

Successful Classroom Techniques: Entrepreneurship in High School Business Classrooms

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Abstract: The importance of entrepreneurship education in high school business classes lies in promoting students' readiness for the constantly changing global economy. This article investigates approaches to effective entrepreneurship education, focusing on the impact of experiential learning and teaching strategies such as challenge-based learning, simulations, mentoring, and decision-making skills. Further, the author evaluates the key challenges that hinder the implementation of entrepreneurship education, such as insufficient teacher preparation, disjointed curriculum, outdated assessment formats, and unequal access to entrepreneurial practices. It emphasizes that entrepreneurship education yields the best results through experience-based, integrated, and practical opportunities, through industry collaboration, and state-of-the-art curriculum design.

Keywords: entrepreneurship education, high school business education, experiential learning, challenge-based learning, simulation-based learning, decision-making skills, mentorship, industry collaboration

Introduction

Middle and high school classes in business have placed greater emphasis on entrepreneurship education as a way of equipping the students with a fast-changing global economy. With the changes in labor markets because of technological progress and economic insecurity, schools are likely to be able to provide not just business skills but also entrepreneurial attitudes and applied skills like creativity, problem-solving, financial literacy, and flexibility. Nevertheless, most existing programs are still more hypothetical and exam-oriented, which does not expose students to real-world entrepreneurial experiences and practice. This leaves a continual disconnect between the classroom training and the business practice. It has been demonstrated that education in entrepreneurship is optimized through experiential, student-centered learning opportunities that actively involve the learner in problem-solving and applied work, which greatly impacts entrepreneurial intention and skill-building (Martínez-Gregorio et al., 2021). This underscores the need to have more practice-oriented teaching strategies. This paper, therefore, discusses the best strategies in teaching entrepreneurship in secondary school and touches on pedagogy, experiential learning, and the issue of implementation.

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Entrepreneurship Education as a Catalyst for Skill Development and Entrepreneurial Mindset Formation

One of the recurring themes in the literature is that entrepreneurship education in schools (high and middle) is mostly effective in instilling both cognitive and non-cognitive skills that go beyond business knowledge. As opposed to merely creating ventures, it is becoming more and more apparent as a process of developing transferable capabilities like creativity, problem-solving, leadership, and adaptability. According to Yinka and Chidinma (2025), entrepreneurship education provides students with the necessary skills, such as financial literacy, communication, and decision-making skills. Their results place the education of entrepreneurship as a whole developmental instrument that works towards academic and personal development. Notably, students who are exposed to structured entrepreneurial experiences, like competitions and project-based learning, show a greater capacity to utilize knowledge in real-life settings, enhancing their capacity to meet future employment challenges.

Likewise, Rina et al. (2019) confirm this point of view by demonstrating that entrepreneurship education facilitates the development of character, as well as skills. Their research shows that when entrepreneurship is incorporated into the curriculum and the school life, the students become independent, responsible, and creative, as they engage in practical activities like product design and business planning. This implies that entrepreneurship education is both an academic and a character-building process. An insightful observation by both studies is that the development of skills cannot just be automatic. Yinka and Chidinma (2025) note that programs that are under-resourced or poorly implemented curricula restrict learning outcomes, and Rina et al. (2019) demonstrate that integrated and experiential programs result in higher competencies.

The literature indicates that, based on conditioning, the most effective entrepreneurship education, that is, it should be real, organized, and experiential so that students can learn through doing rather than through the acquisition of information.

Experiential Learning Environments as Drivers of Entrepreneurial Intent and Innovation

Another theme that dominates throughout the literature is the focus on the centrality of experiential learning environments in determining the entrepreneurial intentions of the students. This is supported by the fact that entrepreneurship education is best applied when students are exposed to practical, real-world experiences of innovation as opposed to depending on classroom learning. Such empirical evidence is made by van Holm (2021) in his research on makerspaces. He concludes that students who encounter areas of collaboration with the design, prototype, and creation are much more prone to declare entrepreneurial desire. The high exposure to makerspaces, even after compensating for background factors, increases the probability of students being interested in starting up a business at least twofold. This implies that entrepreneurial intention is greatly influenced by learning conditions that promote experimentation. This is in line with the argument by Rina et al. (2019), who opine that the meaningfulness of entrepreneurship education is enhanced when students are exposed to business simulations, production, and school-based projects.

Their results demonstrate that participatory engagement fosters confidence, self-reliance, and initiative in the entrepreneurial endeavor, making it dependable on theory and practice.

This is further supported by Yinka and Chidinma (2025), who state that entrepreneurship clubs, competitions, and mentorship programs expose students to real-life problem-solving and collaboration. These studies confirm that experiential learning is an intermediary between knowledge and intention. Whereas the theory creates awareness, practice translates that awareness into an aspiration of being an entrepreneur. Nevertheless, van Holm (2021) also cites an equity issue since access to such environments is not even, which can be a limitation for disadvantaged students.

Structural Integration, Access Inequality, and Implementation Challenges in Entrepreneurship Education

Despite the advantages of entrepreneurship education, academic research also uncovers structural and implementation problems that curtail entrepreneurship education efforts in high school. Yinka and Chidinma (2025) point to several issues, including poor teacher training, absence of formal programs, lack of resources, and societal bias favoring traditional careers. Such issues lead to uneven practices, limiting the effectiveness of entrepreneurship education. They also argue that socio-economic inequalities limit entrepreneurial opportunities, such that disadvantaged students have less access to structured entrepreneurial education.

This is supported by Rina et al. (2019), who demonstrate how integration of entrepreneurship education between curriculum, co-curriculum, and school entrepreneurship programs is required to support effective entrepreneurship education. This ensures continuity and coherence in the entrepreneurship education process. They conclude entrepreneurship must be integrated with the school system, rather than a standalone subject. van Holm (2021) adds a further layer by identifying greater participation for students of higher socio-economic status in makerspaces. This suggests that even when innovative spaces are available, they are not necessarily accessible.

Deficits and Weaknesses of Entrepreneurship Education

Although the teaching of entrepreneurship in business lessons in middle and high school curricula is increasingly popular, there are still considerable structural, pedagogical, and institutional gaps that hamper its success. Curriculum intent and classroom implementation gap is one of the toughest challenges that persist. Despite education systems focusing on entrepreneurship as a main competence of the twenty-first century, it is mainly taught in a conceptual form as opposed to a hands-on and skill-based learning tool (Sithole, 2025). This curtails the potential of students to acquire critical entrepreneurial skills like identification of opportunities, innovations, making financial decisions, and risk management.

One of the key causes of this gap is the lack of preparedness of teachers. The studies show that not all the educators who teach entrepreneurship are trained in the practices of entrepreneurship or have experience in the pedagogies of entrepreneurship (Göksen-Olgun et al., 2022). Consequently, instructional time is often characterized by text-based teaching and learning as opposed to interactive/applied learning. This minimizes the chances of the

students undergoing actual entrepreneurial activities like ideation, prototyping, and market testing. In the absence of sufficient capacity of the teacher, the education in entrepreneurship may turn out to be theoretical as opposed to being practical.

Another significant weakness is that of curriculum fragmentation. Entrepreneurship is not a part of the core business studies program of most systems of secondary education but is rather a secondary or extracurricular subject (Göksen-Olgun et al., 2022). This gives rise to poor delivery within the various schools, and accessibility to entrepreneurial learning opportunities is not even. Structured entrepreneurial programs are offered to some of the students, whereas there is little teaching for the rest, hence making learning unequal.

The practices of assessment are also the reason why entrepreneurship education is not as effective. Most schools are characterized by traditional forms of assessment that rely on examinations that are not highly suited to assessing entrepreneurial skills like creativity, initiative, teamwork, and problem-solving (Moindi & Nyatuka, 2022). Such incongruence between learning goals and assessment procedures promotes learning based on memorization as opposed to the learning of applied skills.

These apprehensions are backed up by empirical studies. Hmama and Rih (2025) believe that a deficiency of pedagogical alignment on the part of instruction, learning outcomes, and assessment mechanisms is a frequent limitation to entrepreneurship education, highlighting that these aspects are not always combined. They emphasize in their study that though entrepreneurship is taught in the curriculum, the lack of evaluation based on experience and competencies decreases its overall effects on enhancing entrepreneurial development among students. This supports the theme that structural coherence is a prerequisite to good entrepreneurship teaching.

Moreover, lack of resources is also a great impediment to implementation. Numerous schools do not have access to simulation tools and business incubators, as well as access to digital solutions and collaborations with external entrepreneurs (Clark & Palisse, 2025). This curtails the chances of students getting into real-world entrepreneurship. Unless exposed to the real-world business setups, students are less likely to attain confidence as well as practical knowledge about entrepreneurship.

The socio-cultural elements are too significant in the determination of the effectiveness of entrepreneurship education. There are still societal barriers in most situations where entrepreneurship is a poorer choice compared to traditional career avenues, which include medicine, law, or engineering (Hill, 2025). It affects the motivation of students and the support of the institution, and diminishes the perceived value of entrepreneurship in terms of becoming a career choice. van Holm (2021) goes on to note that the variety of access to the experiences available in an entrepreneurial environment, like makerspaces, is frequently not evenly distributed, with higher socio-economic students more likely to access it. This brings about structural unequal exposure and the development of entrepreneurship.

Practical Classroom Techniques in Entrepreneurship Education

Although the concept of entrepreneurship is applied and action-oriented, practical classroom methods would be crucial in entrepreneurship education in middle and high school business classes. Compared to the conventional business courses where memorization might be an important component, entrepreneurship demands the ability to

be creative, problem-solving, identify opportunities, and make decisions to be learned through practice. Consequently, an effective entrepreneurship instruction is based on experiential and student-focused teaching models in which students can put the knowledge into practical and useful purposes.

Project-based learning (PBL) is one of the most popular methods, and in this case, students work on a long-term project, which involves creating a business idea, conducting market research, and creating a business plan. The methodology promotes involvement and ownership of learning. According to Almulla (2020), project-based learning is a more effective learning method as it makes students more engaged and helps them learn better because they have to explore real-life issues and create a systematic solution to them. PBL is also applicable in the education of entrepreneurship to enable students to bridge theory and practice, as well as gain creativity, collaboration, and analytical thinking skills.

Both of these are closely connected with challenge-based learning (CBL) that introduces a student to an open-ended problem that needs innovative solutions. As opposed to conventional tasks where answers are fixed, CBL promotes learners to formulate problems, seek alternatives, and come up with solutions as a group. This is an expression of the ambiguity and intricacy of the real entrepreneurial circumstances. Rosário and Raimundo (2024) emphasize that challenge-based learning enhances cognitive involvement and aids in transferring knowledge to different contexts, and is thus highly effective in the development of entrepreneurial adaptability and resilience.

The other important instructional method is simulation-based learning. Business simulations enable students to run virtual companies in which they make decisions pertaining to pricing, marketing, production, and budgeting. These simulations have immediate feedback, and this is helpful in enabling students to know the consequences of their decisions within a risk-free environment. Andrási et al. (2025) believe that simulations reinforce the skills in decision-making and improve the knowledge of the market dynamics through simulation. The given approach is especially useful in the process of filling the gap between theory and practice.

Mentorship and guest speakers are also other ways of enriching classroom learning through exposure of students to real entrepreneurs. These engagements expose to actual business experience, challenges, and career opportunities. According to Al Issa (2024), mentorship enhances entrepreneurial intention by providing students with role models, guidance, and inspiration. The exposure will enable the learners to know what is really happening in the world of entrepreneurship.

Implications for Entrepreneurship Education

The middle and high school business classes' literature on entrepreneurship education identifies some implications of entrepreneurship education for curriculum design and teaching practice. To begin with, entrepreneurship education must be transformed into a competency-oriented and practical learning process and not a theory-based course as it is currently. This involves more application of practice-based methods like simulations, project-based learning, and real-world problem-solving tasks to build applied entrepreneurial capabilities.

By associating entrepreneurship with other disciplines like math, technology, and social studies, students can use entrepreneurial thinking in other relevant situations (Hardie et al., 2023). Moreover, the training of teachers is crucial to successful implementation. The educators require assistance in entrepreneurial knowledge as well as in active learning strategies to be able to guide the students (Hardie et al., 2022).

Schools need proper resources and collaborations with external organizations to facilitate learning in practice. In summary, the key to successful entrepreneurship education lies in the systemic change of the curriculum, teaching and learning capacity, and learning environment in a way that will equip students by making them more competent to join the economy in the future.

Conclusion

The middle and high school business courses in entrepreneurship education are vital in equipping students to succeed in a dynamic global economy. According to the literature, it has been effective based on experiential and student-centered methods like project-based learning, simulation, and mentorship that develop practical skills such as creativity, decision-making, and financial literacy. Nonetheless, issues like poor preparation of teachers, inadequate integration of curricula, and unfair distribution of resources minimize its effects. All in all, entrepreneurship education can best be applied as practical, integrated, and experience-based education. Enhancing these aspects can help students better prepare by providing them with an entrepreneurial attitude and ability to better adapt, be innovative, and succeed in future economic conditions.

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