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Manuscript Abstract

Value Creation through Centres for Entrepreneurship: The Needs and Expectations of Student Entrepreneurs

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Full reference

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Abstract

This research examines the essential function of Centres for Entrepreneurship (CfEs) in nurturing student entrepreneurs by assessing their needs, challenges, and expectations across various stages of entrepreneurial development. As integral components of academic institutions, CfEs aim to merge theoretical knowledge with practical application, offering a broad array of services like mentorship, training, and financial aid to address the complex demands of student entrepreneurs. Despite their significance, there remains a lack of clarity on how CfEs can be optimally designed and operated to meet the dynamic needs of this demographic. Drawing on Sweeney and Soutar's (2001) multidimensional customer value theory, this study suggests that CfEs should aim to deliver comprehensive value, encompassing functional, emotional, and social dimensions, to support student entrepreneurs effectively. Utilizing a qualitative, multi-case study methodology, this investigation seeks to explore the alignment between the offerings of CfEs and the requirements of student entrepreneurs within selected higher education institutions, employing methodological triangulation via semi-structured interviews and document analysis to ensure robust and valid findings. The study aspires to make significant theoretical and practical contributions by applying customer value theory to the CfE context for a deeper insight into entrepreneurial support mechanisms and providing actionable recommendations for enhancing CfE designs and operations to better meet student entrepreneurs' expectations. Such enhancements are anticipated to foster a more dynamic entrepreneurial ecosystem within academic settings, potentially amplifying the economic and social benefits of student-initiated ventures and reinforcing the pivotal role of educational institutions in cultivating the next generation of business leaders.