

Sports Industry Career Opportunities: The Athletes Perception

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Abstract: *Entrepreneurship contributes to economic growth and income within a nation. Entrepreneurship of the sports industry is an important area that provides employment opportunities and increases national income. Willingness to become an entrepreneur in the sports industry is an opportunity for graduates meet the job market to the sports industry. This study aims to identify the element readiness student-athletes to choose the sports industry entrepreneur as a career. This study consisted of 260 respondents. The respondents were student-athletes, which participate in inter-varsity games. Descriptive analyses are used to describe the readiness of student-athletes to become the sport industry entrepreneurs. This research identifies the readiness elements perceived by the student-athletes' readiness in the sports industry entrepreneurship. The findings suggest the institutions of higher learning providing sports entrepreneurship course to foster willingness among the student-athletes to become the sport industry entrepreneurs.*

Keywords: sports industry, sport marketing, career, entrepreneurship, sports business, student-athletes

1. Introduction

The sports industry is an opportunity for graduates to gauge the job market in the sports industry. Becoming entrepreneurs in the sports industry will not only reduce the dependency of employment on the public sector but also help increase the national income.

Sports industry provides career opportunities such as sports equipment business, sports tourism, professional athletes, organizing sports event and sports arena services. Entrepreneurship is important in sports as an innovation to meet the needs of sports customers such as spectators, coaches and athletes. Various student development programs and entrepreneurship program for graduates were held aiming to change the minds of potential graduates to pursue careers as entrepreneurs. Ministry of Malaysia Higher Education through graduate tracer mentioned that 23.4 per cent of graduates unemployed (2009). Therefore, entrepreneurship development program in sport industry should be implemented in higher-education institution. Entrepreneurial skill is a matter that has been outlined as an important agenda Ninth Malaysia Plan and Ministry of Higher Education have provided the Entrepreneurship Module (2006). [1] revealed that entrepreneurship information and knowledge needed in the career of youth. This finding is contrast [2] revealed that five skills sport entrepreneurs in the United States, namely communication skills, financial management, marketing, operations' management and business plan. He suggested that through entrepreneurship, courses could improve student attitudes and skills to become the sports industry entrepreneur. This study similar to [3], explains that entrepreneurship is the process of providing individuals the knowledge and skills to identify business opportunities such as business management, marketing, information systems and financial management. Results of this differ from research [4] found that there was the relationship between attitude, desire and external factors (educational) to conduct self-employed such as entrepreneurial activities. [5,13] revealed that profile of

the respondents (gender, ethnicity, nationality, family income), attitudes and knowledge to start a business and managing a business among the technical students (engineering, science, computer science). The finding shows that gender, family background and education level encourage students to start their own business. Factors of ethnicity, nationality and family income is less important to start a business among the technical students. However, [4,5] did not explain the element of skill to choose a career in the sports industry entrepreneurship. [6] stated entrepreneurial characteristics such as excellent, self-control factors, knowledge and skills. This study similar to [7] explained the effectiveness of career development programs to help youth explore the interest in entrepreneurship as a career option. Youth participation in entrepreneurship programs demonstrates significant initiatives and develops youth personality. This study found that youth who participates in a new entrepreneurial program showed an increase the drive after participating in entrepreneurship programs. [8] found that small and medium business entrepreneurs (SMEs) desire to involve in entrepreneurship activities such as, the characteristics of entrepreneurs and business plan. [9] mentioned the entrepreneurship education program for innovation and successful entrepreneurs in the business. This study found that management and entrepreneurship education courses shown themselves to be more innovative [12].

Previous studies show that there are various causes such as psychological and knowledge influence the readiness of students and choosing to become an entrepreneur. However, the study of the element readiness entrepreneurs the sports industry is still unknown. In Malaysia, the study of entrepreneurial career in the sports industry has not been made. The readiness of student-athletes as the sports industry entrepreneur is an opportunity for graduate meet the job market in the sports industry business. This study aims to examine the elements career readiness as the sports industry entrepreneur among student-athletes' public university. Therefore, the objectives of this study are to examine (1) the

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student-athletes profile and level involvement in sport, (2) the element as sports industry entrepreneurs were preferred by student-athletes and (3) the element of readiness as sports industry entrepreneurs among student-athletes.

2. Methodology

The study comprises of 260 student-athletes in inter-varsity games. The study was carried over a seven- day period, which conducted during the competition season. Besides that, by using sampling it can save time and cost involved to compare if the researcher needs to gather information from the whole customers (students). A descriptive study is used in carrying out this research. This study is delimited to public university student-athletes representing the high-performance sports and sport focus programmed. Generalization of this finding was delimited to these participants or those who could be shown to be similar in composition extensive extrapolation beyond this would not be directly supported by this study. The individual profile questionnaire in this study was aimed at assessing the student-athletes the experience for the subjects. Three instruments revised version [1,10,11] were used to identify readiness element as the sport industry entrepreneurs were preferred among the student-athletes. In the first questionnaire, student-athletes were asked to choose the elements of readiness as sports industry entrepreneurs among the student-athlete they should prefer. The close-ended questionnaire was divided into two sections, where Section 1 captures the demographic information. Section 2 is related to readiness element. This instrument consisted of 59 questions with a five-point Likert-type scales; 1 (absolutely disagree), 2 (disagree), 3 (undecided), 4 (agree) and 5 (absolutely agree). Data was generated from the questionnaire distributed to the selected student-athletes. The researcher chose to use the questionnaire method as a tool of data collection. Data were analyses by using Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS). The descriptive of the data were analyses using by means readiness element among the student-athletes.

3. Results and Discussion

In the first descriptive analysis of variables under study was according to the respondents' profile. There are 152 male student-athletes (58.5 %) and 108 (52.9 %) are female student-athletes. Most of student-athletes, there are 147 (56.5%) from the faculty of social science, 73 (28.1%) student-athletes from faculty of engineering, 24 (6.2%) student-athletes from faculty of science and there are 16 (6.2%) student-athletes from the faculty of sports science. [4] mentioned that profile of the respondents (gender, ethnicity, nationality, family income), attitudes and knowledge to start a business and managing an entrepreneurial activity. However, factors of ethnicity, nationality and family income is less important to start a business among the technical students. In this study, according to category of the sport program, majority of the student-athletes 188 (72.3%) were sports focus program and 72 (27.7%) student-athletes' sports excellence who participated in the inter-varsity games. In this study, there are 138 (53.1%) student-athletes at the level

of university, 65 (25.0%) student-athletes at the level of state, 26 (10.1%) student-athletes at the level of national and 31 (11.9%) student-athletes at the level of international.

The means and standard deviations for the element attitude, knowledge and skill under study are mentioned. The most important attitude element as an entrepreneur is working harder in any situations to improve the performance of the sports industry ($M = 4.15$, $SD = .69$). Analyzed of the mean scores showed that "student-athletes rather found a new company than be the manager of an existing one" ($M = 3.28$, $SD = .92$) was the lowest mean. This finding is consistent with [4] showed that attitude and the desire to venture into entrepreneurship and conduct self-employed such as entrepreneurial activities among the university's students. Furthermore, the elements of knowledge, the most important factors were preparing a sport industry business plan is important ($M=4.39$, $SD = .61$). The student-athletes preferred that the sport industry entrepreneurs are richer than sport industry businessmen ($M = 3.42$, $SD = .78$) was the lowest mean scored. The result indicates that element skill of planning in sport marketing is important to maintain the profit and loss rate in sport industry business ($M = 4.27$, $SD = .70$). The effective promotional strategy determines profit in a sport industry business ($M = 4.05$, $SD = .76$) was the lowest mean scored for element of sport marketing skill. This finding is consistent with [8] indicate that small and medium business entrepreneurs (SMEs) desire to involve in entrepreneurship activities such as entrepreneurial skills, the characteristics of entrepreneurs and business plan. The elements of career readiness ($M = 4.15$, $SD = .83$) was the most important factors motivate student-athletes to become the sport industry entrepreneur. However, the student-athletes ready to make the sports business owner ($M = 3.72$, $SD = .10$) was the lowest mean scored element of career readiness to become the sport industry entrepreneur. Thus, this study supports the previous findings of [1,2,4,6,7,8] indicate that the effectiveness of career development programs to help youth explore the interest in entrepreneurship as a career option and entrepreneurial characteristics such as excellent, self-control factors, knowledge and skills. It is interesting to note that knowledge, attitude and skills such as learning sport marketing and business plan are important motivators for student-athletes to involve in sport entrepreneurship. Therefore, findings of this study suggest that through sport entrepreneurship courses and sport entrepreneurial activities can motivate student-athletes' intention to become the sport industry entrepreneur in the future. Furthermore, findings of this study would suggest the readiness student-athletes as the sport industry entrepreneur can be practiced by student-athletes, academic reference and for further studies. The results will increase knowledge to the field of sport management and entrepreneurship.

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pillars of *Soft-Skills*, Micro Teaching, Mentoring and Coaching in Teaching and Learning, Psychology at Work Place and some issues in Education. Based especially in research and publication matters.

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Author Profile



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