

15.2.2026**Author**

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Title

Entrepreneurial learning as experienced by agricultural graduate entrepreneurs / Naser Zamani ; Maryam Mohammadi

Publication year

2018

Source/Footnote

In: Higher education. - 76 (2018) 2, S. 301 - 316

Inventory number

47277

Keywords

Entwicklungsländer ; Wissenschaft und Wirtschaft ; Hochschule und Wirtschaft

Abstract

Developing entrepreneurial graduates is essential to the future of higher education and supply of quality human resources in developing countries. To address this issue in the agriculture sector, which is dominant in economic terms in most developing countries, an exploratory combined qualitative and quantitative research was conducted to understand entrepreneurial learning of agricultural graduate entrepreneurs. For the phenomenological study, 14 agricultural graduate entrepreneurs were purposely selected, and for the quantitative study, 92 entrepreneurs were selected through simple random sampling method. The phenomenological study revealed 12 themes on how graduates experienced entrepreneurial learning. Our study finds support for “experiential learning,” “learning by doing,” and “social learning” theories. Nine themes including previous business experience, risk-taking propensity, entrepreneurial persistence, use of various information sources, tendency to be self-employed, concerns about job or career, interest in practical courses and activities, passion for agriculture, and thinking outside the box are internal to the entrepreneur and could be seen as learner

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identity. The theme of “support from family and friends” could be seen as a significant external influence. The survey showed that entrepreneurial learning themes were generalizable to the studied population. Although different students can take different learning paths to become the best they can be, our findings suggest that the overall student learning experience can be designed to ensure that graduates are more likely to become entrepreneurs.(HRK / Abstract übernommen) Zamani, Naser, E-Mail: zamanin58@yahoo.com