



An examination of entrepreneurship educator profiles in business programs in the United States

Entrepreneurship
educator

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Abstract

Purpose – This study aims to assess the profiles of faculty teaching entrepreneurship courses in a sample of entrepreneurship programs in the USA for the years 2007-2008.

Design/methodology/approach – A questionnaire was developed and mailed to entrepreneurship programs directors to provide information for answering questions concerning the following: educational backgrounds, primary teaching focus, research interests, publications in academic journals, and entrepreneurial experience brought into the classroom.

Findings – The results of the study demonstrate that only one-fifth of the faculty members in the sample held a PhD in entrepreneurship or in combination with another field in a business discipline. Three out of four faculty members concentrated their teaching in the field of entrepreneurship. More than one-third of the faculty members had a research interest in the field of entrepreneurship. One-fourth of faculty sampled had published in entrepreneurship journals. The majority of the faculty brought entrepreneurial experience to their classrooms.

Research limitations/implications – The fact that the study depended exclusively on the data available from 218 “non-ranked” entrepreneurship programs in the USA represents a distinct limitation. Future research is needed to compare study results with a sample incorporating top ranked entrepreneurship programs in the country.

Originality/value – This study will assist administrators and institutions in preparing new faculty to embrace the field of entrepreneurship education.

Keywords Entrepreneurialism, Serials, Teaching, Research, United States of America

Paper type Research paper

Introduction

Over the past two decades, there has been growing interest in the teaching of entrepreneurship at the college level in most developed and developing countries, particularly in the United States (see Béchard and Grégoire, 2002; Donckels, 1991; Hills, 1988; Klatt, 1988; Matlay and Carey, 2007; McMullan and Long, 1987; Ronstadt, 1987; Sexton and Upton, 1987; Solomon, 2007). Various aspects of the teaching of entrepreneurship have been investigated. Some studies have attempted to describe the process of creating comprehensive, new programs in entrepreneurship through course and curriculum design (Heriot and Simpson, 2007; Gartner and Vesper, 1994; Plaschka



and Welsch, 1990). Others have explored effective methodologies to enhance the teaching of entrepreneurship (Clark *et al.*, 1984; Gartner and Vesper, 1994; Katz and Green, 1996; Mitchell and Chesteen, 1995). Conceptual, contextual, and empirical contributions have been made, seeking to analyze and develop entrepreneurship education as a field of research (Block and Stumpf, 1992; Gorman *et al.*, 1997; Matlay, 2005b). The contemporary entrepreneurship education initiatives also have been critically evaluated and compared across countries (Alvarez and Jung, 2003; Hills, 1988; Hytti and O'Gorman, 2004; Kuratko, 2005; Matlay and Carey, 2007; Solomon, 1988, 2007; Solomon *et al.*, 2002).

With regard to entrepreneurship education and faculty, some studies have attempted to show the institutionalization of entrepreneurship within schools of Business and Management by analyzing trends in the market for entrepreneurship faculty (Finkle and Deeds, 2001; Finkle, 2007; Finkle *et al.*, 2007; Brush *et al.*, 2003; Singh, 2008). Others have stressed the shortage of faculty teaching entrepreneurship while examining the increasing number of endowed chairs and centers over the years (Finkle *et al.*, 2006; Katz, 2003; Katz, 2004; Finkle, 2007; Robinson and Haynes, 1991; Upton, 1997). In addition, many of these studies have focused on the larger, more established, and ranked entrepreneurship programs according to the annual ranking of *Entrepreneur* magazine.

To date, little research has been carried out as to the profiles of entrepreneurship faculty, that is, the systematic assessment of current entrepreneurship educators. In an attempt to redress this balance and shed light on this overlooked area, this paper will examine the characteristics of current entrepreneurship faculty at non-ranked programs. Consequently, this paper is focused on current trends relative to these characteristics at such programs. More specifically, the paper describes the educational background, primary teaching area, research interests, contribution to the field of entrepreneurship and entrepreneurial activities of current faculty involved with entrepreneurship programs at 218 programs not listed among the top 50 programs. This paper contributes to the existing literature by analyzing a sample of entrepreneurship educators in business programs in the United States. The paper sheds light on the trends in the relationship between entrepreneurship education and faculty responsible for its infusion at the collegial level. First, we offer a perspective of entrepreneurship education and the facts about its educators at these schools. Next, we describe the methodology used to conduct the study. We then present and discuss the results of the study, stressing its contribution as well as implications for future research.

Entrepreneurship educator profiles: a review of literature

Despite the progress in entrepreneurship education studies since the 1990s (see Morris *et al.*, 2001), what is known about the general characteristics of current entrepreneurship faculty does not constitute a unified body of knowledge, but a fragmented set of facts that appear in scholarly journals, business and entrepreneurship publications. In the next paragraphs, we attempt to reconstruct facts and observations about the characteristics of current entrepreneurship educators. The discussion is organized and presented according to five content categories: PhD majors/concentration, primary teaching area, research interest, publications in academic journal, and entrepreneurial experience brought to classroom by faculty.

PhD majors/concentrations

As is the case in most academic fields of inquiry, entrepreneurship is considered a young and interdisciplinary field of research, study and practice (Cooper, 2003), which is still in progress or emerging (Busenitz *et al.*, 2003; Katz, 2003; Low, 2001). Researchers within the field recognize that entrepreneurship has developed as a business discipline by borrowing, building upon and adapting theoretical and conceptual work from such fields as sociology, psychology, anthropology, marketing, management, finance, organizational behavior and engineering (Amit *et al.*, 1993; Katz, 2003; Morris *et al.*, 2001; Gartner *et al.*, 2006). This claim is supported by the fact that entrepreneurship faculty hold terminal degrees from many business fields including strategic management, marketing, international management, accounting, finance, management of information systems and organizational behavior.

In interviewing young scholars on their preparation to assume leadership and to teach entrepreneurship courses, Brush *et al.* (2003) found that a vast majority of them (88 percent) focused their dissertations entirely or to a great extent on an entrepreneurship topic. However, most respondents (64 percent) held their PhD from majors/concentrations in areas other than entrepreneurship (Brush *et al.*, 2003, p. 315). These findings were confirmed by Finkle (2007), who performed an analysis of trends in the market of entrepreneurship faculty. He found that, for the academic year 2004-2005, none of the applicants for the positions advertised claimed entrepreneurship as his/her only area of specialization, while 68 percent had specialization in Strategy, 32 percent in International Business, 16 percent in Organization Behavior/Human Resource (OB/HR), and 17 percent in Technology and Innovation Management (TIM).

Katz (2003) recognized that the lack of PhD programs providing faculty in entrepreneurship has been a weakness of entrepreneurship education worldwide, particularly in the United States. As a remedy to this lack of faculty in entrepreneurship, business programs have been using many adjuncts, most of them nontenured and part-timers, to teach entrepreneurship courses. Katz (2003) found that adjuncts and part-timers were being used to teach mostly introductory course levels in entrepreneurship, but his study did not specify whether these adjuncts and part-timers held PhDs in business or other areas. Kuratko (2005) brought in some specification when he reported that some professionals – among them accountants, lawyers, top managers, and consultants – have been called upon to join and support the efforts of entrepreneurship education by providing their vision and leadership styles to students in the classroom.

As entrepreneurship education evolves and transcends the boundaries of business programs (Solomon, 2007), there has been a growing need to develop courses for non-business students interested in entrepreneurial activities. Educators from diversified disciplines such as industrial technology, psychology, art, music, engineering and the sciences have been invited to develop and teach entrepreneurship courses. In fact, Finkle (2007) found that Technology and Innovation Management has become more popular than OB/HR among faculty who claimed they were prepared to teach entrepreneurship courses.

Primary teaching area

There is an expectation from most stakeholders of business programs that the effective teaching of entrepreneurship can positively influence the attitude of students towards

an alternative career path and simultaneously equip the would be entrepreneur with necessary knowledge and skills to start up, manage, and develop an economically viable business (Matlay and Carey, 2007). Dickson *et al.* (2008) reviewed relevant research regarding the relationship between general education and entrepreneurial education and entrepreneurial selection and success. They concluded that there is a general consensus across research from many countries that indicates a significant and positive relationship between education and entrepreneurial performance.

Dedicated entrepreneurship educators seek to assure the linkage between education specific to entrepreneurship and entrepreneurial outcomes. These educators would be involved in the design of new courses and the building of effective programs that meet the needs of the growing student demand. They also would be more likely to teach entrepreneurship as their primary area. As entrepreneurship education becomes more interdisciplinary, the primary teaching area concerns not only faculty from business areas but from all disciplines with entrepreneurial course components. In studying the interdisciplinary dimensions of entrepreneurship, Levenburg *et al.* (2007) learned that although students who majored in business regard their traditional educations as being sufficiently capable of providing adequate preparation to start a business, the greatest need for the entrepreneurship courses and curricula exists within academic disciplines outside the business school.

With regard to teaching entrepreneurship as a primary area, Finkle *et al.* (2007) indicated that progress has been made, at least on two different fronts. On one hand, entrepreneurship as a primary teaching area was reported to be a recent trend. Although Finkle *et al.* (2007) focused on a sample of faculty earning tenure, their findings can be used as a benchmark for most faculty teaching entrepreneurship, regardless of tenure requirements. This novelty can be justified by the development stage of the field of entrepreneurship and entrepreneurship education as stated previously (Busenitz *et al.*, 2003; Katz, 2003; Low, 2001). On the other hand, the number of faculty claiming entrepreneurship as their primary teaching area seems to be increasing. In fact, Finkle *et al.* (2007) observed this increase in most areas during the period of 1989-2002 compared to 1964-1988, also analyzed in their study. Although they found that during both time periods, the combination of Entrepreneurship and Business Policy primary areas comprised the majority of primary teaching areas (37 percent during 1964-1988 and 60 percent during 1989-2002), the frequency of entrepreneurship alone as primary teaching area grew by 41 percent during 1989-2002 compared to the previous period at both undergraduate and graduate levels.

Research interest and publications

As a developing field, research interests of entrepreneurship scholars and their consequent published work in reputable outlets would have a significant effect on its legitimacy. As Morrison and Inkpen (1991) stated, publishing records are an important criterion for evaluating the quality of university faculty and academic institutions. Relative to the nature of research, whether or not the knowledge produced in the field belongs to the field of entrepreneurship remains a matter of debate. Gartner *et al.* (2006) observed that entrepreneurship researchers borrowed heavily from their home disciplines and maintained academic loyalties to those areas. Low (2001) suggested that there were two diametrically opposed, but in fact mutually dependent future possibilities for entrepreneurship. One perspective considers that "Entrepreneurship

research belongs in the disciplines,” while the other considers “Entrepreneurship research as a distinct domain.” Given the relevance of scholarly work for the maturity of the field, Brush *et al.* (2003) made several recommendations to schools of business to prepare PhD students in entrepreneurship to be able to conduct high quality research. They insisted on preparing students with adequate training in data analysis that would provide them a foundation to understand extant entrepreneurship. In their evaluation of quantitative analytic trends and the adequacy of doctoral training, Dean *et al.* (2007) found mixed results. While established scholars felt that new scholars should be competent with a wide variety of techniques, new scholars did not feel that way. They indicated that they lack confidence in their competence with a wide variety of techniques and most felt confident in only a few sophisticated techniques. Dean *et al.* (2007) concluded that the eclectic nature of entrepreneurship research could be a possible explanation of the mixed findings in their study. It will be interesting to assess the contribution made by entrepreneurship educators in the development and creation of knowledge in the field.

Although previous studies have done little to assess specific research interest of entrepreneurship faculty, their research records have received a quite deal of interest. Shane (1997) provided the first measure of the impact of entrepreneurship programs on research in entrepreneurship. He identified high quality outlets for entrepreneurship research as well as institutional affiliations of authors. He found that during the period of 1987-1994, 596 authors from 276 schools published research classified as entrepreneurship according to criteria used. These authors have made significant contributions to scholarly work in the field of entrepreneurship. An interesting finding for the purpose of the present study is that Shane (1997) revealed that more than 75 percent of all entrepreneurship articles during 1987-1994 were published in three entrepreneurship journals:

- (1) *Journal of Business Venturing*;
- (2) *Journal of Small Business Economics*; and
- (3) *Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice*.

Finkle *et al.* (2007) surveyed the average number of publications by tenure applicants for the periods 1964-1988 and 1989-2002. They found significant differences in the total number of scholarly works published by faculty from research and teaching institutions. Although the study did not focus on articles coded as “entrepreneurship,” the findings indicated that, on average, faculty applying for tenure published more in management journals (*Administrative Science Quarterly*, *Academy of Management Review*, *Journal of Management*) than in entrepreneurship journals during 1964-1988. During 1989-2002, the situation was reversed; on average, tenure applicants published their scholarly work more in entrepreneurship journals than in mainstream management journals. Specifically, Finkle *et al.* (2007, p. 116) showed the following statistics in means for tenure applicants. The largest average number of publications at research schools was in:

- *Entrepreneurship Theory & Practice* (0.97);
- *Journal of Business Venturing* (0.88);
- *Journal of Small Business Management* (0.59); and
- *Strategic Management Journal* (0.56).

At teaching schools, the largest average number of publications was in:

- *Journal of Small Business Management* (0.46);
- *Journal of Business Venturing* (0.43); and
- *Entrepreneurship Theory & Practice* (0.40).

These statistics indicate that entrepreneurship educators at both research and teaching schools were publishing more in journals in the field. This can be seen as a sign of progress and maturity of the field.

Entrepreneurship experience

To which extent are entrepreneurship educators actually entrepreneurs? This question has become one of the strength measures of the entrepreneurship programs currently being offered. In its November 2007 issue, the magazine *Entrepreneur* cites facts about the top 50 undergraduate and graduate programs in entrepreneurship. One of the criteria used to rank those programs was the percentage of faculty who are entrepreneurs in each program; across all 50 of those schools, the scores ranged from 37 to 100 percent. In their examination of entrepreneurship centers in the United States, Finkle *et al.* (2006) found that 76 percent of the entrepreneurship center directors were former entrepreneurs, each had started an average of 1.9 businesses and each accumulated approximately 9.9 years of experience as an entrepreneur. In analyzing the relationship between faculty entrepreneurial activity and human capital, Allen *et al.* (2007) found that faculty with tenure and older faculty were more likely to engage in industrial and entrepreneurial research activities that lead to patents. In their study of perceptions of tenure requirements, Finkle *et al.* (2007, p. 109) found that half (50 percent) of all faculty members who earned tenure had started at least one business with slightly more business start-ups by faculty at teaching schools (52 percent versus 48 percent).

Kuratko (2005) stated that “Until more programs develop, faculty can be trained (‘retreated’) if we make an effort” (p. 588). It is worth noting that some of this effort includes the assessment of the status of current faculty teaching entrepreneurship courses in business programs.

Methodology

The objectives of the current study are to determine the following information about faculty members engaged in teaching entrepreneurship courses:

- educational backgrounds;
- primary teaching focus;
- research interests;
- publications in academic journals; and
- entrepreneurial experience brought to the classroom.

A questionnaire was developed to provide background information relevant to answering these five concerns. The list of entrepreneurship programs was obtained from the November 2007 issue *Entrepreneur* magazine. The study focuses on non-ranked entrepreneurship programs mentioned by the magazine. The first wave of

questionnaires was mailed to the directors of 218 undergraduate level entrepreneurship programs in the USA in March 2008, and a second wave was mailed in July 2008. Of the 218 questionnaires mailed, 97 were returned, for a response rate of 44.5 percent. Eight of the respondents did not have or never had an entrepreneurship program, so the remaining 89 questionnaires provide the basis for the following analysis of the characteristics among the faculty teaching entrepreneurship courses in business programs in the USA.

Findings and discussion

Table I illustrates the characteristics of the 89 entrepreneurship programs considered by the study. Of these, 47 (52.8 percent) did not offer a degree or certificate in entrepreneurship while 42 (47.2 percent) did. Table I also illustrates that 38 (42.69 percent) of all entrepreneurship programs in the study offered only undergraduate level courses in entrepreneurship, 3 (3.37 percent) only offered graduate level courses, and 48 (53.93 percent) offered both undergraduate and graduate level courses. In terms of AACSB International accreditation, 70 of the 89 programs (78.65 percent) were accredited while 19 (21.34 percent) were not, including two programs that were pursuing such accreditation. These two programs were counted among the

<i>Entrepreneurship program description</i>	All EPs <i>n</i> = 89		EPs not offering a degree <i>n</i> = 47		EPs offering a degree <i>n</i> = 42	
				%		%
<i>Entrepreneurship program description</i>						
Undergraduate only	38	20	52.63	18	47.37	
Graduate only	3	3	100.00	0	0.00	
Both undergraduate and graduate levels	48	24	50.00	24	50.00	
<i>AACSB Accreditation</i>						
Accredited	70	32	45.71	38	54.29	
Non-accredited	19	15	78.95	5	21.05	
Pursuing accreditation (counted with non-accredited institutions)	2					
<i>Courses offered</i>						
Undergraduate	529	184	34.78	345	65.22	
Graduate	337	132	39.17	205	60.83	
<i>Students enrolled in EPs</i>						
Undergraduate	8,754	2,785	31.81	5,969	68.19	
Graduate	2,832	1,193	42.12	1,639	57.88	
Total	11,586					
<i>Faculty teaching in EP</i>						
Full-time	313	134	42.81	179	57.19	
Adjunct	217	82	37.79	135	62.21	
Total	530	216	41.14	309	58.86	
<i>Faculty reported in the study</i>						
Full-time	310		58.49			
Adjunct	257					
	53					

Table I.
2007-2008 academic year:
characteristics of
Entrepreneurship
Programs (EPs) in the
study

non-accredited programs. Of the 70 accredited programs, 38 (54.29 percent) offered a degree or certificate in entrepreneurship while 32 (45.71 percent) did not. A total of 866 courses were offered, of which 529 were undergraduate while 337 were graduate level programs. Approximately 8,754 students were enrolled in the undergraduate programs while 2,832 students attended entrepreneurship courses at the graduate level. Five hundred thirty (530) faculty members taught these courses, a number comprised of 313 full-time and 217 adjunct instructors. This study reports and analyzes the characteristics of 257 full-time faculty members and 53 adjuncts, for a total of 310 or 58.5 percent of the total faculty members engaged in teaching entrepreneurship courses in business programs.

The demographic composition of entrepreneurship faculty in our sample appears to be in line with the general profile of faculty in business programs in the United States. Our studies have used similar compositions while analyzing business faculty (Finkle, 2007; Finkle and Deeds, 2001; Finkle *et al.*, 2006; Finkle *et al.*, 2007). In this study, we adopted the view that non-response bias is on a continuum, meaning that it ranges from fast respondents to slow respondents with non-respondents defining the end of the continuum. In that respect, we compared two groups of responses to determine the difference between respondents and non-respondents. We looked at early (first 25 percent) and late (last 25 percent) responses to questions relating to entrepreneurship faculty profiles and found no significant differences. Therefore, we concluded that non-response bias was not a problem for our study. Other studies have used the same approach (see, for instance, Armstrong and Overton, 1977).

The results shown in Figure 1 show that 195 faculty (62.9 percent of faculty in the study) had a PhD degree or equivalent. Of these, 189 faculty members (60.92 percent) were full-time while six (1.94 percent) were adjunct instructors. Figure 2 illustrates that

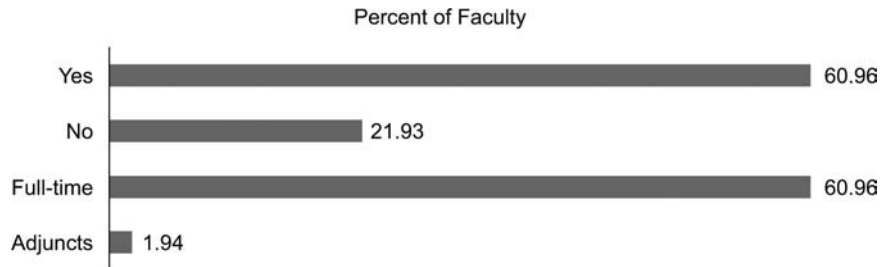


Figure 1.
2007-2008 academic year:
Faculty in the study with
PhD or equivalent

Note: Total number of faculty in the study: 310

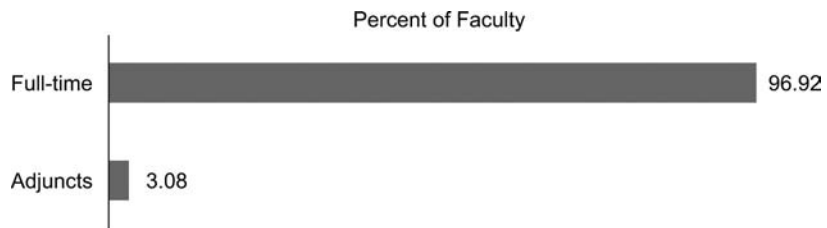


Figure 2.
2007-2008 academic year:
within Faculty with PhD
or equivalent

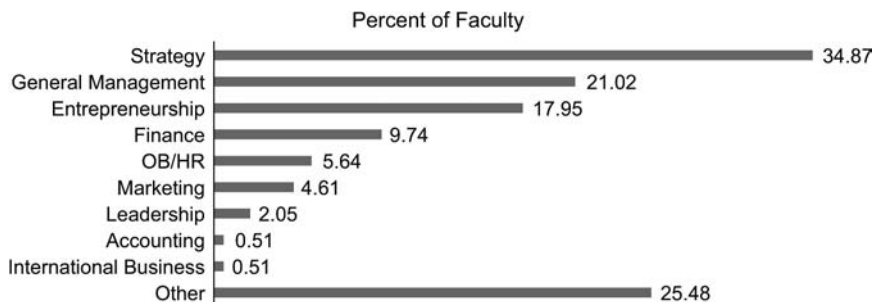
Note: Total number of faculty with PhD or equivalent: 195

among the 195 faculty members with a PhD degree or equivalent, the majority (96.92 percent) taught full time while 3.08 percent were part-time or adjunct instructors.

These results indicate that business programs in our sample have been using a low percentage of adjuncts to teach entrepreneurship courses. This seems to be an improvement since Katz (2003), who found that a high percentage of adjuncts and part-timers were being used to teach mostly introductory level courses in entrepreneurship. Of 195 entrepreneurship faculty who held a PhD in the sample, about 3.08 percent were adjuncts. The study by Katz (2003) could not specify whether these adjuncts and part-timers held a PhD in business or other areas. Kuratko (2005) also reported that some professionals – among them accountants, lawyers, top managers, and consultants – were being used to teach entrepreneurship courses. Given the low percentage of adjuncts in the business programs analyzed, the facts reported by both Katz (2003) and Kuratko (2005) seem to reflect more the situation at top-ranked and non-ranked schools.

The results in Figure 3 indicate that approximately one-third of the faculty members teaching entrepreneurship courses held a PhD degree or equivalent in Strategy or had combined their studies with another field (34.87 percent). After strategy, the most representative focuses were General Management (21.02 percent), Entrepreneurship or a combination with another field (17.95 percent), Finance (9.74 percent), Organizational Behavior/Human Resources (5.64 percent), Marketing (4.61 percent), Leadership (2.05 percent), Accounting (0.51 percent), and International Business (0.51 percent). Nearly one in ten faculty members (13.84 percent) held a PhD or equivalent outside mainstream business disciplines, including Computer Sciences, Engineering, Economics, Law, Psychology, Biology, Physics, Medicine, and Applied Technology.

These findings are in line with the conclusions of Brush *et al.* (2003), who found that 64 percent of new entrepreneurship faculty in their sample held a PhD from majors/concentrations in areas other than entrepreneurship. However, the findings of our study indicated a considerable improvement from those of Finkle (2007), who performed an analysis of trends in the market of entrepreneurship faculty. We used Finkle (2007)'s findings as benchmarks for most entrepreneurship faculty regardless of market requirements. For instance, 17.95 percent of entrepreneurship faculty in our sample claimed a PhD degree in Entrepreneurship or a combination with another; none of the applicants for the entrepreneurship advertised claimed a degree in



Notes: Total number of faculty with PhD or equivalent: 195; The sum of percentage is not 100. Some faculty claimed more than one field or concentration

Figure 3.
2007-2008 academic year:
Faculty PhD field or
concentration

entrepreneurship or a combination with another field found by Finkle (2007). The percentage of entrepreneurship faculty with specialization in Business Policy/Strategy seemed to be in sharp decrease (almost 50 percent) in our sample compared to Finkle (2007). By the same token, our findings indicated that compared to Finkle (2007), certain areas no longer were popular for entrepreneurship faculty with a PhD degree. This is the case of International Business (51 percent versus 32 percent), OB/HR (5.64 percent versus 16 percent), and Technology and Innovation Management (none in our sample versus 17 percent). However, our sample indicated that nearly one-fourth of entrepreneurship faculty claimed a PhD degree in General Management. These results seem to confirm that entrepreneurship education is making progress.

Regarding the teaching focus, the results reported in Figure 4 indicate that most faculty members (75.16 percent) had a teaching load concentrated in Entrepreneurship/Small business courses. This was followed by general courses in Management (25.80 percent), Leadership (14.51 percent), Marketing (12.90 percent), Finance (11.93 percent), Strategy and Policy (10 percent), International Business (9.35 percent), Organizational Behavior/Human Resources (7.09 percent), Accounting (2.58 percent), and Innovation (2.25 percent). A quarter (25.48 percent) of the faculty in entrepreneurship programs concentrated their teaching in areas outside mainstream business disciplines, including Computer Sciences, Engineering, Economics, Law, Psychology, Biology, Physics, Medicine, and Applied Technology.

The breakdown of entrepreneurship faculty according to their primary teaching interest in our sample indicates another area where entrepreneurship education has made significant progress compared to previous studies, specifically Finkle *et al.* (2007). Entrepreneurship has surpassed Business Policy/Strategy as the number one primary teaching focus for three-fourths of entrepreneurship faculty. Although the percentage of entrepreneurship faculty with teaching area concentrated in OB/HR remained almost the same, certain areas are emerging as primary teaching areas. This is the cases of Leadership (14.51 percent), Marketing (12.9 percent), Finance (11.93 percent), and Accounting (2.58 percent). The percentage of faculty members who held a PhD or equivalent outside mainstream business disciplines seemed to increase sharply. This is an indication that Entrepreneurship is making inroad into disciplines outside mainstream business areas.

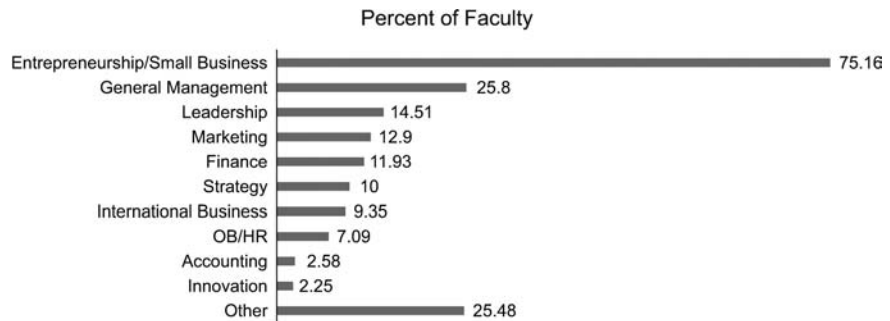


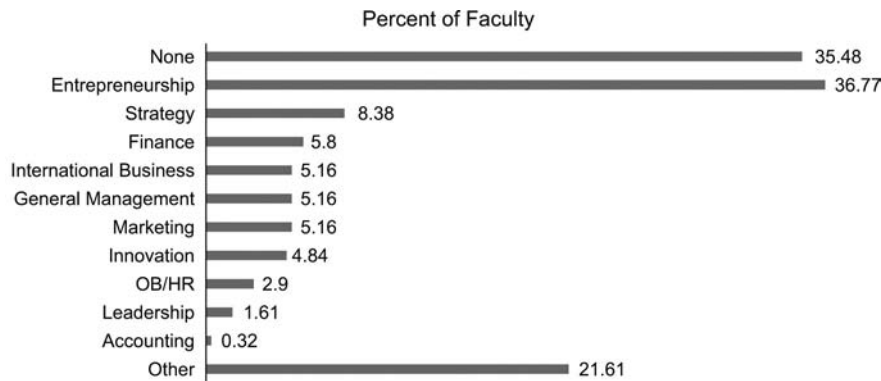
Figure 4.
2007-2008 academic year:
Faculty Teaching Focus

Notes: Total number of faculty in the study: 310; The sum of percentage is not 100. Some faculty claimed more than one teaching area

The results in Figure 5 indicate that more than one-third (35.48 percent) of the faculty members engaged in teaching entrepreneurship programs did not have any research interests. Entrepreneurship ranked number one as a field of interest among faculty conducting research (36.77 percent). Strategy trailed behind substantially at 8.38 percent, followed by Finance (5.80 percent), International Business (5.16 percent), General Management (5.16 percent), Marketing (5.16 percent), Innovation (4.84 percent), Organizational Behavior/Human Resources (2.90 percent), Leadership (1.61 percent), and Accounting (0.32 percent). One-fifth (21.61 percent) of the faculty involved claimed that they had research interests in other fields outside mainstream business disciplines, including Computer Sciences, Engineering, Economics, Law, Psychology, Biology, Physics, Medicine, and Applied Technology.

The fact that Entrepreneurship ranked number one as a field of interest among faculty conducting research is another encouraging sign of progress. This seems to be an improvement from Gartner *et al.* (2006), who observed that entrepreneurship researchers borrow heavily from their home disciplines and maintain academic loyalties to those areas. The results indicated that entrepreneurship scholars are taking the perspective of “Entrepreneurship research as a distinct domain” as opposed to “Entrepreneurship research belongs to the disciplines” (Low, 2001). This seems to be confirmed by the fact that the other business areas, including Strategy, Finance, General Management, OB/HR, Leadership, and Accounting, trailed behind substantially. However, the findings indicated that there a growing number of entrepreneurship faculty claim that they have research interests in other fields outside mainstream business disciplines. In addition, the fact that more than one-third (35.48 percent) of the faculty members engaged in teaching entrepreneurship programs did not have any research interests might be a sign of stagnation. This can be explained by the differences found by Finkle *et al.* (2007) between faculty at research and teaching schools regarding research requirements and publications at the time of tenure application.

Figure 6 indicates that two-fifths (41.30 percent) of the faculty teaching in entrepreneurship programs had not been published in academic journals while one-fourth (25.80 percent) had been so published in entrepreneurship journals. More



Notes: Total number of faculty in the study: 310; The sum of percentage is not 100. Some faculty claimed more than one research interest

Figure 5.
2007-2008 academic year:
Faculty Research Interest

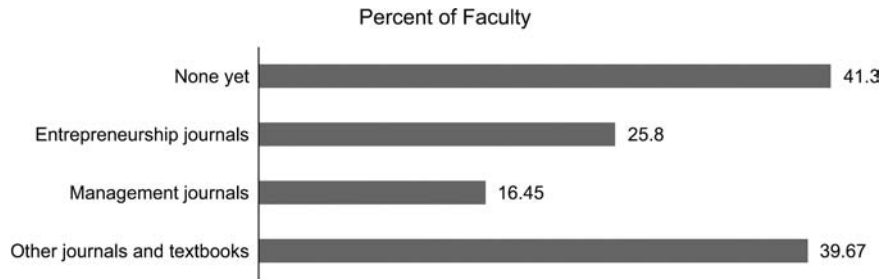


Figure 6.
2007-2008 academic year:
Faculty Publications

Notes: Total number of faculty in the study: 310; The sum of percentage is not 100. Some faculty claimed publications in more than one category. Other journals include publications in Marketing, Finance, Accounting, Law, Information Technology, Medicine, New Product Development, etc.

than half (16.45 percent) of the faculty have published outside the field of Entrepreneurship in Management journals while others (39.67 percent) published in other journals and/or textbooks. These findings are in line with those of previous studies indicating that entrepreneurship educators are publishing more in the academic journals in the field, which is another sign of progress and maturity of the field. Finkle *et al.* (2007) found the same results in the case of entrepreneurship tenure applicants. These findings also are consistent with the number of faculty who claimed entrepreneurship as their research interest (36.77 percent).

Figure 7 indicates that one-fifth (19.03 percent) of the faculty teaching in entrepreneurship programs did not claim any additional experience outside the classroom. This was contrasted by a larger number of faculty members who brought entrepreneurial experience and expertise into their classrooms, having been: consultants (40.64 percent), business owners (36.45 percent), corporate executives and directors of institutions (28.70 percent), entrepreneurs (19.35 percent), and venture capital (4.84 percent). These findings support the notion that entrepreneurship educators bring entrepreneurial experiences into their classrooms. The findings of the current study are in line with and complete those of previous studies. In fact, Finkle *et al.* (2006) found that 76 percent of the entrepreneurship center directors were former

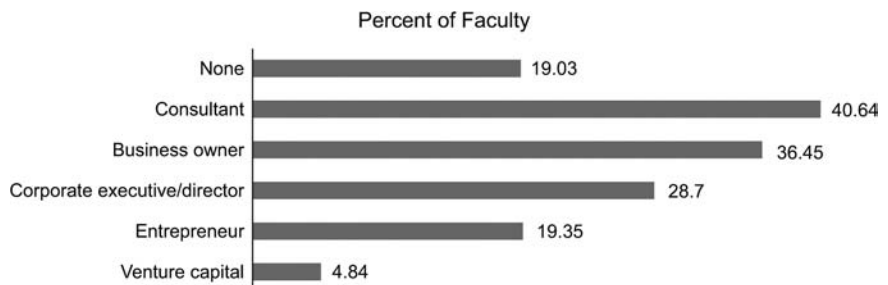


Figure 7.
2007-2008 academic year:
Faculty entrepreneurial
experience

Notes: Total number of faculty in the study: 310; The sum of percentage is not 100. Some faculty claimed publications in more than one category

entrepreneurs, each had started an average of 1.9 businesses, and each accumulated approximately 9.9 years of experience as an entrepreneur. Allen *et al.* (2007) found that faculty with tenure and older faculty were more likely to engage in industrial and entrepreneurial research activities that lead to patents. Finkle *et al.* (2007) found that half of all faculty members who earned tenure had started at least one business. Our findings suggest that entrepreneurship educators bring a wide variety of entrepreneurial experiences into the classroom, which reinforces the link between entrepreneurship theory and practice. This is yet another sign of progress made in the field.

Conclusion

This study fills a gap in entrepreneurship education research by analyzing a sample of entrepreneurship educators in business programs in the United States to determine their educational background, teaching focus, research interest, publication in academic journals, and entrepreneurial experience. The results of the study demonstrate that only one-fifth of the faculty members in the sample held a PhD in entrepreneurship or in combination with another field in a business discipline. More than one-third of the faculty in the sample held a PhD in Strategy. Three out of four faculty members concentrated their teaching in the field of Entrepreneurship. More than one-third of the faculty members had a research interest in the field of entrepreneurship. One-fourth of faculty sampled had published in Entrepreneurship journals. A few of the faculty members sampled conducted research and concentrated their teaching in the area of innovation. The majority of the faculty brought entrepreneurial experience to their classrooms. Overall, information about faculty members engaged in teaching entrepreneurship courses in the programs analyzed indicates that the field has grown as a distinct domain (Low, 2001). In particular, the findings of the study indicate three trends.

First, the number of faculty teaching entrepreneurship courses with a terminal degree in Entrepreneurship or in combination with another field seems to be closing the gap with those who have a terminal degree in Strategy and General Management. These findings give consistency to what the body of research has concluded relative to the strength of entrepreneurship education, particularly in the United States. In fact, Finkle (2007, p. 17) found that the field has made significant progress in becoming more institutionalized since Finkle and Deeds' initial study on trends in the market for entrepreneurship faculty in 2001. Next, as a consequence of the latter, there is an indication that more research is being conducted by faculty members with a teaching focus in the area, even among the faculty members with a terminal degree in areas outside Entrepreneurship, including Computer Sciences, Engineering, Economics, Law, Psychology, Biology, Physics, Medicine, and Applied Technology. Lastly, entrepreneurship courses in the sample tend to be taught by faculty members with substantial entrepreneurial experience and expertise.

The fact that the study depended exclusively on the data obtained from 218 unranked entrepreneurship programs in the United States represents both a distinct limitation and a unique perspective. Clearly, the findings of this study cannot be generalized to all entrepreneurship programs. Future research is needed to conduct research incorporating top ranked entrepreneurship programs in the country.

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