

# How International College Students Understand Entrepreneurial Readiness and Business-Related Skills: A Qualitative Study

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**Abstract**—The free-market economy provides many opportunities for entrepreneurship or starting one's own business, attracting many students to study business at for-profit colleges in the United States. This is also true for international students, many of whom are filled with the hope of making a better life for themselves and their families through entrepreneurial endeavors. This qualitative research showed that not all graduates business students start their own business. In investigating this phenomenon, the effectiveness of entrepreneurship curricula at international colleges needs to be examined in order to adjust, improve and reform entrepreneurship curricula. This qualitative study will explore how business skills learned in college for-profit play a role in the entrepreneurial readiness of undergraduate business students in the south Florida. Business curricula helps international students achieve goals and transform their actions to understand challenges in a corporate society. Students will be interviewed to gain information about the students' experience with entrepreneurship curricula in a for-profit college in south Florida.

**Keywords**—Business skills, college curriculum, entrepreneurial readiness, international students.

## I. INTRODUCTION

EDUCATION of business is prepared by formal and nonformal triggers that enriches student's skills and build human capital. Globalization has primarily driven the interest in learning and studying in United States higher education, and the evolving implication suggests outcomes come from international students' issues and gross national productivity (GNP) index [2]. Hegarty evaluated the business studies that a high percentage of international college students are not prepared to pursue careers with the context of the businesses, which may prevent their academic success [7]. The National Center for Educational Statistics (NCES) reported that in 2018, the highest number of international undergraduate students were enrolled, with a count of 373,000 or 19% studying the five top fields of business programs [16]. According to Hernandez it is essential for-profit U.S. institutions continue identifying outcomes and developed appropriate curricula to meet the needs of international students within specific context such as developing a support system for skilled labor [8]. Many international students choose to study at for-profit international colleges, and there is minimal information on this subject matter. The challenge with this business curriculum, as Hernandez discussed, is a lack of personal knowledge, and curriculum support, when those students' become contributors

or leaders [8]. Similarly, Tinto explained that this high demand impacts on the social, economics, and cultural phenomena and require post-secondary institutions to adjust curricula to meet the needs of international students, who enroll in the for-profit colleges in the Unites States [14]. To investigate this phenomenon, entrepreneurship curricula at an international college for profit will be examined to improve and reform entrepreneurial curricula.

The research questions will be: How do international students describe their entrepreneurial readiness as a result of their courses in a for-profit business college in south Florida? The conceptualization of the theoretical framework synthesizes the findings of the question for further discussions and implications.

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

International students live their hope of the *American Dream* for affordable opportunities, social justice, and improved medium income from their native countries [5]. The international business students assess their business readiness "quid-pro-quo" with a clear mission to become "self-employed" using an American business curriculum in a for-profit college and is expected to become business ready within democratic values in our society [13]. Burns [1] investigates leadership theories and leadership roles. His theoretical leadership framework cohesively joins entrepreneurial readiness in colleges for profit and business-related skills embodied by Fig. 1.

In *Leadership*, Burnes defined the theory of transformational leadership to explain the operational curriculum in business environments where international students learn practical business skills and become prepared to investigate new ideas [1]. Fairholm states that the benefits of transformational leadership are a level of satisfaction and the resulting productivity of self and group stimuli, improved retention, and trust between groups and the leader. Transformational leadership shifts toward common goals that followers and leaders elevate while becoming distinguished by followers, which is based on different powers and motives [4]. Also, inspiration of the transformational leader utilizes the creation of rationality for strong, collaborative relations with the group. Furthermore, Northouse discussed the essence of leadership questions related to business skills such as values, self-esteem,

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motivation, and relationships [12].



Fig. 1 Basic Model of Transformational Leadership

Fairholm traced the role-play position developing a level of accountability where leaders can transform, gather data, conceptualize soft and brut data, synthesize, and implement in school and careers later in life [1]. The self-realization, as a role-play leader, must include all managerial issues, time and money, energy, and shifting powers. Fairholm’s conceptualized relationship with these issues can be implemented by transforming context in an institutionalized matter or an organographic structure of consulting [4]. On the other hand, Burnes challenged creativity and examined critical thinking skills to accomplish business student’s goals while understanding classroom strategies for clear pathways [1]. The leaders with developing social skills influence and affect institutional goals. The transformational leaders explore rewards and punishment that increase motivation. There is a lack of conceptualized literature reviews of business readiness for international student in a college for profit for higher

education.

### III. RESEARCH METHODS

Positivists determined the understandings of the nature of phenomena formed by focus group or individual life experience, beliefs, meanings, and concept of the participant’s views with inductive reasoning [3]. In Creswell’s *Qualitative Study Approach*, the primary essence taken from the study question is *how* we know (ontologically), and *what* we know (epistemologically). Furthermore, Leavy explored the perspective patterns as economic challenges in communities such as empowerment by collaborating with the researcher [9].

This study will be guided by the following research question: How do international students describe their entrepreneurial readiness as a result of their courses in a for-profit business college in south Florida?

For the case study design, the researcher will use purposeful sample with a prior criterion drawn before selecting the participants [10]. The researcher will conduct semi-structural, face-to-face interviews in focus group with undergraduate college students to increase their deep understanding of entrepreneurial and curricula experiences in a college for profit in their second-and third-year studies. An interview protocol with 15 college students will be developed for the individual student and will consist of 12 open-ended questions created by the researcher [3].

The notes, audio, and video recording of the qualitative data will be transcribed, coded, saturated, and analyzed for further description and justification using MAXQDA software 2019 [17].

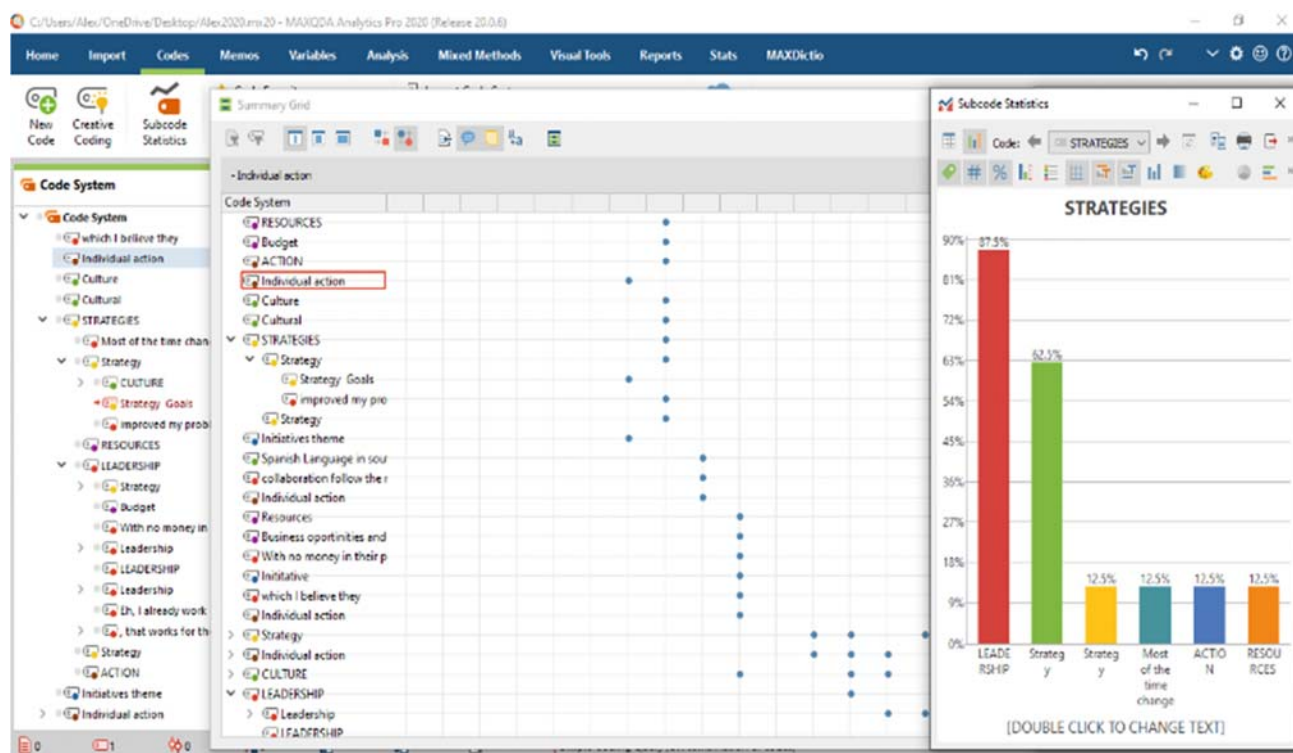


Fig. 2 MAXQDA Data Analysis

The qualitative data will be used to provide a better understanding of entrepreneurial readiness and make recommendations to improve entrepreneurship curricula to prepare students better for starting their own business in the future. Each participant will be interviewed for 30 minutes.

#### IV. RESULTS

The interview was conducted with 15 undergraduate business students at the college for profit.

From the 15 students, nine are female, and six males, each having different backgrounds, in either their first and or third year of studying and with prior or non-experience in business. There were two Asian students and 13 from Latin America, which included three from Venezuela, seven Colombians, and one student each from Ecuador, Peru, and Brazil. The categories that the qualitative MAXQDA softer 2019 coded are seven themes and 25 subthemes. The findings revealed seven themes represented by Fig. 2 such as a) fundamental management skills, b) cultural differences, c) approachable resources, d) business strategies, e) self-actions and behaviors, f) transformational leadership, and g) testimonials.

All of above played an integral part in affirming curriculum transformation as distinguished from a collaborative business context. Burns, in the theoretical leadership framework, cohesively joins entrepreneurial readiness and business-related skills [1]. The literature review supports research question and the methodology from fifteen student's interviewees. One-fifth of the international students from the focus group in the last year of study has a solid business background connected with the resources and strategy themes.

Participant A: "I have an experience from my family-owned business in Colombia. Learning business methods in school is something new, you cannot compare".

Participant E: "I already worked for several places, now is time to become owner or manager, because I have the knowledge, values, principles, and know how business works."

Two students have strong connection with transformational leadership roles, and they reported that they had started their own business and are currently self-employed entrepreneurs while they have been enrolled in college. One of the students strongly expressed his ambition to expand his small shop-stop and self-cleaning company into a bakery shop-stop.

Participant B: "To a degree, we have critical thinking, business planning, business law, business expo, and marketing class, and introduction of management, we learn how to solve problems, not to make rush decisions that negatively impact businesses. I am very thankful for that"... Now I can transform my ideas into the act."

On the other hand, two-thirds of the majority of international students are in the process of learning English language, which includes subject matter in evolving and becoming entrepreneurs, and are aware that they have not become entrepreneurial leaders, yet.

The participant C: "I don't have this kind of subjects in my country, but I like to learn and to work in the

company".

Three students showed no interest in becoming entrepreneurial leaders connected with cultural themes.

#### V. DISCUSSION

The study examined the contemporary view of how international college students understand entrepreneurial readiness while learning business skills. The restoring parts merge the common goal to determine and the frame flexibility of the business curricula in the college for profit.

A case study conducts the data for a better understanding of the comprehensive curriculum and captures the seven major themes that Burnes framed in *Leadership*. This research has an output to the local colleges for profit in south Florida, that mediate: a) collaboration among international students, b) local staff that recruiting international students, c) developing novice curricula, and d) strategic goals designed by local business experts.

The findings reveal that international students' performances as transformative leaders with advanced skills support a business college's curriculum. For instance, many international business students developed self-esteem, and very few international students did not develop leadership skills. This dogmatic inquiry connects the sustainability of local companies to international business students. International students between first and second year of study have opportunities to obtain an Optimal Practice Training Certificate (OPTC), so that students can apply to work for not more than 20 hours per week [16]. Business students, to start as new vendors, need to spend more hours in ventures that will contribute to their forward curricular skills.

Understanding the college staff that recruiting international students, Fairholm conceptualized a connection that can be implemented by the transformative context in an institutionalized matter [4]. International students showed concern in trusting local companies that seek professionals and international students with temporary F-1 visa status [15].

The understanding of entrepreneurial readiness is successfully based on novice business curriculums that teach educational methods, the importance of social engagements, and promote flexible venues that embrace different cultural values [14]. The discussion strategy of entrepreneurial readiness in the college for profit has greatly helped undergraduate students organize leadership curricula. Additionally, entrepreneurial curriculum must be flexible in business leadership program, so that the professors can adapt trending knowledge for every newcomer's generation in building strong business skills [11]. Students have confirmed that business life as a business student with daily life experiences in college for profit is tough. Business skills and entrepreneurial readiness will be readily approachable when understanding international business students in their struggle for building their dreams. Yearly business curriculum design must be reorganized so that advanced subjects from last year's studies can be realized, used in real-world practices, and extended for effective student readiness.

For understandings transformational leadership, Burns underlined that strategic goals cannot be learned from

leadership theories, but through presentations or collaborations in the classroom. Therefore, empirical theory of transformational leadership determined the initiation, impacts, strategy components, and outcomes [1]. The college for profit must permanently create and follow data with those international students that started businesses during their studies or have ambitions for partnerships with established vendors.

*for Qualitative & Mixed Method Research.*

## VI. CONCLUSION

This case study approach in qualitative methods supports the essence of the international entrepreneurial students to understand better college business curricula and business skills outputs. The effective college for business curricula includes elements of high-quality technology, cultural awareness, and collaboration. The overall experiences for international business students are to help them achieve their goals. International private colleges with entrepreneurial programs must focus on fostering transformational leadership skills that prepare students for entrepreneurship upon graduation [6]. The business readiness plays a crucial role in developing a business curriculum in a college for profit for undergraduate students that will create better opportunity and understanding the business climate in the United States.

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