in my syllabus to provide guidance and formative feedback on work progress.	0%	3%	39%	49%	9%
My students conduct market studies to determine needs and opportunities.	30%	25%	21%	24%	0%
My students conduct feasibility studies as part of the requirements for the project completion.	31%	27%	24%	18%	0
I connect my course syllabus and requirements with the needs of the local community.	18%	9%	9%	46%	18%
My students work in the field and learn from working with the community.	18%	15%	21%	33%	12%
My student learn from market experts and professionals.	31%	18%	30%	21%	0%

The results on readiness for entrepreneurial education are positive on many levels. A total of 91% of the sample reported that they cater for learner preferences in project selection (24% sometimes; 49% often; 18% always). Guidance and formative assistance is provided by a large percentage in the sample (39% sometimes; 49% often; 9% always). A high percentage also reported that they connect their courses to the needs of the local communities (9% sometimes; 46% often; 18% always). Hence the instructional practices do provide students with learning opportunities from the field. Additionally, instructors provide students with the chances to pursue their own preferences with regards to the problems they wish to address in their project work.

However, the respondents reported low emphasis on building entrepreneurial skills when it comes to preparing students to start their ventures. Thus, and consistent with the results from the learning methods section above, the curriculum does not integrate learning opportunities that will help students to recognize business opportunities, identify and address customer's needs, understand the needs of the market, create business ideas, develop business plans, estimate feasibility of the business. This is evident from the results on learning from market experts and professionals which is reported at significantly low percentage (31% never; 18% rarely; 30% sometimes; 21% often). Likewise, project feasibility is under represented in the curricula (31% never; 27% rarely; 24% sometimes; 18% often). The training on performing market analysis studies is also underemphasized (30% never; 25% rarely; 21% sometimes; 24% often). With market studies and feasibility studies, it is worth noting that 0% reported that they always integrate these components in the curricula.

The results related to curricula reveal that there is good ground for any transformative interventions towards entrepreneurial education since a quite significant percentage among educators already tap learner's talent by allowing them to pursue projects of their own interest and by integrating periodic formative feedback sessions into the course flow. Linkages with the community seem to be another strength point that allows students to engage directly with the surrounding environments. However, the curricula evidently lacks emphasis on market skills, market needs analysis, project scoping and feasibility, marketing and digital marketing, and customer needs. It is important to include these topics in the capacity enhancement for humanities faculty and

to demonstrate through exemplar success stories how and why these components are essential ones in entrepreneurial curriculum design.

Section 4: Infrastructure Availability

In this section of the survey we aimed to identify the ecosystem elements that are in place on the university campus and their utilization to support potential entrepreneurs. In addition to the entrepreneurial curricula, these elements include physical spaces like work spaces, incubators and accelerators which provide mentoring, specialized training and networking services for potential entrepreneurs. Boot camps are also considered essential for the identification of potentially successful startups with primary interests in the humanities. Bootcamp programs involve students in all the stages of starting a business to help them develop an entrepreneurial mindset to start a social enterprise, non-profit organization or innovative startup. These services also encourage students to set off the journey to start their own ventures. The six prompts for this section solicit information on the availability of in-house training inside the colleges of Humanities and Social Science as well as the other elements of logistical support that are available for entrepreneurs on campus. In light of these resources, the researchers wanted to see to what extent has the lack of resources impacted teachers' coaching and to what extent are teachers utilizing the ecosystem elements that are available for them. The results are given in table (5).

Table 5. Entrepreneurship Ecosystem Elements

Item	Strongly Disagree	Disa-gree	Neu-tral	Agree	Strongly Agree
A space for in-house training is available in the faculty.	33%	25%	21%	21%	0%
My students benefit from the services provided at the univer-sity business incubator.	30%	21%	36%	10%	3%
I provide coaching inside the classroom even when the class is not suitable for doing it.	10%	12%	27%	27%	24%
I do not do any training on en-trepreneurship in any of my courses.	18%	30%	33%	9%	10%
My college organizes Boot camps for the humanities	70%	21%	9%	0%	0%

The results reveal weaknesses in the physical support services such as in-house work spaces (33% voting disagree strongly; 25% disagree; 21% neutral). Utilization of resources available through incubators and business hubs is also rated low (30% disagree strongly; 21 disagree; 36% neutral responses). Only 3% reported that their students are directly engaged with the services offered at the incubators, such as management training, assistance with core business operations, marketing, market studies, legal procedures, and most importantly access to capital sources (grants and loans). Boot camp culture is not common either.91% voted negative on this prompt. However, despite these significant challenges, the educators reported that they are doing project coaching and some sort of entrepreneurial training in their own courses (project coaching is practiced by 51% of the sample.

The infrastructure prompts reveal that in-house training, boot camps, and incubation services are rarely practiced or not emphasized in the current situation. With such negative underpinnings, educators in the humanities

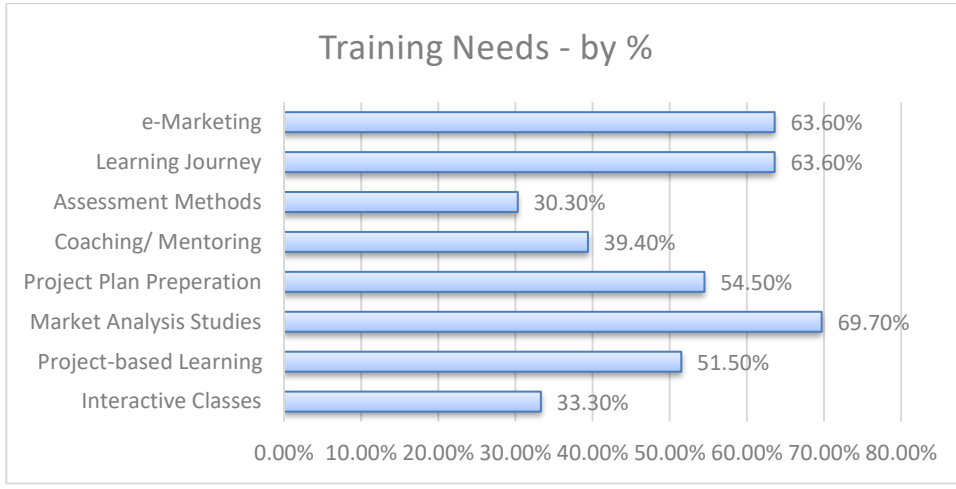
should go through a learning journey to build awareness and experience in the ecosystem support elements in the humanities.

Section 5: Staff Capacity Enhancement Needs

This section aimed to identify teacher training needs as perceived by the educators themselves. At an early stage in initiating entrepreneurial curricula, the teachers are not confident that they can lead courses with strong focus on entrepreneurship. A high percentage (69%%) agreed that they need training to better manage entrepreneurial courses. Only 6% voted that they are confident in their abilities to lead such courses.

Item	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
I will need specialized training to be able to better manage entrepreneurial course.	6%	9%	15%	24%	45%

In consistency with the results in the other sections, the teachers identified their training needs in areas which are related to the integration of market analysis studies (69%), marketing skills and entrepreneurs learning journey (63%), project plan preparation (54%). Assessment of learning and interactive classes were rated lower as capacity enhancement needs.



Source: the authors

A capacity enhancement agenda focused on entrepreneurial support services such as incubation and entrepreneurship camps, work space facilities with mentorship services, market analysis and business planning are identified as high priorities in the training agenda. Interactive, competency-based pedagogies, performance based assessment, authentic projects seem to be applied on wide scale and therefore should receive less time in the capacity enhancement programs.

Conclusion

This extensive situation analysis study aimed to assess the entrepreneurial ecosystem in the humanities and social sciences with the aim to understand gaps, opportunities, and barriers to progress in the colleges of humanities in a developing country like Palestine whose entrepreneurial ecosystem is just beginning to form. The study is diagnostic in nature and is therefore meant to support deans, administrators, and faculty members who want

to systematically bring entrepreneurship into their discipline, and to deepen staff expertise in entrepreneurship education.

Evidence suggests that there are encouraging signs relating to the significant number of staff members who reported using competence-based and interactive methods such as community engagements, problem and project-based methods. However, the results show that lecturing and assessment through standardized examinations are the most commonly used methods in the colleges of humanities; entrepreneurship focused curricula is virtually invisible; courses that enable students with entrepreneurial experience and knowledge are insufficient; there is no clear focus on developing students' entrepreneurial mindset, involving them in enterprises, involving market professionals, or emphasis on business and marketing skills; the level of cooperation with entrepreneurial support centers is evidently low; the different market stakeholders are not involved in the formative and summative assessment of student projects.

Accordingly, these gaps imply that education in the humanities is conducted at total disconnect from the market. With an eye to this finding, and if the entrepreneurial agenda is to be built and further developed in the colleges of humanities, in which entrepreneurial curricula is virtually invisible and whose staff have little to no experience in entrepreneurial curricula design and management, these colleges should invest in the 'essential ingredients' that are critical to the establishment of entrepreneurial education in the humanities. These essentials are: 1. the enhancement of the staff capacities in coaching learners and in integrating learning journeys into their courses; 2. consolidating the ecosystem and enhancing networking with entrepreneurship support centers on campus 3. the design of entrepreneurship curricula that not

only teaches about entrepreneurship but also develops entrepreneurial competencies; 4. involvement of practitioners in teaching and mentorship (numbers of professors of practice, entrepreneurs in residence etc.); 5. promoting student external participation in boot camps and networking events (professional service providers, startup owners, and investors) (Salamzadeh, 2015).These elements could support a well-organized, systematic intervention which aims to boost the readiness in the humanities to develop entrepreneurial education.

This 'essential ingredients' level of entry would necessarily imply that the humanities educators should be exposed to the different approaches used in designing entrepreneurial education, since various forms have diverse learning outcomes and call for different assessment methods (Pittaway & Cope, 2007). The literature identifies three approaches to the design of entrepreneurial education (Johnson, 1988, Heinonen and Hytti, 2010, O'Connor, 2013): ‘about’, ‘for’, and ‘through’. The ‘About’ approaches are theoretical and guided by content, the aim is here to present a general understanding of entrepreneurship. The ‘For’ approaches are oriented to occupation and seek to provide budding entrepreneurs with the required skills and knowledge. The ‘Through’ approaches are often experiential, the aim of going through a real entrepreneurial learning process in ‘safe’ conditions. While the ‘for’ and ‘about’ approaches are convenient for a subset of secondary and tertiary students whose intention is to become entrepreneurs, the ‘through’ approaches are useful to all students at any educational level (Lackeus, 2015). In light of these orientations, the study concludes that entrepreneurial ventures in the humanities education are still theoretical in nature and that the current practices display a lack of emphasis on training 'For' building entrepreneurial

competencies or 'Through' experiential, process-based approaches that link education to the outside business environment. This finding implies that at an early stage in infusing entrepreneurial education in the curricula, the capacity of staff needs to be enhanced in these two delivery modes, the 'For' and 'Through' entrepreneurial learning, that would allow entrepreneurial students to develop innovative ideas and create organizations, either for the purpose of making profit or for social good. Achieving this change in educators' knowledge, behavior and attitude is deemed as the first essential building block towards initiating entrepreneurial curricula in the humanities. Accordingly, at the end of this study, the researchers, informed by the study results, have devised a training agenda which encompasses training topics that are important to immerse educators in the three pedagogical modes of entrepreneurial curricula:

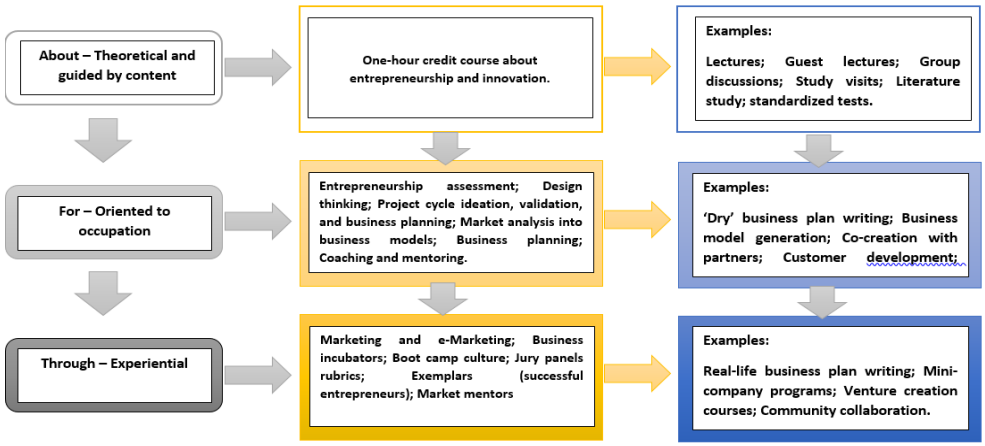


Figure 8. Training Needs Agenda (Source: the authors)

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