

State Bank Enterprise Awards: An Impact Evaluation Case Study

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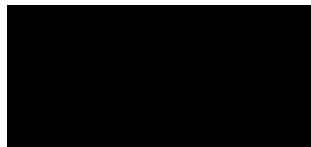
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Declaration

I, Sumit Champrasit, declare that this Doctor of Education dissertation entitled *State Bank Enterprise Awards: An Impact Evaluation Case Study*, is no more than 60,000 words in length, exclusive of tables, figures, attachments, references and footnotes. This dissertation contains no material that has been submitted previously, in whole or in part, for the award of any other academic degree or diploma. Except where otherwise indicated, this dissertation is my own work.



Wednesday, 30 January 2008

Signed

Date

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I acknowledge the support of the program staff in cooperating and providing the information needed for this study. I cherish and am thankful for the understanding of my family as well as my colleagues who have encouraged me during this worthwhile journey. To Thailand: I am grateful to be born in this country and I would do whatever I can to continue its development.

Abstract

This study is concerned with the development of entrepreneurship in young Thais, studying at high school level through an entrepreneurship encouragement program undertaken during the recent period of Thailand's economic recovery. This program is considered new to the country since it focuses on high school participants, a target-group untapped by most existing business incubation programs. In addition, it also takes significant account of the experiential learning method for entrepreneurship development. The research shows that the program had substantial, yet limited impact in encouraging its participants to become future entrepreneurs. This was due to the individual background, parental influence, and differences in their own beliefs that played an essential role in supporting or hindering young Thais towards entrepreneurship.

Quantitative and qualitative research methods, used in conjunction, were used to portray the overall effectiveness of this program; such a mixed method is not commonly practiced in most entrepreneurship program evaluations. Quantitative research was used primarily to give representative results on how well the specific program objectives had been achieved by the participants as well as to select representatives of the program for the qualitative data gathering. Qualitative research was utilised to capture testimonials of program impacts and to obtain a comprehensive interpretation of participants' perceptions, evaluation of program effectiveness, and the factors that support or hinder their development towards entrepreneurship.

The study suggests that this short-term entrepreneurship encouragement program had limited success; success was dependent on both personal and external factors relating to each participant. It showed that one's prior condition was a significant determinant of the varying level of success.

The program was able to encourage the participants with relatively limited business experience towards entrepreneurship, specifically in stimulating more awareness and knowledge in developing entrepreneurial competencies. For those participants with an established background in business, the program provided a period of incubation that encouraged them to become entrepreneurs; it provided them with an opportunity of real business implementation that increased their prospects of success in future entrepreneurship.

The concrete success levels revealed by the study suggests that this short-term entrepreneurship encouragement program might best position itself by providing an initial selection process to separate the ‘entrepreneur-to-be’ from the ‘will not be’. The selected ‘entrepreneur-to-be’ could then be further groomed to be one of the successful entrepreneurs to play an important role in driving the long-term economic growth of Thailand.

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CHAPTER 1

Introduction

Background

Just as bush fires are natural occurrences that raze forests to the ground, and in the very process engender new life, renewed attention on the creation of small and medium enterprises has been established after the collapse of large enterprises during the Thailand's economic crisis in 1997. The crisis started from the lifting of capital control in the early 1990s so that funds could flow freely in and out of the country; as a result, large private firms began borrowing from abroad as the interest rates in Thailand were higher than many other countries. In 1997, the Thai currency was depreciated from 25 Baht to the US dollar to 44 Baht; those large enterprises were devastated since their revenues were generated in Baht while funds borrowed were in foreign currencies (*The Nation*, 1997). After the crisis, to make Thailand less vulnerable to external volatilities, the post-crisis policy, addressed by the Minister of Finance, was to lay a solid foundation for sustainable stability by strengthening domestic activities. Since the grass roots level was the true base of Thai economy comprising a majority of the Thai population and the fact that the small and medium-sized enterprises (SME) sector accounted for more than half of the nation's GDP, the Thai government believed that competitive SME would play an important role in driving securely lasting economic prosperity (Busaba, 1998; Suchart, 2003).

In terms of development in the SME sector, the need to focus and target SME support policy was unavoidable due to the nation's resource constraints. In general, the basic principles underlying Thai policy towards SME promotion were to strengthen the capabilities of existing firms and to foster the creation of new enterprises (Sevilla et al, 2000). The initiatives to strengthen the existing SME mainly dealt with assisting them to grow and to be replicated in sufficient numbers across different industries and sectors (Thitapha, 2002). In terms of new SME creation, there were initiatives to stimulate productive activities by providing people at grass roots level with greater access to capital through different mechanisms such as the Village Fund, and One-Tambon-one-Product (OTOP) that empowered local villages with the capacity to develop one unique product that possessed strong attribute of each local area, thus transforming local resources to value-added products. These mechanisms, which aimed at fostering entrepreneurial and productive capacity, were fundamental to greater grass roots self-reliance (Suchart, 2003).

In promoting sustainable growth in the SME sector, it was undeniable that such promotion required the integrative efforts. Other than the concrete SME initiatives mentioned earlier, the Thai government had also organised two government units for SME development, namely the Department of Industry Promotion and the Institute of Small and Medium Enterprise Development (ISMED). These organisations focused on both developing and supporting new entrepreneurs while providing consultancy services to existing SME through projects such as New Entrepreneurs Creation (NEC) and Strengthening the Thai SME. NEC, for instance, cooperated with colleges and universities throughout the country in business management training, business plan preparation, and business consulting. Turning to education, the Thai government has recognised the role of the younger generation in SME development; the Ministry of Education and Bureau of University Affairs has therefore been assigned to review the curriculum to encourage an entrepreneurial spirit amongst those of an early age. Lee et al.

(2002) observe that it is essential to attract young, educated minds towards entrepreneurship in order to promote SME growth. Understanding the potential of young entrepreneurs' creation is imperative in nurturing healthy economy while vaccinating against future economic turmoil (Kuo, 2002).

There were many ways in which young minds might be educated towards entrepreneurship; however, I would like to narrow these down to two main approaches: firstly, within-the-curriculum approaches, such as the Thai government initiated; secondly, off-the-curriculum approaches through the use of incubation programs. There were many types of programs presented in Thailand and these programs tended to focus on the incubation of Thai young people at university level onwards in creating potential entrepreneurs. There was, however, one significant entrepreneurial incubation program first introduced in Thailand by the State Bank (SB), which focused on the incubation of Thai young people at high school level, namely the State Bank Young Enterprise Awards (SBYEA).

Not only was the SBYEA program the first to focus on high school participants, it also was one of the earliest incubation programs in Thailand. As well as training participants in entrepreneurial know-how, it gave opportunities for its participants to actually carry out a business, according to their plans, in a real business environment.

Now, you may be wondering why a state-owned bank would want to initiate such a program that was not often done by others – both in terms of its participants, and its incubation approach. Fortunately I had the chance to talk to the program organisers from the bank and they clearly told me why. State Bank, the largest state-owned bank in Thailand, took seriously its contribution to social responsibility and its response to government policy. Following the 1997 economic crisis, the government significantly realised the importance of SME development in strengthening the national economy. The bank also wanted to take part in securing much needed SME growth. One of the ways to do this was through its entrepreneurial incubation

program to draw new entrepreneurs into the system. The reason why this program focused on recruiting participants at high school level emerged from the program organisers' belief that students within this age interval were at a very vulnerable stage and were often overwhelmed with career choices. The organisers aimed at capturing the participants before their undergraduate studies commenced. They had noted that most young Thais, once having entered universities, graduated and tended to become employees rather than entrepreneurs. They also believed that the earlier young Thais were exposed to entrepreneurship, the further away they would get from the formal education system in Thailand, in which students were encouraged to think more like employees rather than employers.

Since this program was organised by the bank, the program organisers had made use of the bank's financing capabilities through the offering of investment funds to the participants for implementing a business that they had planned and operated in a real business situation. This way, the organisers believed that participants would actually learn by real business practice, rather than by merely writing a brilliant business plan. The participants would be guided through business practice using a 'learning by doing' approach and the business results would be able to be measured practically. In terms of the program format, the program aimed at facilitating entrepreneurship development through a business competition designed to deliver awareness on business and to encourage young Thais to be future entrepreneurs. What made this program different from others was that a program of this nature had never before been implemented for high school students in Thailand. The program also shifted from the usual-type business competition based on written papers to a competition based on realistic business plans, their implementation, and actual results.

Besides responding to the government SME policy and its social responsibility, the bank, through this program, also benefited from the improvement of its social contribution image amongst the masses, as well as the building of a new customer base in the SME sector. The program

organisers felt that these indirect benefits from its incubation program would attract and secure potential new customers, and strengthen the bank's image and preference amongst existing and potential customers.

It was at this point that I realised that this program was a pioneer; its evaluation would be of great benefit in demonstrating its effectiveness in entrepreneurship encouragement. Information on its success and constraints would be important to other jurisdictions that might wish to replicate a similar program. Aside from the benefits to the other programs that would likely follow in the SBYEA footsteps, an evaluation of the impact made by the program on its participants would likely provide substantial inputs to successful entrepreneurship development processes for young Thais. Such inputs, emerging from the evaluation of this program, might well trigger policy makers to plan for more efficient business incubation policies – taking into account what worked, and did not work, in stimulating these students to become entrepreneurs.

Program development

Since this program was the 'first of its kind' to be introduced in Thailand both in terms of its participants and its incubation approach, this section provides details on how the program was developed, mainly at policy level. According to the program organisers, the program utilised a business 'learning by doing' approach. Rather than just providing training on business plan preparation and business management skills, the program gave the opportunity for its participants to really implement their business according to their business plans and to actually practice their business management skills in the real business world. These were the factors that made the SBYEA program 'unique'.

Based on the program organisers' consensus to design the program to accommodate participants from high school level, the program organisers decided to benchmark the format of the program with similar programs

already practiced in New Zealand to ensure the program's practicality. The benchmarked program was called the Young Enterprise Scheme (YES), the flagship program of the Enterprise New Zealand Trust (ENZT); it was a well-known incubation program conducted among high school participants. YES was an experiential business program in New Zealand which ran in secondary schools at year 12 and/or 13. It involved working through the process of setting up and running a real business within an environment of support and formal structure. For students, Young Enterprise provided a great opportunity to realise their uniqueness, develop their strengths, work together as a team and possibly make a profit at the same time. The YES supported its participants with teachers and mentors. A teacher was the person primarily in charge of the YES team; a mentor helped the team get to the answers to best practice scenarios by asking questions that helped them improve their performance.

The organisers chose to replicate the format of the YES program, especially the real life business experience component, but adapted the program to be compatible with the bank's objectives. Since the program was to be fairly new for Thailand, the program organisers decided that they should organise a workshop to provide the participants with basic business knowledge across different disciplines as well as explaining to them the roles of their teachers and mentors, as well as coaches, before actually entering into the real business arena by themselves. Following substantial research that led to modifications by the program organisers, the developed program in Thailand and the YES program shared a high level of similarity, with some quite specific differences. One of the program organisers had been a participant in the YES program during her secondary school studies in New Zealand, and she realised that since this would be the program's first year, coaching should be provided at the initial stage to enable the students to become accustomed to the process of learning by experience. The program also needed to encourage the generation of business concepts based on the

local resources available since the bank planned to use this program to promote the development of economies at grass roots level.

State Bank Young Enterprise Awards Program

The State Bank Young Enterprise Awards program eventually started in 2002, the year of the bank's thirty-sixth anniversary. One of the program organisers shared with me her vision for this program:

The vision is to increase the potential of the country through Thai young people. With more knowledge and desire to do business, young people could be the backbone in initiating new enterprises in the future. This also corresponds to the government policy in supporting new small enterprises during the period of economic reconstruction. The program aimed at giving Thai young people an opportunity to express their business initiatives and enabling them to be able to put such initiatives into reality.

The potential of youthful Thais to drive the SME sector, as well as the program's real business implementation, were highly regarded by the program organisers. In particular, the program organisers guided me through the five intended objectives of the program, which were as follows:

- To encourage participants to think like an entrepreneur;
- To equip them with practice skills to process entrepreneurial thoughts into implementation;
- To develop a 'can do' attitude among participants;
- To enable them to realise their future direction of what they want to become
- To enhance the significance of learning by experience.

The program gave the opportunity to over one million Thai students at high school level, from over two thousand schools, to become program

participants. The program had received very good feedback from target groups; more than five hundred high schools had shown their intention to participate in the program. Ultimately, a quarter of those schools became involved in the program, indicating a significant indication of interest in entrepreneurial development at upper high school level in Thailand.

The program consisted of three sequential phases: a business concept submission phase, a training and implementation phase, and a final presentation phase.

Business concept submission

In this phase, the students were to submit a written enterprise concept consisting of an articulated product or service and its rationale, a brief marketing plan, and a concept feasibility analysis in accordance to the program guidelines. The guidelines basically consisted of the following:

- **Business Overview:** Detailed description of the products or services the participants would like to propose including the rationale and motivation for their selection as well as the expected benefits to the society from their business concepts.
- **SWOT Analysis:** Stating the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats of their business concepts:
 - *Strengths* – Outstanding features/aspects of their products or services.
 - *Weaknesses* – Limitations of their concepts in terms of time, budget, and etc. with respect to their competitors.
 - *Opportunities* – The external factors that supported their business concepts, for instance, the government policies or the industry trend.

- *Threats* – The external factors that obstructed their business concepts in terms of development such as regulations and fierce competitive conditions.
- **Marketing Plan:** Stating the primary and secondary target groups and the reasons for their selection. The marketing plan should also include the marketing mix (the 4Ps of Kotler & Armstrong, 2001) of the business concepts being proposed:
 - *Product* – detailed description of the products or services including their benefits to targeted customers.
 - *Price* – the pricing strategy and pricing procedures as well as the reasons for setting their price at any certain level.
 - *Place* – the planned distribution channel and the approach used to reach their customers such as through internet, home delivery, etc.
 - *Promotion* - sales promotion strategies including advertising, public relation, marketing activities; marketing tactics such as discount, buy one get one free schemes.
- **Financial Analysis:** Stating the revenue projections, the cost estimation, administrative expenses, and profitability:
 - *Revenue projection* – sales forecast or other revenue to be generated with the explanations on the sources of their revenue.
 - *Cost estimation* – cost of manufacturing goods or providing the services.
 - *Administrative expenses* – the expenses incurred from operations such as rent, labour, transport, delivery, utilities, and marketing expenses.

- *Profitability* – the projections of profit resulting from the conduct of this business concept.

Feasibility: An analysis of the extent to which the business concept, as planned, could be put into real business practice.

Students were able to choose to enter the competition either as individuals or in teams. In 2002, just under 600 business concepts were submitted. Twenty concept groups were selected to join the program. The criteria for selecting the concept groups that would join this program were not limited to the completeness of the business aspects but rather decided on the originality and creativity of the business concepts as well as the extent to how the concepts had been derived from the local resources readily available in Thailand, such as raw material and local know-how. The program organisers were also convinced that these selection criteria made this program different from any other programs being practiced in Thailand, since they tried to stimulate product development utilising resources from local communities – the so called ‘grass roots level of the country’.

Selected business concepts

Under this section, I would like to provide a brief overview of the 20 business concepts selected after the business submission phase to demonstrate concrete examples of what young Thais had come up with and their creativity in terms of the business concept generation. The motivation and rationale behind some of the concepts were overwhelming as well as inspiring to the program organisers and those who had witnessed them.

Math tutoring book

Mathematics plays a significant role in the development of young people’s thinking processes. In response to the lack of a focused maths exercise book to develop maths practice skill, the tutoring book provided practice exercises

for students from Year 9-12. It was written by an experienced maths champion, relatively famous among Thai high school students, who had won the gold medal in an International Maths Olympics competition. This product was expected to be sold to the 1 500 high school students from the schools within the targeted area.

Wedding balloons

This concept was initiated by a group of disabled high school students who were deaf and discovered that they could make balloons into different forms and shapes without being frightened by them. The fact that they could not hear made it easier for them to twist and turn the balloons into creative forms without being afraid of the bursting sound once the balloons accidentally explode. These balloons were targeted to replace the flower decorations at most weddings. Not only were they a lot cheaper than flowers, they were also easier to install and to maintain.

Mama Ramen

What made this group noodle business concept different from other noodle houses was the marketing technique: it allowed customers to refill unlimited amount of noodles within the bowl they first ordered. This group also invented different types of soup from the raw material and spices readily available in their region. The customers could refill with noodles as often as they wanted, provided soup remained in their bowls. The group targeted their primary customers as teenagers and fellow students – those undergoing a growth spurt period and to whom quantity was more appealing than quality.

Moral funeral condolences

In Thailand, guests most often give fresh flowers at funerals to express their condolences to the families of those who have passed away. The group recognised that those fresh flowers are perishable and last for a relatively short period of time. They conceived the idea to use cloth to make a symbolic

condolence objects decorated with moral quotations about life, mostly derived from the preaching of monks in Buddhism. The moral quotes would enlighten other guests at the funeral or those who had read them about life and the way to live life in the Buddhist way. For instance, the quote could say something like, 'Uncertainties are certain' or 'No one ever got out of life alive, the point is learning how to let go'. The group planned to sell their products in front of the temples around Bangkok, since that is where most funerals take place.

M.Q. youth camp

In most developing civilised societies, moral qualities are often neglected. Thailand is no different. The M.Q. (moral qualities) youth camp aimed to develop and equip young Thais with the IQ (intelligence quotient) and EQ (emotional intelligence quotient) in the group's beliefs that development of the two qualities of intelligence and emotions would eventually lead to development in terms of moral qualities, M.Q. The group came up with this concept based on the availability of human resources with specific training skills and past experience in organizing training events on problematic Thai young people. The camp was designed to train troublesome Thai young people to look back and evaluate themselves, build relationships with others, and improve their behaviours both academically and emotionally. The program was planned to consist of 30-hours of face-to-face sessions held only on Sundays.

Learn in Rap

This concept started from the creative thinking of a group to combine study with pleasure. The group believed that learning was most effective when it was fun. Due to the excessive content of different subjects to be memorised, why not rhyme theories and formulas into a rap song composed in hip hop music. Since hip hop music was already popular among high school students, it made the rap formulas easier to remember. The concept was inspired by

one of the group whose grades were not so good. He regarded himself as a lazy person who did not want to read any textbooks. The 'Learn in Rap' songs were targeted at high school students, for whom the academic level of subjects and content had become complicated and excessive.

Coffee man

With respect to the fiercely competitive business environment, people have less and less time for themselves. Since working people have limited time to shop for their coffee, the Coffee Man would go to shop for them instead. Coffee Man was a portable coffee shop, with the competitive advantage of being at the right place and time when coffee was needed. The Coffee Man represented the coffee person with the products usually sold in coffee shops, such as coffee, tea, and sandwiches on him, personally. This made it convenient for working people in office buildings to obtain their drinks and snacks on their way to work; the customers could even call the Coffee Man to their offices. The Coffee Man project targeted customers as the working people around the Silom area, Bangkok, the most crowded working district in the city, consisting of a very large number of office buildings.

Natural plant bucket

The plant bucket is biodegradable since it is made from plant fibres. Compared to the plastic plant bucket, this product was more convenient as well since the plant could be ready to be put into the ground without having to remove the bucket. The group targeted their primary customers as environmentally friendly people, as well as those who liked to experiment with new things. The plant fibres used to make this product were readily available from local resources. The fibres were knitted together to form the plant bucket with sufficient strength to hold the plant.

Sticky rice ready-to-eat

Other than normally cooked rice, sticky rice is very popular with Thai people, especially those in the north-eastern part of Thailand. The process of cooking sticky rice usually takes a significant amount of time, and once it is cooked, it can only be left for a while before it gets too hard. This ready-to-eat sticky rice product made it easier for the metropolitan people to save time and allow them to have sticky rice whenever they felt like it. The customers just needed to add some water onto this product before putting it into the microwave. The product added value to the common sticky rice available in the market and could be charged at premium price. The group targeted their product to be sold to people living in the metropolitan area and who sought convenience products, and those who like to experience new products.

Deluxe pork snack

Fried pork skin is a very popular snack among Thai people, especially those in the northern region. This group added value to the existing non-branded plain fried pork skin by adding different flavours to them, and placing them in branded packaging, in forms of boxes and small snack bags. Some of the flavours were B.P.H., wasabi (Japanese spices), and satay. All of these flavours used natural spices rather than artificial flavouring or chemicals. The group targeted their product to be sold in the northern region, especially to those who wanted to buy this deluxe snack as souvenirs from their visits to the north.

Portable mini garden

Green areas for people living in the major cities in Thailand are becoming more and more scarce as the cities expand in terms of population and real estate construction. This group wanted to capture the concept of a portable garden, that would be convenient and suitable for a metropolitan lifestyle. Utilizing the material from local resource, the group conceived of a compact-sized garden on a portable tray. The product comprised dried wooden sticks

and stones decorated into small waterfalls and other natural landmarks. The small plants were then grown in smaller trays to make a complete mini garden. The target group of this business concept were metropolitan people who admired nature and wished to decorate their space with corners of compact green area.

Local crab soup cube

Local crabs in Thailand are found widely in the fields. This group aimed to purchase, from farmers, small local crabs and to process them in form of a crab soup cube. Soup cubes are often put into boiled water to transform them into chicken soup or pork soup, without having to boil real chicken or pork. One of the differences was using local crabs instead of chicken or pork to make soup cubes. There was, however, a second difference: the local crabs present as major enemies to the farmers and their crops. This business concept provided opportunities for the farmers to capture the local crabs present in their plantation and to sell them for additional income. The group converted the farmers' crisis into an opportunity. In terms of product benefits, local crabs are known to provide high levels of protein, and tricosan – a chemical which helps reduce the accumulation of body fats. This product was targeted to be sold to housewives who were health-conscious.

Wooden crafts

From a class of wooden craftwork, the business concept of wooden crafts made from old wood or pieces of wood was initiated. This project intended to utilise the free time of high school students who took the wooden craftwork class. The availability of old wood and pieces of wood made it possible for the group to acquire raw materials for wooden craft production since they were usually neglected or thrown away by the locals. The group only collected this neglected wood and creatively made use of it by shaping it into picture frames, tissue boxes, lamps, small furniture, etc. The products required significant level of skills in craftsmanship and creativity in art to

revive the abandoned resource into delicate crafted wooden artwork. This group had targeted their primary customers as working class people who admired artwork and wooden crafts who could purchase this product as presents, souvenirs, or for their own use.

Hydroponic vegetables

What makes hydroponic vegetables different from the vegetables in the market is the way they are planted. They are not planted in the soil but in small transparent plastic containers. The process is scientifically proven and has been adapted from the scientific theories the group had learned in their science class. This way of planting makes the vegetables very hygienic and free of chemicals. In terms of cost, hydroponic vegetables are cheaper; as well, they do not require the use of fertilisers or chemicals to maintain the vegetables in good condition. The primary target group for the hydroponic vegetables were health-conscious housewives and local people shopping in the market for environmentally-friendly vegetables.

Marigold pesticides

Marigolds are flowers that are extensively grown in Sukothai province. Besides their beauty and bright yellow colour, marigolds have a very strong perfume that repels insects and pests. This group made use of marigolds that were readily present in their province to make pesticides. Marigold pesticides, which are not only organic and free of chemicals but also harmless to consumers, were aimed to be used for vegetables plantation. Thus, the primary target group of Marigold pesticides were vegetable farmers since vegetables are very sensitive to insects and pests compared to other commercial plants.

Prosperity & Medicinal Herbs restaurant

Thai herbs are a precious heritage of the country. They are proven to be beneficial for the body, not only to keep people healthy but also able to cure

a number of diseases. This group initiated the idea to establish a restaurant selling special Thai curries on rice. Curries are very popular among Thai people and are used widely in their cooking; however, what made the curries of this group different was that fact that Thai herbs were used as the major ingredients. The group selected twenty-one kinds of Thai herbs to be mixed with the curries. Each has been proven beneficial to the body in different ways. One particular benefit is some of the herbs help to enrich the skin. The primary customers of these Thai herbs curries on rice were fellow high school students – especially females, who they care more about the beauty of their skin more do males.

Baan Chiang jar

Baan Chiang is widely known for its jars made with a traditional design. The jars are mainly used for decoration in traditional Thai houses. This group wanted to adapt the Baan Chiang jar to the lifestyle and preference of the wider target groups to broaden the market, especially amongst teenagers. They had the idea to adapt the jar into various products, from miniature Baan Chiang jar key-chains or refrigerator magnets to colourful versions of the jar (traditionally brown). They planned to bring the products closer to prospective buyers by establishing retail shop at schools and at the Odom Night Bazaar, a famous night market in the province. The group expected to change the public's perception about the Baan Chiang jar from that of an out-of-date antique to a range of fashionable products.

Curry and Herbal tablet

Curry and herbs have long been important local products that have co-existed with Thai society. They are widely used as both food and medicines. Although many herb and curry ingredients can be easily found in most parts of the country, they cannot be transported easily, given their very perishable nature. Therefore, this group had the idea to condense curry and herbs into a tablet form for convenience of transportation and usage. Besides the

domestic market, this group also planned to export the products, starting with Asian countries where taste and preferences are similar to those of Thailand.

Petchburi Home-stay Tourism

Thailand is one of the most famous tourist destinations in Asia. Over 10 million tourists visit Thailand annually, and a growing number of Thais are interested in travelling up-country on the weekend. While Petchburi is a beautiful province with many attractions and activities, many tourists still prefer to go to the more expensive beach districts such as Cha-Am and Hua-Hin, due to the presence of developed tourist infrastructures and hotels. This group planned to promote a one-week home-stay tourism concept in Petchburi where the tourists would spend time moving around the province, participating in many activities planned by the group, such as cooking, sailing, spas, and rafting. The target group was young, adventurous tourists who wanted to experience a rural lifestyle.

Sugar cane Starch Food Box

Sugar cane is a popular cash crop in Klongkiew Village. Most sugar cane is processed into sugar cane juice and sugar, leaving large amounts of starch unused. This group planned to maximise the use of sugar cane by processing waste sugar cane starch into paper- and food-boxes. The group wished to replace existing non-recyclable Styrofoam food-boxes with bio-degradable sugar cane food-boxes. This way, the project could reduce pollution from Styrofoam, reduce sugar cane waste, and generate jobs in the village. The group planned to start marketing the product to the local food vendors to generate awareness and promote acceptance of the products in the local society.

The twenty business concepts selected varied in terms of their industries. Some were very innovative while others were designed to provide solutions to existing problems. This suggests that the ideas and thinking of

Thai young people should not be under-estimated; rather, they should be cherished and encouraged.

Business training and implementation

The selected groups were given an initial fund of 10,000 Baht each to invest in their proposed business concepts. In this phase, the program played an important role in training and facilitating the participants to put their business into reality. The program organised a workshop that helped train their business planning skills in various disciplines, such as marketing, accounting, and finance. A coach, whose task was to help formulate and derive action plans for business implementation, was personally appointed to assist each group or individual. The coaches hired by the program were the first-rate consultants from various fields such as marketing, accounting, finance, and operations. They had the capability to give significant advice to the participants on how to implement their business according to their plan. The coaches not only trained and gave advice to participants on a needs basis, but sought to inspire the participants towards entrepreneurship. As well as providing coaches, the program also engaged guest speakers to share their real-business experience as a source of inspirations for the participants.

The expected outcome of the workshop was that all program participants would gain the necessary knowledge of how to carry out a business in real practice, as well as making modifications to their initial business plans to make them as practical as possible within a limited timeframe. To achieve this outcome, the groups had to create definite targets or goals that could be measured later on in terms of performance. Ultimately, the workshop and the coaching aspect of the program were expected to help program participants take the first step in real business implementation.

Each team was given a period of one-and-a-half months to conduct their business activity, which included the actual sales of their products or services to their targets, according to their prepared action plans from the

workshop. Throughout this period, the program intended that coaches would be readily available for consultation as required.

Final presentation

In the final phase, after the real business implementation, the participating teams were to prepare a 15-minute presentation and a written report on their project achievement and trial implementation outcomes.

Awards were given to the teams with different aspects of outstanding performance based on specific criteria: business innovation; creativity; marketing capabilities; presentation; social and environmental responsibility. The program organisers invited the judges both from private and public sector for this final phase. Each was an honourable and successful executive from different industries in Thailand, such as banking, advertising, entertainment, consulting, and manufacturing.

The SBYEA program ended in 2003. After the program, it depended on the judgment of the participants if they wished to continue their business. Nevertheless, due to the constraints of their on-going study, most of the participants chose to discontinue the businesses started in the program and focused their efforts on furthering their studies at the university level.

Research Objectives

After the program ended, it was essential to make the most of the program results and performance. This was the purpose of this research. In order to determine the overall effect of the program, this research reports an impact evaluation to investigate how effective the program was in encouraging Thai young people to become future entrepreneurs. The evaluation focused on whether the program under study had achieved its intended impact, i.e., the encouragement of entrepreneurship amongst the participants, rather than any

detailed aspects of program delivery. The program impacts would be implied under this study through the following:

- The relevant factors of the program that encouraged young Thais to be future entrepreneurs.
- The level of program outcomes.
- The program impact in facilitating the concepts of entrepreneurship and the orientation of participants towards being entrepreneurs.

This research primarily addresses issues that were of concern to the program organisers, as well as the implications for any further program development. It also places stress on the relevance of program impacts on its participants towards entrepreneurship, which fundamentally benefits policy makers, decision-makers, fund providers, and other jurisdictions to understand the program's capabilities and limitations. Those findings can be utilised according to their needs of these different groups, helping to facilitate their policies and decision making.

Significance of the Study

The research benefited the target groups at different levels, from the targeted audience to the overall society as a whole. This research aims at providing feedback to the program organisers in terms of the program outcomes and impacts on entrepreneurship encouragement. In turn, this allows for recommendations for improvement, making it an efficient and practical learning program for high school participants who, at a vulnerable stage of their career selection, may be stimulated to think more like job creators rather than job seekers.

Evaluation of the entrepreneurial development program will also contribute to entrepreneurship development at a higher level. This research seeks to point out the significance of entrepreneurial development at early

ages. This will increase high school students' credibility as participants or target groups for institutes that would like to support or fund entrepreneurial development. Findings from this research were also expected to benefit the program organisers of other programs involving high school students as well as similar programs on entrepreneurial development.

For the small and medium-sized enterprise sector, it is anticipated that reflection on a short-term entrepreneurship education program such as this will help facilitate the decision making of the funders, educators, and policy makers in formulating an appropriate strategy to create a new breed of learning entrepreneurs according to their needs. Whether or not such a new generation would have the potential to drive a secure and sustainable economic recovery, still depends on the program's long-term impacts and the various continuation strategies.

Separate from the target groups of audience and the significance of this study to the broader sectors, I personally found this research to be of substantial personal importance. Fortunately, I had the opportunity to witness the delivery of this program at high school level and was very proud of the capabilities revealed by our Thai students. They were courageous and creative; they had abundant fresh ideas. The fact that this program received very high feedback from the schools made me realise that, as a result of this early interest in business, these enthusiastic young Thais were a potential and powerful driving force for the future Thai economy. Thus, evaluation of this program addresses the importance of Thai young people and their development in different circumstances and directions, as well as the program's notion to make them aware of what they might want to do in life.

While this research is of significance to different target groups and to me, it is clear that the study, like all studies, has its limitations. There are limitations to this study being able to discretely pinpoint whether or not a participant would be a future successful entrepreneur. This study only provides the essence of the program's impact shortly after the program

ended, and does not consider the delayed impacts that might incur in the later stage of each participant's life in becoming an entrepreneur. In terms of program effectiveness, this performance measure is restricted to a consideration of the objectives formulated by the program organisers and their intention of what each objective meant to them.

Outline of Chapters

This research has commenced with an overview on the program, its rationale, and the objectives in conducting the impact evaluation of the SBYEA program.

Chapter 2 entails the related literature on entrepreneurship, entrepreneurship learning, available entrepreneurship education programs, and the selection of impact evaluation methods. Subsequently, this research establishes its standing and contribution to the academic world based on the review of such literature.

Chapter 3 provides details of the research methods and of data analysis; how this research was conducted, with the use of questionnaires and interviews.

Chapter 4 displays the findings from the questionnaires from thirty two program participants. It provides the overall findings and impressions on how well the program has performed based on its objectives through the use of descriptive statistics.

Chapter 5 has its role firstly in categorizing the program participants based on the results from the questionnaires. It allows for the selection of nine individuals to represent the overall program participants for the interview process. This chapter also displays the narratives from the interviews of each participant group. It captures the relevant quotes and snapshots of the interviews including its emerging themes towards the issues that are critical to the program evaluation.

Chapter 6 consists of the program evaluation in terms of both the program objectives and entrepreneurship encouragement. This chapter stresses the implications of the program's impact, explores the reasoning behind such impacts, and then categorises the participants into groups with different degrees of entrepreneurship adoption.

The research ends with **Chapter 7** in which the conclusion and the researcher's recommendations to the program organisers, and to society are drawn, based on implications gathered from all aspects of the study.

CHAPTER 2

Literature Review

Introduction

This chapter aims at reviewing the literature on entrepreneurship in the broad context of entrepreneurial behaviour, learning, and environment. It further focuses on issues related to entrepreneurship incubation, particularly the current activities in youth incubation and their outcomes. Lastly, it reviews methods of program evaluation in light of the available method's categorisation in order to locate an appropriate method for this study. All in all, this chapter contributes to positioning this research in the academic world of entrepreneurship development.

General context of entrepreneurship

To date, entrepreneurship study receives increasing popularity. Birch (1979) found that small businesses play the significant role in creating employment opportunities in the United States. Great Britain is in pursuit to reduce state intervention and promote entrepreneurial activities. Governments in many countries are interested in forming a culture that will support the creation of new enterprises and ventures. Many countries have begun to recognise the importance of small business and are contributing to the entrepreneur incubation process in schools to encourage the prospect of graduates engaging in small business as another employment option. Since the incubation process is costly and will take considerable resources to establish

and make it successful, some scholars have paid considerable attention to the process of creating entrepreneurs (Hills, 1986; Scott & Twomey, 1988).

Gibb (1996) points out three main reasons why many countries and scholars paid more interest in entrepreneurship and the creation of entrepreneurs: job creation and economic development; strategic adjustment and realignment; as well as the deregulation and privatisation of state-owned enterprises. Kirby (2004) concludes that there will be less reliance on others, whether less-developed countries on the developed countries, citizens on the governments, or employees on the corporate sector. Increasingly, societies have become more self-reliance for their own wealth, securities, healthcare and destinies. It is also crucial that educational institutions develop entrepreneurial characteristics in their students. In fact, there has been a growth in the literature on entrepreneurship education that argues that a different learning environment is required to support the study of entrepreneurship within a university setting (Gibb, 2002).

Low & MacMillan (1988) suggest that the study of the behaviour of the entrepreneur should consider contextual issues and elaborate the processes that explain rather than just describe the entrepreneurial phenomenon. The entrepreneurial process involves functions, activities, and actions related to the perception of opportunities, resource acquisition, interaction with environment, and creation of organisations to pursue them – including both promoting and constraining factors (Bygrave & Hofer, 1991).

Westhead & Wright (1998) identify five types of entrepreneurs: *nascent*, individuals who consider establishing a new business; *novice*, individuals who have no prior experience in business ownership as a business founder, an inheritor, or a purchaser; *habitual*, individuals who previously have had business ownership experience; *serial*, individuals who have sold/closed the original business but at a later date have inherited, established, or purchased another business; and *portfolio*, individuals who have kept and retained their original business but at a later time have

inherited, established, or purchased other businesses. Studies have now begun to focus on the process of preparing of forming a new venture during which individuals may be considered as nascent entrepreneurs (Dalmar & Davidson, 2000). Reynolds (1997) points out that entrepreneurs in different ventures are not homogeneous. He suggests that the age of the entrepreneur, previous employment, and experience are the crucial factors that differentiate each entrepreneur. Carter et al. (1996) point out that the individuals who actually establish a new venture have undertaken more activities, including gathering the necessary resources, to make sure that their business idea is solid and able to be materialised than those who have given up. Therefore, longitudinal studies will help entrepreneurs in providing insights for nascent entrepreneurs in the process of starting businesses and the processes that are involved. They suggest that additional research in this area might be useful to examine the relationship between pre-start-up activities and venture success rates.

To date, many approaches have been utilised to describe entrepreneurs and the entrepreneurial phenomenon. Previously, many researchers focused on entrepreneurs' backgrounds, personalities, childhood experiences and traits (Carland et al., 1984). Many of these studies, subsequently, have been widely criticised and have generally produced disappointing findings (Low & MacMillan, 1988; Gartner, 1990). More recent studies have focused intensively on the behavioural aspects of entrepreneurs (Chell et al., 1991; Gartner, Bird, & Starr, 1992; Lumpkin & Dess, 1996).

Entrepreneurial characteristics

Until today, there has not been an agreed definition among scholars for the word 'entrepreneur' and associated terms. While some consider entrepreneurship indistinguishable from small business operation (Gibb, 1996), others suggest that it is the start of big corporate operations around the world. Timmons (1989) suggests that entrepreneurs are people who build

businesses by themselves, and that entrepreneurship is the act of initiating, working, and establishing a new organisation or enterprise, rather than watching or observing as a spectator. An entrepreneur, according to Timmons, is someone who will recognise the opportunities amidst chaos and uncertainty.

Although cultural factors play a vital part in shaping entrepreneurs, many studies suggest that some characteristics and attributes are common in most entrepreneurs: risk-taking ability; need for achievement; internal locus of control; desire for autonomy; deviancy; creativity and opportunism; and intuition (Kirby, 2004).

By the nature of the activities engaged by entrepreneur, it is very obvious that entrepreneurs must be risk-takers. Koh (1996) states that entrepreneurs are more capable of coping with ambiguity and uncertainty than those who are not. Busenitz (1999) points out that entrepreneurs have a higher level of confidence regarding risk perception than do managers of large corporations. Ho & Koh (1992) conclude that risk tolerance is one of the key characteristics of entrepreneurs.

In 1961, McClelland first proposed the second key characteristic of entrepreneurs: the need for achievement. He concluded that entrepreneurs have a higher need for achievement than non-entrepreneurs: the former prefer to take responsibility individually and anticipate future possibilities. McClelland (1961) suggests that it is the prospect of achievement that drives entrepreneurs, not money alone. Monetary reward, however, can be one of the achievement symbols for entrepreneurs. Utsch & Rauch (2000) state that while non-entrepreneurs tend to have low achievement orientation, innovation avoidance, give up quickly and show lack of effort, entrepreneurs have a high need for achievement, tend to put in considerably more effort, and thrive in ambiguity and an uncertain environment.

Rotter (1966) concludes that entrepreneurs tend to possess a high level of internal locus of control: they believe that they are responsible for

the success or failure of their established goals. Some studies (Cromie, 1987; Cromie & Johns, 1983) similarly point out that entrepreneurs have a significantly higher internal locus of control score compared with the managers of the large, established enterprises.

Entrepreneurs want to be in control of their own business, with little or no external interference (Caird, 1991; Cromie & O'Donoghue, 1992). They tend to dislike rules, procedures and social norms. As a result, they cannot perform well in an environment that constrains creativity and activities; therefore, it is more common to find entrepreneurial activities in countries with a free market economies, or in democracies.

Kets de Vries (1977) argues that the behaviour of entrepreneurs is the result of a disturbed childhood or of negative characteristics. He cites an entrepreneur as a non-conformist and poorly organised individual, who is likely to exhibit self-destructive behaviour. Other studies, however, shed a more positive light on entrepreneurial characteristics. McClelland (1961) points out that entrepreneurs usually come from an environment with high standards of excellence, self-reliance training, maternal warmth and low masculine dominance. Other external contributing factors are supportive cultural norms and religious beliefs.

The literature suggests that entrepreneurs are usually more creative than managers of large enterprise (Whiting, 1988; Timmons, 1989). Entrepreneurs tend to be more flexible and adaptable to the environment. Other studies suggest that entrepreneurs are more opportunistic than they are creative, so that they are able to recognise and exploit emerging opportunities to their advantage (Kirton, 1976; Solomon & Winslow, 1988).

Carland (1982) points out that entrepreneurs use intuition rather than rational thinking. Instead of utilizing a systematic and structured problem-solving approach that requires detail and which is constrained by rules, entrepreneurs apply an intuitive approach with which they tackle problems. Allinson (2000), undertaking a survey of company founders and managers

from different organisations, found that entrepreneurs are more intuitive than managers in the large organisations, despite their being little difference in their cognitive style.

The aforementioned entrepreneurial characteristics will be found, in some measure, in many successful entrepreneurs; however, the literature suggests that many individuals with such traits or characteristics will not become entrepreneurs. Entrepreneurial characteristics provide an inadequate explanation of entrepreneurship. The circumstances of individuals may restrain their ambition; alternatively, they may be inspired to do other things (Thompson, 1999).

Entrepreneurial behaviours

Entrepreneurs regularly find themselves in situations that tend to make good use of opportunities to maximise the potential return and impact of various heuristics (methods of solving problems), sometimes without their having sufficient information or detail (Baron, 1998). Busenitz & Barney (1997) point out that the level of uncertainty faced by entrepreneurs is substantially greater than the uncertainty faced by managers of well-established organisations who have convenient access to historical trends, past performance, and other information. Entrepreneurs often have to make decisions with little, if any, historical data, no previous levels of performance, and little or no market information regarding whether the new products or services will be accepted by the market. Entrepreneurs are able to gain new insights and information via unique heuristic-based logic. Simplifying heuristics can become very handy to help entrepreneurs to make decisions that exploit brief opportunities (Tversky & Kahneman, 1974; Stevenson & Gumpert, 1985).

Limited empirical research has focused on the first and critical processes of when an entrepreneur recognises opportunity (Kirzner, 1973) and searches for information to form a new venture (Christensen, Madsen, &

Peterson, 1994; Shane & Venkataraman, 2000). Shane & Venkataraman (2000) suggest that why, when, and how certain entrepreneurs exploit opportunities combines the joint characteristics of the business opportunity and the nature of the individual. Venkataraman (2000) suggests that the ability to make the connection between specific knowledge and commercial opportunity requires various skills, aptitudes, insights, and circumstances that are not common in each individual. How well an entrepreneur recognises business opportunities and looks out for relevant information depends on different dimensions of the entrepreneur's human capital. According to Woo et al. (1992), ability to search for useful information can be limited by the entrepreneur's knowledge of how to handle information as well as the ability to acquire an appropriate level and amount of information. They conclude that novice entrepreneurs seek out more information than do experienced entrepreneurs; however, such information gathering is usually limited to familiar surroundings. Experienced entrepreneurs usually sought less information as many of them had a high level of confidence as a result of their prior business ownership experience.

Some people have the ability to process information and to be able to notice windows of opportunities, even with an overwhelming number of stimuli around them (Gaglio, 1997). For this reason, many entrepreneurs are able to pick up and point out ideas and opportunities that will lead to additional innovative decisions not recognised previously by the public (Ronstadt, 1988). McGrath (1999) argues that entrepreneurs have access to numerous unexploited business opportunities. Over time, when valuable information is recognised, suitable ventures emerge. McGrath also points out that the more successful entrepreneurs tend to identify more untapped opportunities.

Personal motivation is found to have a high correlation with the firm's survival and growth. Pena's (2000) work concludes that there is a significant difference between strongly-motivated entrepreneurs who quit their jobs and invest their own capital to start a new business, and

entrepreneurs who start businesses using public funds just because they are jobless. The former are more likely to perform better than the latter.

To provide a summary of the behaviours of entrepreneurs, Thompson (1999) has synthesised his research findings into ten key points of the way entrepreneurs act or do things, as follows:

1. Entrepreneurs are individuals who make a difference.

Entrepreneurs translate ‘what is possible’ into reality (Kao, 1989); they transform a simple idea into something which works (Kets de Vries, 1997). They have their own ways of dealing with opportunities, setbacks, and uncertainties to create new products, services and new ways of satisfying customers.

2. Entrepreneurship is about spotting and exploiting opportunities.

Thompson illustrates this point with the story of a shoe manufacturer. Many years ago, a shoe manufacturer sent two marketing graduates to the interior of Australia to see if they could come up with new product ideas for the undeveloped aborigine market. The first responded, ‘There is no business here; the natives don’t wear shoes of any type!’. The second one was very excited and suggested, ‘This is a great opportunity; the natives haven’t even discovered shoes yet!’. In short, people’s perceptions about opportunities vary.

3. Entrepreneurs find resources to exploit opportunities.

Successful entrepreneurs do not emerge due to luck but rather from the discipline to exploit resources handed to them or can be found. The non-existence of resources will not be a barrier for the committed entrepreneurs who will exploit contacts and sources, beg, steal, or borrow if necessary (Stevenson, 1997).

4. Entrepreneurs add value.

Entrepreneurs sometimes instinctively understand market needs and plan to satisfy them. Resources are acquired and utilised to create

products or services for which value is usually added through a transformation process. Entrepreneurs understand factors critical for success and ensure that performance, in respect of the value-adding process, is effectively controlled and outcome-driven.

5. Entrepreneurs are good networkers.

Constrained by limitations in resources, entrepreneurs use creativity, social networking, and bargaining to obtain favours, deals and action (McGrath, 1997). Entrepreneurs, especially successful ones, often realise where they can obtain sound and free advice.

6. Entrepreneurs have know-how and know-who.

Entrepreneurs have the knowledge and also know where they can obtain the resources they require (Gibb, 1998).

7. Entrepreneurs create capital.

Resource acquisition, adding value and networking make up the entrepreneur's intellectual capital which is used to create financial and social capital. Financial capital refers to wealth creation or making money. Social capital refers to something of real value to local communities or society at large.

8. Entrepreneurs manage risk.

Entrepreneurs take risks, but they believe they understand and can manage them. It is vital that entrepreneurs think seriously about all the risks inherent in any new venture, and not just the financial risk.

9. Entrepreneurs are determined in the face of adversity.

With their determination and self-belief, entrepreneurs are motivated to succeed. They refuse to be beaten and persevere when the going gets tough. Successful entrepreneurs are also able to deal with unexpected obstacles. They are over-comers who can resolve

problems under pressure. Failures can be perceived as the price of their success. Many failed entrepreneurs simply start again with the belief that next time they will win.

10. Entrepreneurship involves creativity and innovation

Creativity and innovation are the means by which entrepreneurs make a difference. In some way or another, successful entrepreneurial ventures will feature creativity and innovation, which enable the meeting of the demands of a turbulent environment and the harvesting of new potentials.

Entrepreneurial learning

Honig (2001) suggests that as the entrepreneur is the key resource for the growth and survival of the firm, both characteristics and knowledge are found to have crucial impact on business performance. He emphasises that knowledge acquired in the formal education process, such as school and college, enriches entrepreneurs' knowledge capacity. Therefore, education is found to have a positive impact on the firm's profitability.

Besides formal education, both direct and indirect experiences are another crucial factor to enrich entrepreneurs' knowledge. Wood & Bandura (1989) suggest that entrepreneurs should undergo a learning process that develops three key competencies: mastery experience, vicarious experience and social persuasion. They describe *mastery experience* as a hands-on experience during the entrepreneur incubation process as the most effective way to develop entrepreneurial competencies. *Vicarious experience*, through learning by observing how and what others have done to start businesses, should help new and existing entrepreneurs to improve their knowledge and competencies. Interaction and cooperation among entrepreneur teams also encourage learning and reflection among different teams in regards to their methods, approaches and performance. The third contributing factor is *social persuasion*, in which entrepreneurs interact with each other to shape their

perceptions. An entrepreneur incubation process requires all three elements, which should benefit potential entrepreneurs.

McGrath (1999) has also suggested that entrepreneurs may learn from the experience of owning a business that ceased to operate, or failed, to avoid repeating similar mistakes in future ventures. The ability of entrepreneurs to learn from previous business ownership experiences can influence the quantity and quality of information they collect to form a future venture (Gaglio, 1997). Previous entrepreneurial experience may provide a framework or mental schema for processing information. Experience also enables skilled and experienced entrepreneurs to point out and take advantage of disequilibrium profit opportunities (Kaish & Gilad, 1991). When individual experience is matched with skill, entrepreneurs may come up with an out-of-the-box, creative innovation. Through experimental learning, based on trial-and-error, entrepreneurs may constantly alter their course of business strategies to adopt more appropriate strategies over time (Boden & Nucci, 2000).

Other than experience, owners, or entrepreneurs themselves, are likely to be ventures' key resource in entrepreneurial learning (Storey, 1994; Westhead, 1995; Bates, 1998). At the same time, owners may be a key constraint on resource acquisition (Brown & Kirchhoff, 1997). Although resources are vital to operate a venture, resources alone are not sufficient to achieve success venture. Storey (1994) suggests that entrepreneurs are likely to be a key resource, although not the sole resource; therefore, entrepreneurs must learn to enhance knowledge and apply appropriate competitive strategies to make good use of the resources available to them.

Kamm & Shuman (1990) note that over 50 per cent of businesses were actually initiated by a group of individuals: an entrepreneurial team. Learning in teams allows for a more diversified range of skills and competencies to be drawn upon. Teams provide a wider social and business network, which can be beneficial in acquiring additional resources for the

new venture. Moreover, the entrepreneur teams can also increase the business legitimacy, especially when trying to apply for financial assistance, whether from investors or creditors (Fiet et al., 1997). High amounts of financial resource and capital will provide entrepreneurs with more flexibility to carry out more variety of strategies, which will positively affect performance and the survival rate of the new ventures (Boden & Nucci, 2000).

The concept of a network as a result of entrepreneurial teams is consistent with the conclusion of Low & MacMillan (1988) who suggest that networks are vital in the process of venture formation. Businesses owned by entrepreneur teams of partners generally have a wider range of social and business networks (Cooper et al., 1994) and a more diversified set of skills and competencies that can be utilised (Slevin & Covin, 1992). Some studies conclude that business performance is highly correlated with the size of the team. A company that is started by an entrepreneurial team tends to perform considerably better than a company started by an individual (Woo et al., 1989). It is not clear, however, how effective sponsored networks are in equipping entrepreneurs and firms with the ability to select effective strategies to secure scarce resources outside a sponsored environment.

External environment

Van de Ven (1993) has suggested that the research on entrepreneurship is not efficient if it focuses solely on the characteristics and behaviours of individual entrepreneurs, and treats the social, economic, and political infrastructure factors as externalities. He asserts that the external environmental conditions are important factor that can be used to explain the process of entrepreneurship.

Many studies have turned their focus on the relationship between venture formation, environmental conditions and chosen entrepreneurial activity (Gnyawali & Fogel, 1994). On the resource aspect, many resource dependence theorists view the environment as a pool of resources for the

organisations as they cannot generate all necessary resources by themselves (Pfeffer & Salancik, 1978). According to Shane (2003) the economic, political, and social and cultural environment influence the exploitation of entrepreneurial opportunities. Four aspects of economic environment were identified: wealth, economic stability, capital availability, and taxation. Three aspects of political environment were identified: political freedom, the system of property rights and centralisation of power. Lastly, three aspects influenced by the social and cultural environment were identified: the degree to which entrepreneurship is considered desirable in a community; the number of entrepreneurial role models present in a social group; through certain beliefs and norms, entrepreneurship could be encouraged or discouraged. Casson (1990) claims that a society with a high level of moral commitment is likely to increase the number of entrepreneurs in that country.

Hofstede (1980) identifies four cultural factors that affect entrepreneurial activities across forty countries: individual/collectivism, power distance, uncertainty avoidance, and masculinity/femininity. He points out that the countries with a high score on individualism and a low score on power distance tend to be more entrepreneurial and innovative. Individuals in individualist societies tend to pursue personal interests. The countries with low power distance tend to be more decentralised and based less on hierarchy, which is conducive for entrepreneurial activities. Societies with low uncertainty avoidance tend to be more optimistic, risk-taking and more open to changes. Hofstede points out that these cultures are more likely to accept entrepreneurship and innovation.

Environmental and cultural factors play crucial roles in entrepreneur creation. Lee & Peterson (2000) state that entrepreneurship is more suitable in some culture than it is in others. An example of an environment found to be unfavourable for entrepreneurial activities is that of France. Klapper (2005) notes that French society still does not accept entrepreneurship, as they want their children to obtain 'noble' professional life, such as becoming doctors or lawyers. The root of this problem appears to be closely tied with

the fear of failure that dominates that society and hinders entrepreneurial initiations. Other arguments for the lack of initiation point to the lack of entrepreneurial role models, which results from the unfavourable environment. A study by Worms et al. (2005) supports this view. They suggest that there are three problems preventing progressive development of entrepreneurial culture in France. French society is generally risk-averse and opposed to change. Entrepreneurship is viewed as being closely linked to radical innovation; French culture is in favour of inheriting property and maintaining the status quo. Thus it is not likely to promote entrepreneurial creation. Second, prospective entrepreneurs do not receive adequate information to enable them to access the available supports for new company creation or innovation. Third, many available support structures do not provide quality services. Furthermore, despite new legislature establishing the Economic Initiative Law (2003) being issued to encourage and facilitate company creation, administrative hassle and capital raising difficulties are two of many environment factors that hinder the entrepreneurial initiative in France. Many capable French entrepreneurs, therefore, form their enterprises in the more liberal countries like the UK and the United States.

The 2002 Global Entrepreneurship Monitor (GEM) Report published by London Business School supports the aforementioned observations. The GEM report estimates Total Entrepreneurial Activity (TEA) which is the percentage of the labour force actively seeking to start new ventures or to own newly formed business in 42 countries. The TEA for cultures in favour of maintaining status quo, such as France and Japan, are at 3 per cent and 2 per cent, respectively. More liberal countries, such as USA and Canada, are at 11 per cent and 9 per cent, respectively. The report indicates, however, that not all entrepreneurs start businesses through their own free will. While some start businesses as they see attractive business opportunities, others do it out of necessity because they cannot find alternative work; the general proportion is 60:40; the necessity group tends to be higher in developing countries. That

is part of the reason why the countries with highest TEA, according to the GEM report, are Thailand (19 per cent) and India (18 per cent).

In the global context, entrepreneurship has become a crucial issue and important tool to fight global youth unemployment. The International Labour Organisation proposed Recommendation No. 189 to its member states. The recommendation encourages participating countries to promote entrepreneurial activities through: 1) developing entrepreneurial attitudes through compulsory education and training programs; 2) encouraging positive risk-taking attitude and create value that failure is part of learning process; 3) promoting life-long learning process for both professional and entrepreneurs; 4) cooperating with organisations to promote worker development program and devise award plan to encourage such development.

Besides personal traits and culture factors that play a crucial role in entrepreneur's decision making process, economic and industry growth also act as a window of opportunity for entrepreneurs. Policies in favour of small enterprise creation could stimulate enterprise formation processes (Haftendorn & Salzano, 2003).

Unlike some traditional conclusions stating that monetary benefit is the sole and primary reason why entrepreneurs emerge, Shane et al. (1991) concluded that the motives for entrepreneurs in various countries are different systematically. Other motivations could be need for achievement, independence, personal development, and status.

Applying these findings

The study of entrepreneurship has achieved much attention over past three decades. This may well be due to the fact that success in entrepreneurship has proven its capability in stimulating the wealth and economic growth in participating nations. Nevertheless, rather than describing what entrepreneurship is, the focus has recently shifted towards more contextual issues which elaborate the processes of entrepreneurship. In previous studies,

entrepreneurship was often described in terms of commonly found characteristics that were common in most entrepreneurs. Recent studies show that many individuals with such traits may not eventually become entrepreneurs since different situations and circumstances in their lives may constrain their business aspirations and direct them to do other things that are relatively fulfilling to them at different stages of their lives. As a result, more recent studies have focused on the behavioural aspects of entrepreneurs rather than on their backgrounds, personalities, and traits. The behaviours of entrepreneurs affecting why, when, and how they chose to exploit entrepreneurial opportunities have not been immediately obvious to others. The recent research, rather than concentrating solely on the attractiveness of those opportunities, has focused on the individual characteristics of entrepreneurs that has enabled them to identify and make the most of the opportunities, and which has resulted in them making unmatched innovative decisions.

Success for those entrepreneurs who have thrived has been shown to depend greatly on their learning processes. These processes can vary: through direct and indirect experiences; through hands-on experience or by observation; as a result of a particular economic, political, or cultural environment. Regardless of their experience and environment, entrepreneurs must learn to capitalise on their knowledge, and to apply competitive strategies to best utilise the resources available to them to achieve planned-for results, despite the high uncertainties of their given situations.

Entrepreneurship Incubation

Lewis (2001) points out that there are three common reasons why more than 75 per cent of new ventures fail within the first five years: insufficient access to capital, lack of managerial expertise, and insufficient marketing expertise. This is where incubation comes along. The goal of business incubation is to provide a supportive environment for newly started business where new

entrepreneurs are trained in business managerial and marketing skills, and where they are protected from stiff market forces with lower than-market rent, lower service fees, and better access to capital (Gatewood et al., 1985; Peterson et al., 1985; Allen, 1985). Some services provided by most incubators include: developing business plan; providing legal, accounting, and financial consulting service; assisting in attracting investors; giving marketing assistance and other common shared services, such as secretarial support or facility maintenance (Allen, 1985). In theory, incubators help stimulate the innovation process by linking new product/service development/invention with ever-changing market demand and provide necessary support such as funding or marketing assistance for the new venture (Smilor & Gill, 1986; Tornatzky et al., 1996). Lewis (2001) points out three main benefits of an incubation program: 1) increased employment; 2) more new venture formation and more private investment in innovation; 3) highly skilled individuals to reside in the host area.

Agarwal & Audretsch (2001) conclude that a business that is successful in the initial stage is likely to grow in the long-run, while one that does not perform well is likely to remain small and may be forced to exit the industry. Thus, it is crucial for the incubator to lend a hand during the early stage of a new business. Financial resources and facility supports alone are not sufficient to enhance the long-term survival rate. Therefore, it is important for the incubator to educate the entrepreneur in how to exploit strategic niches to sustain long-term competitiveness. The research literature points out that a company's growth is not as important to the new company's survival as the ability to identify and occupy a strategic niche.

To address the high failure rate of un-incubated new ventures, the US federal government devised the Small Business Innovation Research program. The program was established to address how government had failed in its R&D policy, the level of support necessary for small firms, and to provide funds to support R&D in small firms (Wallsten, 1998). Lewis (2001) points out that business incubation support from the public sector in the early

stage of new enterprises will promote entrepreneurial activities which, in turn, will improve the business climate and increase business transactions. The improvement will then increase wealth in the host area and draw private investment capital into the region.

Other than the entrepreneur incubation programs, entrepreneurship was also taught widely at university level. *Entrepreneur education* has been defined by Bechard & Toulouse (1998) as a collection of formalised teachings that informs, trains, and educates students interested in business development. They also point out that entrepreneur education focuses on combining and carrying out a combination of business elements while education for small business ownership focuses on the skills needed to reproduce or acquire existing business. The skills taught in traditional business education programs are somewhat excessive for entrepreneurs; while the curriculum addresses the functions needed in running a business, the programs omit any discussion of how to create one. Gibb (2002) points out that the nature of the relationship between student and university is generally about knowledge rather than personal development.

Youth Incubation in Real World

Haftendorn & Salzano (2003) point out that more and more young people are entering the labour market each year. Many countries, especially developed countries, have taken the initiative of providing entrepreneurship education for young people and have promoted self-employment as an alternative for them. They also indicate that incubation programs do not necessarily have to be carried out on nascent entrepreneurs; special incubation programs designed for specific youth groups also prove fruitful in the long term. Awareness-raising programs at secondary school level can help students familiarise themselves with the philosophy of entrepreneurship. A more intensive program targeted on vocational or university students that may involve young people actually start small businesses could make self-employment a career option. Although the entrepreneurial incubation

programs targeted at young people are not necessarily profit-oriented, such programs can develop awareness of, and capability for, developing business ventures immediately, or at some later date. Therefore, the effectiveness of such a program, therefore, cannot be measured by financial success or survival rate alone; what must also be taken into account is the fact that students have gained valuable practical life skills and are able to respond to societal changes more readily.

Haftendorn & Salzano (2003) further observe that there is a common element in the entrepreneurial education programs run in every country, regardless of economic, social and cultural differences: the promotion of entrepreneurial initiative. Every program reviewed in their research assisted the participants in developing their own business plans and entrepreneurial skills. Most of the youth programs combined classroom-based lectures with mentoring and practical experience; these varied according to the socio-economic circumstances of each country. All programs utilised some kind of experiential learning or a learning-by-doing approach, by which the participants related personal experience to the situation in hand and tried to come up with dynamic solutions to problems.

Despite the many similarities in entrepreneur incubation program in every country, Lee and Peterson (2000) note that entrepreneurship might be more suitable in some cultures than others. Hofstede (2001), in particular, notes that cultural norms are the key to determining practices that relate to social practice, society, educational system and legal system.

Review of existing entrepreneur incubation programs

Young entrepreneur incubation programs have become very popular, and are embraced by many countries in both developed and developing countries. All countries, however, take different approaches and pursue different objectives. The variation mainly derives from differences in available resources and the potential of young people in different countries. In New Zealand, the

Enterprise New Zealand Trust (ENZT) has the Young Enterprise Scheme (YES) as its flagship program. Established in the early 1980s, the program gives opportunities to secondary school students in Years 12 and Years 13, to run their own businesses during the course of the school year through a real-life experience. Students involved form a company, develop a product or a service which they market, sell, and liquidate at the end of the school year. According to ENZT, the YES is run in around 40 per cent of New Zealand secondary schools while at some schools YES is run as an in-class activity for economics or business classes. Under the YES program, students are supported by the teachers in charge from their school, a regional coordinator from ENZT, and a mentor generally from the business community.

In Australia, there is a Young Achievement Australia (YAA) program. The participating students in the YAA program carry out the tasks undertaken by a real entrepreneur: raising capital through share selling; form a company; devising a business plan; researching and producing goods or services to serve respective market needs; planning and executing a finance, manufacturing, and marketing plan; liquidating the company and splitting up the residual at the end of the program. The government, institutes, and corporations plan many seminars, trade fairs, and other events where these newly incubated companies have the opportunity to grow their business for final performance awards. Similar programs operate in Denmark and Finland. Both countries' governments applied entrepreneurial education throughout the education system and encouraged students to attend business-related courses (Haftendorn & Salzano, 2003). Each year, over 900 Danish students participate in the business game, based on their business idea and with judges from corporate and respected business sectors to help evaluate their business plans.

In the developing countries, by comparison, the focus is more on developing poor and uneducated students into a quality human resource. Most of the funds are supported by either developed countries or international organisations. In 2000, the Canadian College Partnership

Program helped fund entrepreneurial education in Mali (Haftendorn & Salzano, 2003). The objective was to ensure that Malian students were educated and prepared for the labour market by the end of their high school years. Canadian project leaders and Malian counterparts provided technical and technological assistance to help the students get a good start in careers in applied science. Modules include occupations, in Mali, in carpentry, electricity, meteorology, mechanics, and entrepreneurship. It is noteworthy that entrepreneurship is only one of the modules available in the program. Another entrepreneurship program, *Two for One* in Peru, was initiated by the Peruvian Ministry of Education with the help of UNICEF. The program picks children who do not perform well in class; they usually come from poor families with little or no educational background. The program pairs up the trainee with a high school teenager in a secondary school, who gives personalised training and encouragement. The program results in trainees scoring better in standardised tests and having a lower dropout rate.

Existing evaluations on entrepreneur incubation programs

Incubation programs enhance the success rate of nascent entrepreneurs. Erikson & Gjellan (2003) found that 76 per cent of nascent founder managers reported their businesses technologically successful; 77 per cent reported commercial success. Campbell et al. (1988) point out that new enterprises that received some kind of benefits from an incubation program had a very low failure rate of only 13.7 per cent. They concluded that favourable location, services, and supportive environment are beneficial to the survival and growth of new ventures. In this section, two particular evaluations from the two entrepreneur incubation programs are discussed; the Young Enterprise Scheme (YES) in New Zealand and the Young Achievement Australia (YAA) program.

Young Enterprise Scheme (YES)

The YES program was evaluated by Lewis (2005) to report the program's influence on career intentions and employability of its participants. Data were collected via questionnaires from 512 respondents who accounted for 29 per cent of all program participants in 2001. The questionnaire was designed to provide answers that illustrated the participants' attitudes and beliefs about the program, especially regarding its impact on their career aspirations.

Twenty-three per cent of the respondents felt that participating in the YES had influenced their plans. This portion of respondents was asked to specify how the program had influenced their decisions about what to do when they left school. The YES experience has influenced their choices as follow:

- It helped them better clarify and define themselves in terms of what they do and they do not want to do.
- It made them more aware about opportunities for careers in business or self-employment.
- It made them more aware of what it takes to run a business.
- It made them want to do further study in the business or commerce area.
- It made them want to run their own business in the future.

For the students who felt that the YES experience had influenced their choices about the future, most said that it had done so by exposing them to new experiences and broadening them in terms of the subjects to study as well as the careers to pursue. This type of influence was typically available through career advice and university career offices.

An obvious by-product of the YES experience for some students was that they underwent an attitudinal change based on experience, rather than

mere advice. The fact that half of the respondents did not indicate a desire to be entrepreneurs in the future was not necessarily interpreted as a negative impact for the YES program. Lewis points out that Cameron & Milstein (1999) also felt that similar results from their work indicated that participants had gained an understanding of the time and complexity involved in becoming entrepreneurs. Of the 262 students who indicated their motivation to become entrepreneurs in the future, about half had their parents as the self-employment models.

Nearly two-thirds (63 per cent) of the students with parental role models as entrepreneurs indicated that it was very likely or likely that they would start their own businesses in the future. Lewis suggested that there was a strong link between exposure to parental role models and a desire to be entrepreneurs. In terms of the age to start a business, the questionnaire results revealed that the most frequent age range in which the respondents selected was in the interval of 25-29. The fact that YES participants can specify at what age they felt they would like to start a business indicated the awareness of their own self-efficacy and ideas for business opportunities.

Based on quantitative data, only, Lewis (2005) concluded that to a degree the program did influence the choices participants make about further study and future work opportunities. A more influential impact was noted on those who were exposed to business role models either through their family or friends. Students also believed that the program had enhanced their business and personal capabilities.

Findings from this study provided a number of implications for the program provider, ENZT, as well as for the parents and students from the program. There was merit in the program highlighting specific career intentions; this provided the ENZT with the opportunity to engage partners to strengthen the program's profile on students' employability. For parents and students, the evaluation indicated that it was possible to categorise outcomes

from the program that, previously, were seen as only being deliverable through business experience.

Young Achievement Australia (YAA)

The YAA program was investigated by Peterman (2000) to measure the changes in participants' perception of desirability and feasibility of starting a business. The work was based on an intentions-based model, quantitative in nature, through the use of questionnaires. The results showed that perceptions of desirability and feasibility increased over the course of the program with prior business experience as an influencer in attitudes. After the program, the participants became more aware of what type of knowledge they need to acquire to do business. Peterman (2000) argued that the YAA can assist in a successful transition from education to further education and from education to work.

Earlier research by Cameron & Milstein (1999), investigated the impact of the same program on program graduates who had graduated prior to 1992. They utilised a mail survey, followed by semi-structured interviews with 10 per cent of respondents chosen as representatives in terms of background and attitudes, in determining their attitudes and the type of impact the program has on them. Over 80 per cent of the participants believed their business and communication skills had been improved while 40 per cent of the respondents described YAA as having important influence on where to study, what to do for a career, where to live and whether to start their own business.

Applying these findings

To overcome a lack of sufficient access to capital, lack of expertise and skills, a supportive environment is able to be provided for newly started businesses through business incubation initiatives. Incubation has been shown to assist new entrepreneurs or entrepreneurs-to-be by providing the financial resources, facilities, as well as the training necessary for them to

exploit business opportunities and to sustain their competitiveness in the long run.

In most countries, entrepreneur incubation programs have focused on promoting entrepreneurial initiatives through development of business plans and entrepreneurial skills. More recently, the programs have been tailored to allow participants to carry out tasks similar to those undertaken by a real entrepreneur. This means, other than developing the business plan, they can produce products and services to serve the real market needs, execute the finance, manufacturing, and marketing aspects of business in a real, competitive environment. Programs of this type have gained substantial recognition for their ability to develop outcomes that have been categorised, in the past, as deliverable only through real business experience.

Despite the satisfying results of recent incubation programs, evaluation of the success of these programs has been limited to quantitative interpretation. In order to obtain further insights and a deeper understanding of how those programs actually incubate entrepreneurship, qualitative evaluation should be utilised to determine these insights and understandings.

Entrepreneurial program evaluation

According to Ucbassaran et al. (2001), entrepreneurial performance is a subjective concept, which varies and depends a great deal on the personal expectations, aspirations, and skills of each entrepreneur. They point out that because of the vastly different nature of entrepreneurships in motivational diversity, different types of entrepreneurs, and organisational forms, measuring entrepreneurial performance is inevitably a challenging task. Venkataraman (1997) suggests that in order to identify whether the success or failure is solely attributed to the entrepreneurs themselves, and not due to any particular opportunity or misfortune, the entrepreneurs must be studied across several new enterprise efforts. Hence, a particular indicator or approach may not be sufficient to fully understand and explain the entire

outcomes associated with the entrepreneurial phenomenon. It is observed by Fayolle et al. (2006) that evaluation of entrepreneurship education programs has to meet both economic and academic challenges. The program stakeholders need to validate and evaluate the intensity of the social and economical impact of these programs, while the lack of research regarding the outcomes of entrepreneurship education and methodological concerns have made it difficult to perform such program evaluation. As a consequence of these concerns, this section outlines the different program evaluation methods available while examining the most appropriate evaluation method for this research.

Qualitative and quantitative program evaluation

As the entrepreneur incubation program is expensive, in terms of both money from program sponsors and time for program participants, such a program is deserving of being evaluated. McMullan et al. (2001) suggest some categories that might be used to evaluate the program: participant satisfaction; subjective assessment of overall program effectiveness; or subsequent performance of participants in term of start-up rate, survival, growth, and improved profitability.

Those authors suggested that, though difficult to implement, objective and quantitative measures should be obtained to evaluate the economic impact of such programs. Chrisman & McMullan (2000) emphasise that the economic development impact resulting from the entrepreneur incubation program will lead to knowledge that will enhance competitive advantages in the long run. Collecting and evaluating a program objectively can, however, be complicated as the incubation program is usually funded by government or other sponsors. These sponsors are usually short-term oriented and eager to see immediate payoff from their investment. These expectations and intense financial support can distort the result of the program.

Due to the partial deficiency of quantitative approaches and difficulty in obtaining data, subjective and qualitative measures are used by some scholars to evaluate incubation programs. The measurement of participants/customers satisfaction and program effectiveness are more straightforward to implement (McMullan et al., 2001). At least these measures could reveal the feelings of participants, clients, and sponsors about the program. Participants' confidence, customers' satisfaction, and sponsors' approval should be the key objectives these stakeholders look for in the short-term; however, some authors argue that qualitative evaluation will contribute little to economic development in the long-term. Moreover, though possibly easier to implement, qualitative evaluation still presents only one side of the program.

Evaluation methods

Evaluation of a program is the systematic collection and analysis of data needed to make decisions, for instance, in finding out what knowledge, skills, attitudes, or behaviours a program addresses (Department of Education, 1998). Stufflebeam (2001) indicates that evaluators today have many more evaluation approaches available than those in the 1960s. He has categorised and summarised the breadth of approaches that emerged in the extent to what developments are valuable for future use and what should be left behind. His classifies possible evaluation approaches into four categories: 1) Pseudo-evaluations, the approaches that promote incomplete findings; 2) Questions/Methods-Oriented; 3) Improvement/Accountability and 4) Social Agenda/Advocacy. The latter three categories include approaches that match the purpose of determining the program's merit and worth. In his review of evaluation models, he looked at the approaches as relatively discrete ways to conduct evaluations; however, in reality, there are many occasions when it is functional to mix and match different approaches.

According to Day (1991), the guidelines for choosing appropriate models and methods that focus on 'why we evaluate' appear to be a scarce

resource. In response to that deficiency, a comprehensive model of evaluations is suggested by Owen & Rogers (1999). The evaluation approaches are given a definite orientation and focus on a set of common issues, incorporating the clustering of existing well-known evaluation approaches that have elements in common. Owen & Rogers (1999) introduce *Forms of Evaluation* as a conceptual yet practical framework based on significant issues of an evaluation, such as its orientation, state of the program, major focus, timing, and key approaches. A summary of the Forms is contained in listed in Table 2.1.

Each evaluation form can be used in practical settings of the evaluators. From my review of existing program evaluation methods, Owen & Rogers' Evaluation Forms are superior in terms of the evaluation types applicable to each defined stage of the program under evaluation. This allows great flexibility for the evaluators compared to other evaluation approaches that were rather fragmented, vague, and not readily available with regards to which approach we should choose to evaluate and why we should choose that particular approach for evaluation.

TABLE 2.1 EVALUATION FORMS

	Proactive Evaluation	Clarificative Evaluation	Interactive Evaluation	Monitoring Evaluation	Impact Evaluation
Orientation	Synthesis	Clarification	Improvement	Justification/ fine-tuning	Justification/ accountability
State of Program	None	Development	Development	Settled	Settled
Major focus	Program context	All elements	Delivery	Delivery/ outcomes	Delivery/ outcomes
Timing	Before	During	During	During	After
Key approaches	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Needs assessment • Research review • Best practice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluability assessment • Logic/theory development • Accreditation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Responsive • Action research • Quality review • Developmental • Empowerment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Component analysis • Devolved performance assessment • Systems analysis 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Objective-based • Process-outcomes • Needs based • Goal free • Performance audit

Impact evaluation

Impact evaluation is used to evaluate the impact of a settled program in establishing the foundations of what works and why (Owen & Rogers, 1999); thus it entails the following typical issues:

- Has the program been implemented as planned?
- Have the stated goals of the program been achieved?
- Have the needs of those served by the program been met?
- What are the unintended outcomes?
- Does the implementation strategy lead to intended outcomes?
- How do differences in implementation affect program outcomes?
- What are the benefits of the program given the costs?

In brief, impact evaluation measures the program's effects and the extent to which its goals were attained (Weidman et al, 1997). The five approaches of an impact evaluation, as presented in Table 2.1, are: objectives-based; process-outcomes; needs-based; goal-free evaluation; performance audit.

Objective-based approach

This approach is based on the judgment as to whether or not the objectives of a program have been met. The objectives are usually given, while the success of the program is based on the extent to which the objectives are achieved. The main tasks under this approach are determining the key issues for stakeholders to check on the program outcomes, determining the program objectives, deciding on the most appropriate ways to determine whether the program has reached its goals, selecting appropriate measuring instruments, identifying sources of evidence, collecting and analysing the evidence, and drawing conclusions, judgments, or recommendations.

Process-outcomes approach

This approach examines the program outcomes in relation to the program implementation. The program outcomes are thought of as dependent variables, being influenced by the process characteristics, independent variables. Observations by trained personnel are usually the data collection method for the implementation aspect of this study.

Needs-based approach

This approach is an alternative to the objective-based approach in determining if a program meets its needs. Rather than focusing on the program objectives, judgment of the program's worth depends on the extent to which it meets the needs of the program participants. If the program goals reflect the same needs, objective-based and needs-based should be similar.

Goal-free approach

This approach examines all of the program's effects, ignoring the intended objectives of the program. The findings are not limited to outcomes which reflect program objectives. This approach, though practically rare, finds its significance in navigating both intended and unintended outcomes.

Performance audit approach

This approach is mostly used to provide independent findings for accountability purposes. Even though the term 'audit' is often used related to the review of financials, auditing procedures can be used to report findings on the performance of individuals, government units, universities, and other non-commercial entities. Performance audits provide a customised analysis of program effectiveness in order to provide information on improving public accountability and facilitating decision making of the stakeholders.

Before moving on to the next section on how this research positions itself in the academic world, I would like to summarise the relevance of entrepreneurship that has been discussed in previous sections. Starting from the context of entrepreneurship, I have identified the characteristics, behaviours, learning process, as well as the surrounding environment that were found in most entrepreneurs. After a significant study on what entrepreneurs were like, I have directed the research to explain the incubation of entrepreneurship, especially at the level of young persons still in secondary school. Existing incubation programs, as well as evaluations of those programs, have been discussed.

Finally, I have narrowed down the focus to program evaluation. I have covered the differences between qualitative and quantitative evaluations, the different forms of evaluation and have detailed the key aspects of the impact evaluation, the type of evaluation that this research focuses on.

Expansion of knowledge of entrepreneurship incubation

This section entails the significance of this research in the academic world. This research seeks to add on to the studies in entrepreneurship incubation. Due to the vast diversity of entrepreneurship studies and incubation, the current reviews on such issues suggested that entrepreneurship and its creation is a rather subjective matter opened for interpretation. Though there had been numerous studies on entrepreneurial behaviour and learning, creation of entrepreneurs significantly relied on the individuals' intention to pursue a new enterprise. Opportunities were always available for those who seek for them. This research aims at navigating the relevant issues of the extent to which an entrepreneurship incubation program can encourage entrepreneurship in individuals as well as exploring the factors, from both the individuals and the program, that stimulate or hinder such encouragement. This hopefully will add to the existing context of entrepreneurship and its

creation in light of an entrepreneurship incubation program's contribution. Its role, more or less, can help explain the outcomes of entrepreneur incubation efforts.

From the existing evaluations of entrepreneurship incubation programs similar to the program considered in this study, many studies focus solely on quantitative measures through the utilisation of quantitative data collection methods. I recognise the value of these current evaluations; my aim is to add to these existing evaluations by focusing on the capability in entrepreneurship encouragement of entrepreneurship incubation programs.

Ucbassaran et al. (2001) suggest that to understand and separate the contribution of individual entrepreneurs from the entrepreneurial process and performance, qualitative approaches may also make a substantial contribution to an effective evaluation. Furthermore, Harper & Hamilton (1994) also suggest that scholars should pay more attention to the psychological and sociological aspects of entrepreneurship. Hence, I intend to utilise both quantitative and qualitative approaches in determining the program's significance, thus taking this study into an arena not previously investigated. With respect to impact evaluation, this study aims at expanding the pool of knowledge where researchers or evaluators interested in performing an impact evaluation study can take into account what to expect from the similar evidence assembly process and logic of evaluation.

CHAPTER 3

Evaluation Design

Introduction

To efficiently evaluate the SBYEA program as well as to methodically respond to the objectives of this research, an evaluation plan was required. The interest in evaluating the program emerged from three perspectives: the fact that this program was first of its kind in Thailand; the original lack of interest to evaluate and foresee the implications of this short-term entrepreneurship education program; my discussions with the program organisers regarding their inquiries on the program's performance.

The program had already been settled, hence the program organisers wanted to know how effective the program had been in encouraging young Thais to be entrepreneurs in the future. The organisers stated that there were five objectives that the program planned to encourage, namely, entrepreneurial thinking, practice, can-do attitude, decision-making on future directions, and the use of experiential learning methods. Following refinements with the program organisers, this research was tailored to focus on an impact program evaluation – both in terms of the preset program objectives, and in its encouragement of entrepreneurship.

In addition to the impact evaluation, I planned to research how well the program had facilitated and directed entrepreneurship in its participants, the differences in program outcomes, and the factors that encouraged participants to become future entrepreneurs. To accommodate these

enquiries, I developed a methodology that centred an impact evaluation with appropriate methods of data collection and data analysis.

Role of Program Organisers and their Involvement

Since the primary target audiences of this study were the program organisers, I focused on what they wanted to find out about their program. During the program, the program organisers were in charge of setting up the procedures, process, methods, and competition. The findings of this research would be directed to the program organisers in giving feedback on the program performance and to suggest ways for further improving the program.

The organisers had significant involvement with this research. They determined the specific program impacts on participants that wanted evaluated. They had their preset program objectives and were well aware of what each objective meant to them. They supported me with documents and contacts relevant to the program, as well as details of the different business plans submitted by each group of participants. They also talked me through how the program had been conducted, especially the program's emphasis on learning by doing, which had made the program different from other entrepreneurship programs in Thailand.

The Program Objectives

The initial discussions with the program organisers, indicated their interest in finding how effective the program had been, generally, in encouraging the participants to be future entrepreneurs, what the program outcomes were, and what factors of the program were effective. They indicated to me that they wanted to specifically examine the program's impact *after program completion*, along the dimensions of the program objectives that they had indicated. They had explained the five program objectives that were important to them, namely:

1. Encouraging participants to think like an entrepreneur.
2. Equipping participants with the practical skills to process entrepreneurial thoughts into implementation.
3. Developing a ‘can do’ attitude among participants.
4. Enabling participants to realise the future direction they wished to pursue.
5. Enhancing the significance of learning by experience.

Each of these is discussed in the following sub-sections.

Encouraging participants to think like an entrepreneur

The program organisers wanted the participants to think more like businessmen, show a desire to do business, and to always be exploring opportunities to own a business. After the program, they wanted to find out how their desire to be entrepreneurs, together with the development of entrepreneurial characteristics, had been changed in program participants. They had also handed to me a list of thirteen entrepreneurial characteristics that they thought commonly comprised a successful entrepreneur. These are listed in Figure 3.1.

As well as showing a desire to do business and developing entrepreneurial characteristics, the program organisers emphasised the significance of the participants’ seriousness and intention to become entrepreneurs. This specifically translated into the desire of the participants to do business, as well as showing a sense of urgency to really become an entrepreneur. In summary, the participants’ desire, entrepreneurial characteristics, and their seriousness of wanting to be entrepreneurs were the three main aspects of this first objective. The program organisers saw this as a primary objective of the program.

FIGURE 3.1 ENTREPRENEURIAL CHARACTERISTICS ACCORDING TO PROGRAM ORGANISERS

- **Out-of-the-box thinking**
- **Opportunity awareness**
- **Desire to succeed**
- **Willing to take risks**
- **Self-confidence**
- **Commitment to recovery**
- **Need for control**
- **Openness to new information**
- **Tolerance of ambiguity**
- **Ability to make judgmental decisions**
- **Vision**
- **Systematic thinking**
- **Leadership**

Equipping participants with the practical skills to process entrepreneurial thoughts into implementation

The program organisers wanted to examine the changes in the participants' business implementation abilities regarding the following:

- ability to translate a business concept into an action plan;
- ability to identify and acquire the resources needed;
- ability to identify the necessary steps to be taken;
- ability to understand the differences of steps and resources in relation to the nature of the business type;
- confidence in implementation;
- the degree of their involvement in multidisciplinary field needed to carry out a business as well as the ability to implement the business in a systematic manner.

This objective was also a primary program objective on which the program organisers had placed a strong emphasis.

Developing a ‘can do’ attitude among participants

The program organisers wanted to develop a ‘can do’ attitude in young Thais, strengthening the attitude that one could be successful in business, and capable of starting the business on their own. At the same time, they wanted participants to not be afraid of failure, always being ready to recover and to start again. For this research, they wanted to determine if their confidence in being a future successful entrepreneur had been increased following the program, if participants believed that they could promptly start a business on their own, and whether or not they could cope with business failure and always be ready for recovery.

Enabling participants to realise the future direction they wished to pursue

After the program, the program organisers wanted the participants to have a better understanding of what they wanted to become. They wanted to find out, specifically, if the participants’ career choice has been changed after the program and to what extent it has been changed towards entrepreneurship. Thus, they wanted to explore to what extent the program had influenced participants’ career choice.

Enhancing the significance of learning by experience

The program organisers wanted the participants to realise the significance of learning by doing as well as its contribution to business learning. They wanted to examine the contribution of learning by experience towards the creation of entrepreneurs, explore the confidence and knowledge gained by experiential learning, and to explore the preference of learning by experience to that of formal education.

The five program objectives established by the program organisers gave me the initial framework regarding the criteria by which the program's impact should be evaluated. Since it was the objective of this research to evaluate the program's impact, it was essential to evaluate the achievement of Thai young people according to the program's objectives, as well as to determine the ultimate impact: whether or not the program encouraged its participants towards entrepreneurship.

Evaluation Form and Approach

The issues addressed by the program organisers were involved significantly with the effects of the program on the program participants mainly through the encouragement of entrepreneurship. Coupled with the fact that the program was already settled, this research called for an impact evaluation with the major focus on the program outcomes. Outcomes result following the participants' involvement with a program, and are often related to knowledge, skill, attitude, values, behaviour, condition, or status (Hatry & van Houten, 1996).

According to Owen & Rogers (1999), there are five typical approaches regarding impact evaluation – objective-based, needs-based, goal-free, process-product, and performance audit. I chose to follow Owen & Rogers' objective-based approach because the objectives of this program were available from the program organisers and decisions about the impact of the program were able to be based on the extent to which the objectives were achieved.

The impact evaluation centered on the effect the program had on its clients in terms of achieving its goals. Data are collected and analysed in order to make a summative evaluation of the program's effect (Whitley, 2001). The use of tests and other quantitative data to traditionally assemble the evidence in impact evaluation requires the additional use of exploratory methods and qualitative evidence to determine and explain the outcomes

(Owen & Rogers, 1999). In this research, to effectively capture the program's effects on the participants being studied in terms of achievement of the stated program objectives and the success of entrepreneurship encouragement towards entrepreneurship adoption, both quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis methods were employed. The quantitative method played an important role in narrowing down the participants into potential respondents for the qualitative data collection. I chose to report the findings to the program organisers through the narratives describing emerging themes, issues, and variables, suggested by the selected participants, which portray program achievement and effectiveness.

Data collection and analysis

Fournier (1995) notes that what counts as criteria, what evidence is invoked, and how information is synthesised can vary across different approaches within evaluation practice. For this research, I employed quantitative and qualitative methods to collect data to be used in the evaluation. The quantitative method of the evaluation involved the use of questionnaires to reflect on the overall ratings and performance of the participants under each program objective. Results from the questionnaires were also analysed on a descriptive basis and further used to categorise the participants into groups of high, medium, and low performance. Such categorisation made it possible to select representatives from each group to join the qualitative review session. The qualitative method comprised interviews of selected representatives of the participants to seek descriptions and gain insights as to how the program had encouraged them towards entrepreneurship. The findings were then analysed in accordance with themes emerging from the interviews and the perceived gain in individual attainment of the program objectives.

Mixture of quantitative and qualitative methods

The difference between quantitative and qualitative research had been explained by many different researchers. Creswell (1994) defines *quantitative* research as:

an inquiry into social or human problems based on testing a theory composed of variables, measured with numbers, and analysed with statistical procedures, in order to determine whether the predictive generalisations of theory hold true.

He defines *qualitative* research as

an inquiry process of understanding social or human problems based on building a complex, holistic picture, formed with words, reporting detailed views of informants, and conducted in a natural setting.

More succinctly, Punch (1998) defines the quantitative approach as ‘empirical research for which the data are in numbers’ and the qualitative approach as ‘empirical research for which the data are not in numbers’. There are also differences between quantitative and qualitative methods in terms of data collection and analysis. Quantitative methods rely heavily on numerical data and statistical analysis, while qualitative methods rely heavily on verbal data and subjective analysis (Gall, 1999).

While acknowledging the fact that differences exist between the two methods, these differences do not obstruct their similarities in logic; hence, combining the two approaches is possible (Punch 1998). The resulting ‘mixed methods’ approach make it possible to obtain a more comprehensive interpretation of data (Sogunro, 2002). In light of an impact evaluation study, Sogunro (2002) also states that, for an impact evaluation, there is a need to go beyond specific data collection through distant collection of hard data, to a closer and interactive collection of soft data like getting testimonials of program impact from program participants and stakeholders, as well as emerging concerns, in order to enhance the evaluation.

Consistent with Sogunro's advice, I utilised a mixed methods approach in this study, using quantitative and qualitative methods depending on the particular situation. From the literature review, I found that most program evaluation of a summative and impact type was conducted using quantitative data collection methods. I wanted to initiate something different by combining qualitative and quantitative methods in my research with the personal belief that the mixed methods approach would bring about interesting results and would increase the significance of my study through the introduction of cumulative findings. Besides my intention to broaden the commonly practiced approach in program evaluation, the mixed methods approach also was suitable for my research in terms of the different roles played by quantitative and qualitative data collection methods. Quantitative data were used primarily to give representative results on how the program objectives had been achieved by the program participants. In turn, these data were used to find representatives for the interview process, the qualitative data collection part of this research. The qualitative methods were then utilised to capture testimonials of the program's impact from the program participants, as well as to evaluate how effective the program had been in encouraging them towards entrepreneurship. Consistent with Creswell's (1994) views, it is advantageous to a researcher to combine methods to better understand a concept being tested or explored. Evidence unrestricted by the use of combined quantitative and qualitative methods results in stronger validity of outcomes and findings.

Quantitative method: use of questionnaires

If research requires overt information from individuals, the use of a questionnaire is one of the substantial research activities that provides valid and reliable information for making a decision or investigating a topic (Peterson, 2000). In this study, a questionnaire was used to investigate the overall performance of program participants after they had completed the program. In addition, it acted as a selection method for the selection of

respondents for the qualitative data collection process. The construction, trial, distribution, and its analysis methods are discussed under this section.

In this research, I chose to mail out the questionnaires to be self-administered by the respondents. Mail procedures had distinct advantages:

- they were relatively low in cost;
- could be accomplished with minimal staff and facilities;
- provided access to samples that otherwise might have been difficult to reach by telephone or in person;
- gave the respondents time to give thoughtful answers;
- self-administration left the respondents at ease since they did not have to share answers with an interviewer guiding them through the different items in the questionnaire.

However, self-administered questionnaires require respondents to have certain reading or writing skills to answer the items since the interviewer is not present to exercise quality control with respect to answering all items, meeting item objectives, or the quality of answers provided.

One major problem with a mail survey can be its response rates, an indication of the number of questionnaires that have been returned. For this study, I minimised the non-response primarily by using telephone follow ups. The elements contained in the mail survey of this study were a cover letter, questionnaire, consent form to participate in this study, and the return envelope with attached postage. Details of these items may be found in Appendix A and B, and in Attachments 1-5.

The following sub-sections describe how the questionnaire was constructed, how it was tested, and how it was analysed to support the objective-based impact evaluation undertaken in this research.

Questionnaire construction

I followed the guidelines of constructing effective questionnaires provided by Peterson (2000). A review of information requirements is a necessity in initiating the questionnaire construction, followed by the development and prioritisation of items that would provide the required information. Then the types of items to be asked can be determined. The questionnaire to be used in this research was significantly derived from the information requirements of the program organisers, and more specifically from different inquiries and aspects of the program objectives. The development of each item depended on the criteria defined by each program objective.

For instance, on the primary program objective to encourage entrepreneurial thinking, one of the criteria was the change in entrepreneurial characteristics as provided by the program organisers. As a result, the item developed asks the participants to evaluate themselves before and after the program and give ratings on the listed entrepreneurial characteristics based on a measurement scale. This is not similar to the before-after design for which the same item is asked twice, once before the program starts and another after the program completed. Since this was an impact evaluation study conducted after the program had been settled for about a year, the item developed under this study was based on the participants' judgement and evaluation of themselves, looking back to the times before they joined the program compared to the point in time when the questionnaire is handed to them.

Before the questionnaire could be constructed, it was important to undertake a review of the possible types of items that could be asked, as well as a description of the available measurement scales to ensure an effective design for the questionnaire.

Types of questions

Before the specific items could be phrased, a decision needed to be made on what degree of freedom was to be given to respondents in answering the question. The common types of items used in questionnaires are either open-ended or close-ended.

Open-ended questions: Open-ended items allow for a wide range of responses and do not have prior influence in the responses from pre-specified categories. Respondents often appreciate the freedom to give marginal comments when they do not feel that the response categories capture their feelings adequately. However, open-ended items are time consuming and should be designed so that the available answer space and time coincide with the question's importance.

Close-ended questions: Closed-ended items ask respondents to make one or more choices from a list of possible responses, or to select from a rating scale where the respondent is given a range of labelled categories that represents the range of responses. These items are easier to answer for the respondents as well as easier for the researchers both in terms of data collection and data analysis. It is important, however, to make sure that the respondents are not forced to choose an opinion. One way of handling this is to include a 'don't know' or 'other' alternative.

A choice between open-ended and close-ended items was not necessary in this research. Open-ended items were used in conjunction with close-ended items to provide additional information.

Measurement scale

In the evaluation of program objectives in this impact evaluation, the measurement scale required the assignment of numbers to objects or persons that represented quantities of their attributes. The question facing me was how to establish and assign those numbers. I examined the properties of different scales of measurement in establishing a useful basis for evaluating

various attitude rating scales. It was rather important to understand the differences among the types of scales to be able to identify them in practice, for their properties place significant restrictions on the interpretation and use of any resulting measurements (Aaker *et al*, 2006). There were four different types of measurement scales which served as the basis for different types of rating scales.

Nominal Scale: In such a scale, objects are assumed to be mutually exclusive, labelled categories; moreover, there is no necessary relationships among the categories, for instance, no order. A typical application of such a scale is in the classification and gathering of demographic data such as gender, geographic location, and marital status. The most obvious attitude rating scale derived from nominal scale properties is the dichotomous ‘yes or no’ scale.

Ordinal Scale: An ordinal scale requires ranking or arranging objects in order with regard to some common variable. The question simply is whether each object has more or less of this variable than some other. This scale provides no information as to how much difference there is between the objects. The types of attitude rating scales for this kind of measurement are comparative, rank order, itemised category, and paired comparison.

Interval Scale: The numbers used to rank objects on an interval scale also represent equal increments of the attribute being measured; thus, that difference could be compared. The difference between 1 and 2 is the same as between 2 and 3, but is only half the difference between 2 and 4. The location of the zero point is not fixed, since zero does not denote absence of the attribute. Attitude rating scales for this kind of measurement property were Likert, Thurstone, Stapel, associative, and semantic-differential scales.

I placed particular attention on the *Likert scale*, a rating scale which requires the respondent to indicate a degree of agreement or disagreement with a variety of statements related to attitude or object. A Likert scale usually consists of two parts, the item part and the evaluative part. The item

part is essentially a statement about a certain product, event, or attitude. The evaluative part is a list of response categories ranging from ‘strongly agree’ to strongly disagree’.

Ratio Scale: A ratio scale is similar to an interval scale but had natural zero point. It is the only type of scale that permits the comparison of absolute magnitudes. This is often used in certain scales with special instructions; its typical applications are such as sales, income, weight, and age.

I designed the questionnaire to contain different types of questions: Likert scales, close-ended, and open-ended questions. Selection of the types of items to be used were dependent on the nature of the information requirement. According to Whitley (2001), Likert scales are widely used as means for studying opinions, self rating, agreement and disagreement with a statement; close-ended items require respondents to select one response from a list of response options, which represent categories of interest and can be easily quantified; open-ended items are used in some cases to enable clarification when there is uncertainty of the most appropriate response options included in close-ended questions.

Hence, the specific items in the questionnaire are derived from the stated program objectives through the use of the appropriate types of items for particular criteria of inquiries. I will now consider each of the specific items and will describe how each contributed to the program objectives established by the program organisers.

Program Objective 1: Encouraging participants to think like an entrepreneur

As the program organisers pointed out, the three main aspects of this program objective were the desire to become entrepreneurs, the entrepreneurial characteristics as listed by the program organisers, and their seriousness in wanting to be entrepreneurs. Items were derived from these three aspects, as shown in Figure 3.2.

FIGURE 3.2 DESIGN OF ENTREPRENEURSHIP ITEMS

• **Desire in becoming entrepreneurs**

<i>Measure of your response at the beginning of the program.</i>	Question	<i>Measure of your response now, at the end of the program.</i>
weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	1. How strong is your wish to become a future entrepreneur?	weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

• **Seriousness of wanting to be entrepreneurs**

How many years from now do you think you will have a business of your own? (Please put a 'X' on the selected answer.)	
<input type="checkbox"/> Less than 1 year	<input type="checkbox"/> 2-5 years
<input type="checkbox"/> 5-10 years	<input type="checkbox"/> 10-15 years
<input type="checkbox"/> More than 15 years	<input type="checkbox"/> Undecided

• **Self evaluation of entrepreneurial characteristics**

How strong do you think you are in relation to the following characteristics?

<i>Measure of your response at the beginning of the program.</i>	Characteristic	<i>Measure of your response now, at the end of the program.</i>
weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	1. Out of the box thinking	weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	2. Awareness of opportunities	weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	3. Desire to succeed	weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	4. Willingness to take risks	weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	5. Self-confidence	weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	6. Commitment to recovery through experimenting with new possibility	weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	7. Need for control	weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	8. Openness to new information	weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	9. Tolerance for ambiguity	weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	10. Ability to make judgmental decisions	weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

<i>Measure of your response at the beginning of the program.</i>	Characteristic	<i>Measure of your response now, at the end of the program.</i>
weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	11. Great vision and insights	weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	12. Systematic thinking and derivation of vision into action	weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	13. Team leadership	weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	14. Other (Specify): _____	weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Program Objective 2: Equipping participants with the practice skills to process entrepreneurial thoughts into implementation

The implementation abilities were defined by the program organisers as the ability to translate a business concept into an action plan, ability to identify and acquire resources needed, ability to identify necessary steps, ability to understand the differences of steps and resources in relation to business nature, systematic planning, and confidence in implementation. Responses to the aforementioned abilities were asked, in straight-forward terms, in the following items (see Figure 3.3):

FIGURE 3.3 SELF EVALUATION OF IMPLEMENTATION ABILITIES

- **How strongly do you agree about the following statements, given a specific business concept?**

<i>Measure of your response at the beginning of the course.</i>	Statement	<i>Measure of your response at the end of the course.</i>
weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	1. I could translate this business concept into series of action plans.	weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	2. I am certain that I could identify all the resources needed (e.g. human resource, funding source, etc.) in putting this business concept into implementation.	weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	3. I am certain that I know how to acquire all the resources needed (e.g. human resource, funding source, etc.) in putting this business concept into implementation.	weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	4. I could bring all the resources together by systematic planning.	weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	5. I could identify the steps to be taken in starting this business.	weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	6. I understand how the resources needed and the steps in implementing the business would be different, depending on the nature of the business.	weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	7. I am confident that I could be successful in implementing this business concept.	weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

- **If you were to implement a given business in the future, how strongly would you like to be involved in the following areas of the implementation?**

Area	<i>Measure of your involvement in the implementation</i>
1. Planning	weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
2. Marketing and sales	weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
3. Production	weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
4. Distribution	weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
5. Acquiring of raw material or inputs	weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
6. Funding	weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
7. Accounting	weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
8. Other (Specify): _____	weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Program objective 3: Developing a ‘can do’ attitude among participants

According to the program organisers, a ‘can do’ attitude was represented by the confidence of being a future successful entrepreneur, the belief that they could promptly start a business on their own without further assurance, and that they could cope with business failure and always be ready for recovery. The following item was designed to measure the aforementioned representations of a ‘can do’ attitude on the part of participants (see Figure 3.4):

FIGURE 3.4 SELF EVALUATION OF ‘CAN DO’ ATTITUDE

- **The following statements are designed to indicate the strength of your feelings about the following statements before and after the SBYEA program:**

<i>Measure of your response at the beginning of the course.</i>	Statement	<i>Measure of your response at the end of the course.</i>
weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	1. I am convinced that I could be one of the successful entrepreneurs.	weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	2. It would be better to start my career being an employee before first owning my own business.	weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	3. I believe that the higher education I can get, the more likely this would help me to become a successful entrepreneur.	weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	4. I find it acceptable to have started a business and failed.	weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	5. Failure in running a business would not stop me from becoming successful entrepreneur.	weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Program objective 4: Enabling participants to realise the future direction they wished to pursue

Realisation of future directions was represented by the fact that they knew what they wanted to become in terms of future career and the extent that the program has influenced the participants' career choice. This realisation was explored in the following items (see Figure 3.5):

FIGURE 3.5 SELF EVALUATION OF FUTURE DIRECTION

• **The SBYEA program's influence in decisions regarding your career choice**

1. How strong has this program help you make decisions about your future career?	weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
--	--

• **After graduation, how strongly do you want to become the following?**

<i>Measure of your response at the beginning of the course.</i>	Career	<i>Measure of your response at the end of the course.</i>
weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	1. Employee.	weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	2. Own business owner.	weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	3. Government's officer	weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	4. Other (Specify): _____	weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Program objective 5: Enhancing the significance of learning by experience

Learning by experience was indicated by the investigation of the contribution of learning experience towards the creation of entrepreneurs; exploring the confidence and knowledge gained, and the preference of learning by experience over formal education. The following items were derived to explore the significance of learning by experience by means of what the program organisers had identified (see Figure 3.6):

FIGURE 3.6 EVALUATION ON THE SIGNIFICANCE OF EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING

- **How strongly do you feel about the following statements?**

<i>Measure of your response at the beginning of the course.</i>	Statement	<i>Measure of your response at the end of the course.</i>
weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	1. Hands-on training in entrepreneurship helps create future entrepreneurs.	weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	2. If I had been trained by an entrepreneurial workshop using hands-on training, I would feel more confident and stimulated to start owning a business.	weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	3. Knowledge of entrepreneurship could be better delivered to me by experience.	weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	4. I prefer learning by experience or hands-on training more than my class of formal education.	weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	5. I believe that formal education could help create future entrepreneurs once they have the chance to continue their study within the field of interest.	weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Other than the items that were derived directly from the program objectives of the program organisers, I designed additional items to gain supportive information and insights to the program evaluation as follows (see Figure 3.7):

FIGURE 3.7 EVALUATION ON THE SIGNIFICANCE OF EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING (CONT)

Reasons that have supported / prevented you to become an entrepreneur

- **How strong are the following reasons why you might wish to become an entrepreneur?**

1. Encouragement by parents	weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
2. Encouragement by society	weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
3. Tired of academic program	weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
4. Not wanting to be an employee	weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
5. Freedom to operate independently	weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
6. Financial return of a business	weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
7. Personal satisfaction	weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
8. To leave a legacy for my family	weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
9. Other (specify): _____	weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

- **How strong are the following reasons why you might NOT wish to become an entrepreneur?**

1. High risk and uncertainty	weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
2. Hard work and long hours	weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
3. Too much stress	weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
4. Possibility of business failure	weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
5. No capital to invest	weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
6. Want a family life	weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
7. Other (Specify): _____	weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

The influence of business concept creation

- **How strong were the following in helping you first come up with a business concept for the SBYEA program?**

1. Working all by myself	weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
2. Teacher's guidance	weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
3. Family's guidance	weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
4. Surrounding environment	weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
5. Friends' influence	weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
6. Other (Specify): _____	weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

The industries that participants were interested in to start out a business

- **How strongly interested are you in establishing the following kind of business?**

<i>Measure of your response at the beginning of the course.</i>	Interest	<i>Measure of your response now, at the end of the course.</i>
weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	1. Consumer goods	weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	2. High-tech products	weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	3. Service	weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	4. Agricultural products	weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	5. Products from local resources	weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	Other (Specify): _____	weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

- **Role model of successful entrepreneur**

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do you have a role model of successful entrepreneur? (Please put a 'X' on the selected answer.) <p> <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No </p> <p>If 'Yes', specify your ideal, or name a person: _____</p>
--

The identified items were then put into a sequence that gave a sense of flow as the participants answering the questionnaires read through. Some of the items, although not directly related to the evaluation of program objectives, were designed to investigate and explore further information; however, it was worthwhile to note that those items were used as supportive data only.

Questionnaire trial

Pre-testing a questionnaire is usually a required process of questionnaire construction in a research project (Cannell *et al.*, 1991). The first draft of the questionnaire developed under this study was tested for validity and suitability. A trial of the questionnaire was run with 16 high school students in the age range of 17-21 years old – an age range comparable to that of the program participants. The trial questionnaire acted as a pilot study during which the survey instrument was able to be revised. The factors that were evaluated under this trial process were: the overall quality; ease of understanding; the wording of items, their clarity, and validity; the simplicity of answering; the order of the items; the overall impression of the number of items being asked. The fully developed questionnaires after the trial process were then mailed out to 34 program participants located in different regions of Thailand. The completed and fully developed questionnaire used in this study is contained in Appendix A.

Questionnaire analysis and scoring

The criteria for evaluating program impact for this research were the degree of change, relative to each of the goals and desired consequences of the program, and the importance of change, in terms of percentage of clients who met the program's goals. The greater the number of clients who met the goals, the more effective was the program. Such a judgement was made possible as a result of the questionnaire analysis.

The results from each item of the questionnaire were displayed using simple descriptive statistics: means and standard deviation. For the items designed to measure the change in participants' ratings before and after the program, the significance of the differences in ratings was measured by a paired sample t-test using Microsoft SPSS computer software. A paired sample t-test was used in testing the significance in difference between sample means, assuming that the ratings before and after the program were independent. Instead of comparing the difference between two sample means, the testing procedure in this case was to obtain the mean and standard deviation of the difference first. Such difference in ratings could be described as the difference between the before and after weights of each individual in the sample.

In the process of data reduction that influenced the classification of participants into high/medium/low performance group, each item in the questionnaire was assigned a different weighting. Weighting is a procedure by which each response is assigned a number according to a pre-specified rule. Items derived from the two main program objectives which were strongly emphasised by the program organisers had more weight than those derived from the other three program objectives; the main program objectives were assigned a weight of 35 per cent while the other three program objectives were assigned a weight of 10 per cent each. These weights were multiplied by the Likert scale rating assigned to each answer, with a particular focus on the ratings after the participants had been through the program. For more details, an example of the scoring sheet is shown in Appendix B. From a total score of 100, judgments could be made as to whether the participant had achieved the program objectives at a high, medium, or low level. Subsequently, participants from each level were chosen as the group's representatives based on their score; I chose a total of nine representatives from the three levels; these nine were involved in the qualitative data collection. The details of the selection are explained in detail in Chapter 5.

The purpose of the quantitative method was primarily for data reduction as well as to obtain an overall description of the achievement levels of the program participants based on the program objectives. From this data, I was able to obtain significant support for both the qualitative analysis that I undertook, as well as the ultimate findings of this research.

Qualitative method: interviews

Although the findings from the quantitative method gave worthwhile evidence to support the evaluation of program effectiveness, further findings were required to confirm and to explore the potential supporting evidence towards forming more elaborate results. Frequently, quantitative analysis is limited to describing the statistics and summary of data patterns without the capability of explaining why they were so. There were interesting points arising from the results of the quantitative analysis undertaken in this research that needed to be clarified. In other words, I needed to find the reasons behind the responses. This is why I undertook a set of interviews. The interviews were able to assist me in detailing the rationale behind each interviewee's responses, as well as aspects regarding the factors of the program that had motivated or obstructed the change – but which could not be quantified.

In the following sub-sections I explain how the interviews were carried out as well as how the information gained from them was displayed and analysed in terms of narratives.

Interview approach and guidelines

I realised it was my responsibility to meet with the interviewees wherever they felt most comfortable in talking to me. After checking with them, they mentioned that it was better for them to meet at their residence, school, or a public meeting place in their hometown.

For every interview, I agreed with them first where to meet and at what time before I was able to see and talk to them personally. Before each meeting, the interviewees had agreed to have their responses recorded. Since the interviewees came from different parts of Thailand, I found myself getting ready for an extensive interview trip. At first, I thought of this trip as a data collection process, but it ended up being an enlightening and enjoyable journey. Hands-on experience with the interviewees allowed me to gain insights and information that were not accessible by the questionnaires, and which provided me with an eye-opening experience.

Under this study, I chose to use a semi-structured interview approach due to its capacity for specifying topics and issues to be covered while allowing the interview to be flexible and conversational (Whitley, 2001). The interview questions were open-ended which provided the opportunity for interviewees to respond freely. The questions in the interview guide are listed below:

- Do you want to be an entrepreneur?
- Please tell me about your impression of the program. How do you feel about the program?
- How has the program influenced your thinking/desire on entrepreneurship?
- If the program has not influenced your thinking and desire to become entrepreneurs much, why is it so? And in what way the program has influenced you?
- How has the program helped you with your practice abilities in implementing real business?
- Please tell me about the good and bad points of program workshops?
- How do feel about starting a business on our own? How would you do it?

- What you intended to do after the program?
- How has the program influenced your future plans?
- How do you feel about the method of learning by experience?

Narratives and qualitative analysis

A precise definition of narratives is difficult to pinpoint. Labov (1972), initially, thought of narratives as stories about a specific past event with similar characteristics as follow:

- **Abstract:** summary of the substance of the narrative
- **Orientation:** time, place, situation, participants
- **Complicating action:** sequence of events
- **Evaluation:** significance and meaning of the action including the opinions of the writer
- **Resolution:** consequences of what finally happened
- **Coda:** reflection of perspectives on that past event to the present

Through these structures, researchers are able to form a story from primary experience that interprets the significance of events and their embedded evaluation.

More recent literature defines narratives as story- telling in relation to individual experience with distinctive styles, structures, and the mode of presentation that the writer chooses (Mitchell, 1990; Riessman, 1991). Despite the slightly different view of narratives in discrete structure or incorporated with individual styles, narratives are destined to serve a purpose; to do this, narratives, according to Riessman (1993) require interpretation:

Narratives could be interpreted in many different ways; however, since this qualitative part of the study was mainly derived from the interviews, I

chose to utilise narratives in a way that they would form stories relating the emerging themes from the interview. Interview data were selected and linked to synthesise the emerging themes explaining about the experience of the program participants. These themes were then threaded to form the narratives of each participant group. Narratives displayed evaluation clauses which illustrated what story the research wanted to be portrayed, understood, and what the point was.

For this study, narratives played a significant role in displaying the interview data; to make this most effective, the data contained in the narratives were presented as vignettes. Miles (1987) describes ‘vignettes’ as follow:

Vignettes as we defined them are essentially snapshots—or perhaps mini-movies—of professional practice. They engage the professional directly in reflecting on a recent episode of practice—first describing it, then producing thoughtful explanations.

In this study, I used vignettes to form *snapshots* of the experience of program participants. With these snapshots, the core issues and themes that emerged from the participants’ experience were grouped into a relevant interpretation of program impacts on entrepreneurship encouragement as well as the achievement of the program objectives. If narratives are thought of as a movie, vignettes could be thought of as movie ‘previews’, used to emphasise the interesting and eye-catching themes from the whole movie.

The use of vignettes in program evaluation is fairly common. Miles (1987) points out that the reflective character of vignettes has proved to be efficient when used in the context of formal program evaluations: they are able to provide a concrete idea of elements of program delivery, as well as the underlying reasons for the program’s success. Their format – as mini-cases, or mini-movies – means that vignettes are able to be easily diagnosed, demonstrated, and used in interventions. Since the snapshots of the events – the vignettes – in this study were described in a short time-frame compared to narratives, it was possible to observe attitudes, traits, rationale, and trends,

which were very useful for understanding the nature of each participant, why they were the way they were, what were the underlying reasons behind their thinking, and the ways in which the program had made an impact upon them.

In forming and grouping the interview data to form the vignettes, I utilised matrices: tables displaying themes in relation to the program objectives or topics under discussion. This made it clearer and easier to foresee the linkage between different themes and their contributions towards entrepreneur development amongst the participants. Before the interview data was put into these matrices, full transcripts of the interviews, in Thai, were made. Next came the process of data reduction. Significant portions of the interviewees' statements were selected to be put in the matrices to capture the linkage of intervening statements for which a 'theme' could emerge; these themes then spoke for themselves. I, as researcher, was in charge of analysing how themes could be threaded to form a compelling story with a point to make regarding issues about the program participants as well as the program implications in relation to the entrepreneurship development.

I must, at this point, mention the subjectivity of qualitative analysis. The time, place, and personal experience of the researcher contribute to how the characters of the story are valued. Despite this, I now think of this subjectivity as a way to better tell the stories to the readers. The qualitative approach took into account the participants' nature, and identity; the characteristics, expressions and opinions of the researcher who was embedded in that particular experience. In combination, this provided an in-depth source of how the event could be portrayed in detail and with poise. To me, the characterisations and personal expressions provide a perspective that I greatly value. I believe that they deliver a better understanding of the situation to the readers, while making it quite easy for them to follow. Qualitative analysis is, in fact, very interesting and not at all dull. For me, the outcomes of this phase of the research proved to be quite overwhelming.

Conclusion

The impact evaluation was designed to provide feedback to the program organisers as well as to add value to current entrepreneurship development processes. Since the primary audience of this research was the program organisers, the research was designed in accordance with the program objectives set by them. This chapter has provided a discussion of the available evaluation methods as well as a rationale for why these particular methods were selected. In light of the nature of this impact evaluation, a mixture of qualitative and quantitative methods was used; each method complemented the other. Both methods helped me to explore new insights to the program's impact. This was central to my research.

CHAPTER 4

Quantitative Implications from the Program

Introduction

Questionnaires mobilised the preliminary findings of this research; analysis of the data provided the basis of subsequent semi-structured interviews. This chapter displays the results from those questionnaires. I considered the results of all questions and answers from the questionnaire for each item in the expectation that they would lead, support, or relate to the further findings of this research. Coupled with the interview data, this research would be more efficient in evaluating the impact of the program.

In the context of this research, the program effectiveness is demonstrated, in general, through the comparisons of the participants' ratings before and after the program based on the main elements from five program objectives, namely entrepreneurial thoughts, entrepreneurial practice, 'can do' attitude, career direction, and significance of experiential learning. The program effectiveness was the extent to which the participants could accomplish such program objectives. From the questionnaires, some criteria were more contributive to such objective-based evaluation of the participants while other criteria related more to supporting factors that explained the reasons or gave additional information on the student's performance on that objective.

TABLE 4.1 ASSIGNMENT OF DESCRIPTION TO EACH INTERVAL OF RESPONSES

Description	Range of quantitative data
High	8-10
Medium	6-7.99
Low	1-5.99

Setting the standards for evaluation

For the consistency of evaluation, I categorised the quantitative results into level of ratings. Since most of the items required responses using a 10-point Likert scale, the participants provided responses of 1 to 10, indicating ‘weak’ to ‘strong’ agreement with the items, respectively. The responses were described as ‘high’, ‘medium’, or ‘low’ according to each interval of the item responses. The numerical range of responses for such assigned description is summarised in Table 4.1. For instance, if the average rating of a particular criterion was at 7.7, this was said to be at moderate level.

Questionnaire findings

Out of the 34 program participants, 32 responded and completed the mail-out questionnaires. The questionnaire used for this research is presented in Appendix A. The items mainly focused on how and to what extent they had been influenced in different ways after passing through the program, especially according to the program objectives. The profile of the participant group that returned the questionnaires is summarised in Table 4.2. The data indicate that three-quarters of the respondents resided outside of Bangkok. The respondents were all at high school level so the age range difference was not significant.

TABLE 4.2 PROFILE OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE RESPONDENTS

Factor	Criterion	N	%
Gender	Male	18	58
	Female	14	42
	Total	32	
Age	Range	16-20	
	Mean	18	
	Median	18	
Geographical location	Bangkok (capital city)	8	25
	Outside Bangkok	24	75

Undertaking a quantitative analysis of the responses before and after the program, the participants as a group showed a greater desire in becoming future entrepreneurs after entering the program, as shown in Table 4.3. The mean value of the participants' ratings had increased; furthermore, a paired sample t-test confirmed that the ratings on their desire in wanting to be entrepreneurs after the program was higher than before the program at the significance level of 0.05. Their desire to become entrepreneur had substantially shifted from *low* to *high*.

The three reasons that contributed most strongly towards being entrepreneurs were: the freedom to operate independently; personal satisfaction; financial return of having own business. The three reasons that contributed most strongly to preventing or decreasing their interest in becoming entrepreneurs were: no capital to invest in the business; high risk; fear of failure.

TABLE 4.3 DESIRE IN WANTING TO BE ENTREPRENEURS BEFORE AND AFTER THE PROGRAM

Summary Statistics	Before-program Response	After-program Response
Mean value of ratings	5.94	8.37
Standard deviation	2.59	1.52
Standard error	0.46	0.27
Number of responses	32	32
Paired Sample T-test	Difference = Before-After H ₀ : Mean of difference = 0 H ₁ : Mean of difference ≠ 0	
Difference Mean	-2.44	
Standard Deviation	2.17	
Standard Error	0.38	
Correlation	0.548	
t-value	-6.356	
Degrees of Freedom	31	
Two-Tailed Probability (p-value)	0.000*	
*p-value < 0.05 'Ratings on After were significantly higher than Before'		

In becoming entrepreneurs, I further examined the timeframe in which they wanted to really become one. This indicated the perception of becoming entrepreneurs as a realistic organised goal in their lives. These results are shown in Table 4.4. Participants had mostly planned to have their own business in 2-10 years; however, about 10 per cent had not yet decided.

TABLE 4.4 TIMEFRAME IN WANTING TO BE ENTREPRENEURS

Years from now to have own business	% of answers
2-5 years	56.3
5-10 years	21.9
Undecided	9.4
Less than 1 year	6.3
10-15 years	3.1
More than 15 years	0
Number of responses	31

TABLE 4.5 SUMMARY OF RESULTS—RATING OF PARTICIPANTS' COMPETENCIES ON ENTREPRENEURIAL CHARACTERISTICS

Criteria	Mean		Paired Sample T-test After > Before Level of significance at 0.05	Before and after program comparison	Mean value of difference
	Before	After			
Willing to take risks	5.13	7.81	Yes	Increased	+2.60
Systematic thinking/ vision to action	5.76	8.37	Yes	Increased	+2.55
Commitment to recovery	5.45	7.93	Yes	Increased	+2.41
Judgmental decision	5.52	7.97	Yes	Increased	+2.38
Self-confidence	5.86	8.10	Yes	Increased	+2.21
Vision	5.66	7.92	Yes	Increased	+2.21
Out-of-the-box thinking	5.43	7.71	Yes	Increased	+2.20
Tolerance for ambiguity	5.55	7.70	Yes	Increased	+2.07
Opportunity awareness	6.13	8.06	Yes	Increased	+1.90
Team leader	6.34	8.23	Yes	Increased	+1.86
Desire to succeed	6.90	8.77	Yes	Increased	+1.79
Need for control	5.72	7.30	Yes	Increased	+1.52
Open to new information	7.48	8.97	Yes	Increased	+1.45

From the list of entrepreneurial characteristics described in the literature review, the participants gave ratings of their own competencies on each: their willingness to take risks, systematic thinking, commitment to recovery, ability to make judgmental decisions, self-confidence, vision, out-of-the-box thinking, tolerance for ambiguity, opportunity awareness, team leadership, desire to succeed, need for control, and openness to new information. The results are shown in Table 4.5.

The ratings of each characteristic of entrepreneurship asked in the questionnaire increased significantly following the program. Participants' ratings on systematic thinking in derivation of vision to action and their self-

confidence shifted substantially from *low* to *high*; their ratings on opportunity awareness, team leadership, desire to succeed, and openness to new information had lesser shifts, from *medium* to *high*. The remaining characteristics increased significantly – but from *low* to *medium* level – as a result of the program.

Most of the participants had not continued with the projects that they started during the program. Nevertheless, following the program, the participants' responses on their abilities to process their business ideas into real practice had increased significantly, confirmed by paired sample t-tests. Their confidence, abilities to identify the steps to be taken, abilities to come up with action plans, and their understanding the implementation difference corresponding to different business type had all shifted substantially from *low* to *high*. The abilities that were rated to have increased the most are summarised in Table 4.6. It is noted that the shift in means of the

TABLE 4.6 SUMMARY OF RESULTS — IMPLEMENTATION ABILITIES'

Criteria	Mean		Paired Sample T-test After > Before Level of significance at 0.05	Before and after program comparison	Mean value of difference
	Before	After			
Identification of necessary steps to be taken	4.32	8.32	Yes	Increased	+4.00
Confidence in implementation	5.19	8.43	Yes	Increased	+3.30
Translation of concept into action plan	5.20	8.30	Yes	Increased	+3.10
Identification of resources needed	4.67	7.67	Yes	Increased	+3.00
Understanding the differences of steps and resources in relation to business type	5.48	8.26	Yes	Increased	+2.77
Acquisition of resources needed	4.77	7.48	Yes	Increased	+2.71
Systematic planning	5.39	7.77	Yes	Increased	+2.59

TABLE 4.7 SUMMARY OF RESULTS—DESIRED INVOLVEMENT IN MULTIDISCIPLINARY FIELD

Criteria	Mean		Paired Sample T-test After > Before Level of significance at 0.05
	Before	After	
Involvement perception – Planning	8.03	8.74	Yes
Involvement perception – Marketing/sales	8.10	8.58	No
Involvement perception – Production	7.87	7.71	No
Involvement perception – Distribution	7.61	7.71	No
Involvement perception – Acquiring raw materials	7.71	7.68	No
Involvement perception – Funding	7.45	7.00	No
Involvement perception – Accounting	6.16	6.63	No

implementation abilities was noticeably higher than those of the entrepreneurial characteristics discussed earlier.

Involvement in multidisciplinary fields also plays an important role in business implementation. A shift towards the field of planning was the only one that was statistically significant as a result of the program (see Table 4.7). The shifts in the remaining fields were variable: half rose, and half fell. There was a slight increase in marketing, distribution, and accounting; there was a slight decrease in production, raw materials, and funding – but none of these shifts was statistically significant.

Aside from the implementation abilities and multidisciplinary involvement, the program also aimed to enhance the participants to be equipped with a ‘can do’ attitude. Most of the responses indicating ‘can do’ attitude proved to have significantly increased, especially on their confidence and ability to cope with failure. The confidence to be the future successful entrepreneurs shifted from *low* to *high*, as shown in Table 4.8.

TABLE 4.8 SUMMARY OF RESULTS—‘CAN DO’ ATTITUDE CRITERIA

Criteria	Mean		Paired Sample T-test After > Before Level of significance at 0.05	Before and after program comparison	Mean value of difference
	Before	After			
Confidence in being future successful entrepreneur	5.35	8.10	Yes	Increased	+2.74
Acceptability to start business and fail	6.29	8.32	Yes	Increased	+2.03
Failure in running business does not stop them from wanting to be entrepreneurs	6.60	8.13	Yes	Increased	+1.53
Thoughts to become employee first before starting own business	5.48	6.39	No	-	-
Thoughts to pursue higher education before becoming entrepreneurs	6.55	7.06	No	-	-

The rated criteria to become employees or to pursue higher education first before owning a business increased slightly, but were not statistically significant (see Table 4.8). The measure in participants’ ‘can do’ attitude was also illustrated indirectly by the advice they would give to a friend who had just initiated a business and failed. Their responses to advise their friend to start over again and get more knowledge in running business shifted from *moderate* to *high*, following the program. Their rating on the advice to get more experience as an employee first also increased significantly but had not shifted to high level. On the other hand, their rating on advice to quit and find something else to do had not increased at all. These results are summarised in Table 4.9.

Another objective of this program was to make the participants realise the future direction of what they wanted to become. Out of the 31 participants who answered this question, two-thirds of the participants’ career

choices had been changed after the program compared to their intention before the program. Now, the question is whether those career choices had been changed as a result of the program or because of factors outside the program.

TABLE 4.9 SUMMARY OF RESULTS—ADVICE TO A FRIEND WHO HAS STARTED BUSINESS AND FAILED

Criteria	Mean		Paired Sample T-test After > Before Level of significance at 0.05	Before and after program comparison	Mean value of difference
	Before	After			
Advice – Start over again	7.13	8.90	Yes	Increased	+1.77
Advice – Get more knowledge in running the business	7.77	9.35	Yes	Increased	+1.58
Advice – Get more experience as an employee	5.81	7.00	Yes	Increased	+1.19
Advice – Quit and find something else to do	4.81	4.16	No	-	-

TABLE 4.10 SUMMARY OF RESULTS—CAREER INTENTION

Criteria	Mean		Paired Sample T-test After > Before Level of significance at 0.05	Before and after program comparison	Mean value of difference
	Before	After			
Career intention – Business owner	6.71	8.68	Yes	Increased	+1.97
Career intention – Employee	4.74	3.94	No	-	-
Career intention – Government officer	5.84	5.42	No	-	-

According to the participants, the program influence on their career choices was rated at a moderate level. Their career intentions on being a business owner shifted from *moderate* to *high* (see Table 4.10), which was the only statistically significant shift. The ratings on career intentions on being either an employee or a government officer had decreased, but this change was not statistically significant.

The program had also introduced an alternative way of learning to the participants. The program allowed them to go through the workshops to enhance their business plans, translate such plans into implementation, and allow for real practice: they had the chance to sell their products and services, and to operate a real business. They all had learned by experience and real business practice, which was rather different from the approach they used when learning in a formal education classroom. The factors to be rated in relation to this alternative way of learning by experience were: the contribution of experiential learning towards the creation of entrepreneur, confidence gained by experiential learning, knowledge deliverance by experiential learning, and experiential learning dominance over formal education. All of these factors showed a significant shift from *moderate* to *high*, following the program; the results are summarised in Table 4.11.

TABLE 4.11 SUMMARY OF RESULTS—THOUGHTS THAT INDICATE SIGNIFICANCE OF EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING

Criteria	Mean		Paired Sample T-test After > Before Level of significance at 0.05	Before and after program comparison	Mean value of difference
	Before	After			
Contribution of experiential learning towards the creation of entrepreneur	6.87	9.19	Yes	Increased	+2.32
Confidence gained by experiential learning	7.35	9.32	Yes	Increased	+1.97
Entrepreneurial knowledge deliverance	7.58	9.35	Yes	Increased	+1.77

created by experiential learning					
Preference of experiential learning over formal education	7.97	9.55	Yes	Increased	+1.58
Formal education helps create future entrepreneurs if studied in specialised field	7.57	8.93	Yes	Increased	+1.37

Conclusion

The findings of the quantitative survey indicated that most criteria contributed significantly to the effectiveness of the program, even though the findings from this section did not fully contribute to a conclusion regarding program effectiveness. In summary, some program objectives had produced greater shifts in ratings than others: entrepreneurial thinking and implementation abilities contained a number of high shifts in ratings; most of the medium shifts were illustrated in participants' 'can do' attitude, realisation of future direction, and significance of learning by experience.

In terms of entrepreneurial thinking, participants' ratings illustrated major shifts in their desire to be entrepreneurs, their self-confidence, and systematic thinking (*low to high*). For other entrepreneurial characteristics, *medium to high* shifts were found in opportunity awareness, team leadership, desire to succeed, and openness to new information. Within other program objectives, the questionnaire results indicated that, as a result of the program, the participants had substantially more self-confidence, were able to think more systematically, and strongly wanted to be entrepreneurs.

The participants' overall ratings on business implementation abilities showed major shifts (*low to high*) in their confidence in implementation, abilities to identify the steps of implementation and come up with an action plan, as well as their understanding in implementation differences corresponding to different business types. The questionnaire results also indicated that participants wanted to be more involved in the field of

planning. In the overall picture, the participants indicated considerable improvement in their business implementation abilities.

Following the program, there was only one major shift shown in participants' 'can do' attitude: their confidence of being future successful entrepreneurs (*low to high*); medium shifts were shown in their ability to cope with failure (*medium to high*). The ratings to become employees or pursue higher education first before owning a business showed a small increase; the initial ratings on these two criteria were in the *low to medium* range. The fact that the changes were not statistically significant means that it was not possible to evaluate their 'can do' attitude from these data. The participants' insistence on studying or working first suggests the possibility that they thought they were not ready or were not capable of doing business at this stage. The reasons behind this thinking needed to be explored further in the interviews.

Participants showed an increasing tendency to become business owners following the program as seen from the medium shift in their career intention as entrepreneurs (*medium to high*). The ratings on other career intentions as employees or government officers decreased slightly; these changes were not statistically significant. The program had influenced the participants' career choice to a moderate extent; however, the questionnaire was unable to reveal just *how* the program has been able to do this. This question needed to be examined further.

In the context of experiential learning practiced in the program, there were medium shifts (*medium to high*) in the ratings of its contribution to creating entrepreneurs, confidence gained, its knowledge deliverance, and its preference over formal education's ways of learning.

The common significant criterion that had been strongly developed in meeting three of the program objectives – entrepreneurial thinking, practice, and 'can do' attitude – was an increase in the confidence of the participants. Participants indicated that they had more confidence in becoming

entrepreneurs, and in practicing business; thus, they believed that they could be successful at it. Confidence was an interesting issue that need to be explored further. To do this, semi-structured interviews were undertaken with selected participants. The outcomes of these interviews are discussed in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 5

Interview Respondents Selection and Narratives from the Interviews

Introduction

The selection of the interview respondents was carried out using data obtained from the questionnaires; this was my only source of reliable information that related to program outcomes. The scores were taken as a measure of participant achievement based on the program objectives. This analysis placed emphasis on the after-program questionnaire ratings, instead of examining the differences in their ratings before and after the program. To form a systematic way of categorizing the after-the-program performance into level of achievements, I used the scores of the participants taken from the after-program responses of the final questionnaire.

Since the questionnaire asked the participants to give self-ratings, I was not absolutely confident that the scores on the questionnaire provided a true measure of level of achievement; however, I felt that the scores would serve as a guideline to examine the achievement distribution of the participants as well as to facilitate the selection of interviewees to represent a range of levels of achievement: high, medium and low.

After describing how the interview respondents were selected, this chapter follows with a brief introduction of each of the respondents based on my personal impressions in meeting and talking to them. Following this introduction – which later turned out to be an insightful journey – I

developed narratives, in the form of vignettes derived from my experience in interviewing them, to demonstrate the situation; I include quotes from each of my respondents. Their opinions, perceptions, and personal experiences gave me in-depth and valuable information that helped in the further analysis and evaluation of the program, in accordance with the research objectives.

Selection of Interviewees

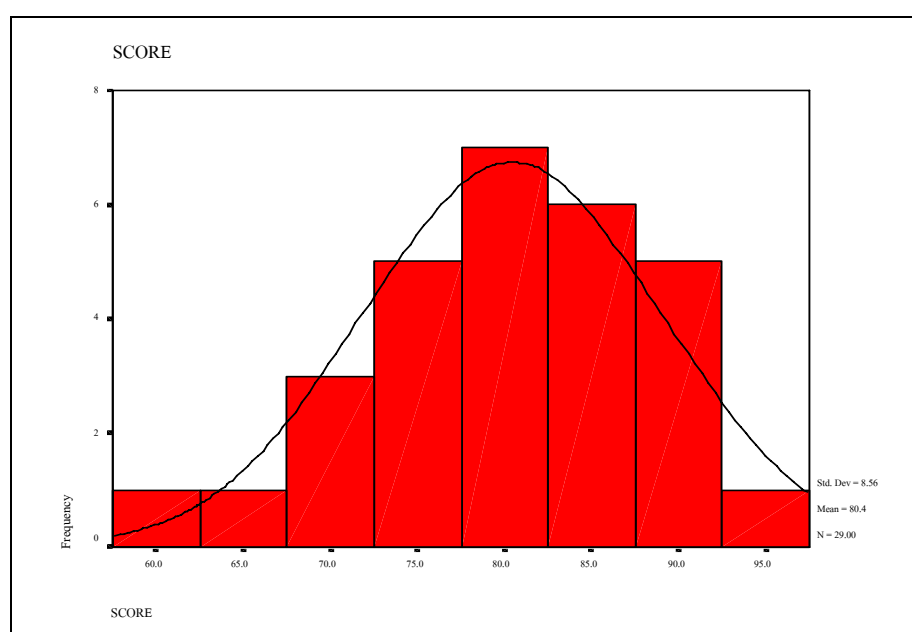
Twenty-nine questionnaires were computed quantitatively, according to the evaluation plan, to determine the scores. The descriptive statistics of scores are shown in Table 5.1. The highest score achieved was 95.2 out of 100; the lowest score was 57.8. The mean value of the scores was 80.4. I further investigated the distribution of scores to examine how the scores were spread out across the samples. The score distribution almost formed a normal distribution (with a slight negative skew); this can be seen in Figure 5.1.

From the score distribution, I categorised the samples into groups, based on the range of scores. The first quartile (Q1) of the score distribution represented the low achievers, the second and third quartiles (Q2 and Q3) represented the medium achievers, and the fourth quartile (Q4) represented the high achievers. Seven people achieved highly; the majority (N = 15) fell in the medium range while seven people fell in the low range of achievement. The normal distribution of the scores indicated the sufficiency of sample size to allow for low, medium, and high range to be categorised. The scores, the division into low, medium and high achievers, and the number of participants are shown in Table 5.2.

For the selection of the interviewees, I followed the guidelines of selection from Aaker *et al* (2006), who suggest many types of sampling methods with different purposes of their usage. I have reviewed the different types of sampling methods as follows:

TABLE 5.1 SCORE – DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS

	Mean value	Minimum	Maximum	Std Deviation
Score	80.4	57.8	95.2	8.6
Valid samples	29			

FIGURE 5.1 OVERALL SCORE DISTRIBUTION**TABLE 5.2 LEVEL OF ACHIEVEMENT**

	Low achievers	Medium achievers		High achievers
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Range of scores	<75.8	75.8 – 86.9		>86.9
Number of participants	7	15		7

Simple Random Sampling: Simple random sampling is an approach in which each population member, and each member of the sample, has equal probability of being selected. This selection is quite straightforward. Each member would be randomly picked by the researcher.

Stratified Sampling: In simple random sampling, a random sample is taken from the sampling frame representing the population. Often, some information about the subgroups within the sample frame can be used to improve the efficiency of sampling. This selection method assumes that the members in the subgroups of the sample frame have homogeneous attitudes; there would be variations between members within one subgroup and another. In short, there would be more homogeneity within the group compared to between the groups. The accuracy of stratified sampling is increased if there are dissimilarities between groups, and similarities within the groups, with respect to the measure of interest.

Cluster Sampling: Cluster sampling, unlike stratified sampling, divides the population into clusters. Cluster sampling assumes that a cluster could represent the population. A random selection of clusters is selected and all members of that cluster are interviewed. Compared to stratified sampling, cluster sampling assumes homogeneity between clusters and heterogeneity within the cluster. It involves random selection of the clusters.

Systematic Sampling: This approach involves systematically spreading the sample through the list of population members. The starting point of the selection process could be randomly chosen. If the list of elements in the sampling frame is arranged in a random order, then the accuracy of systematic sampling may be equal to that of the simple random sampling. If the elements are arranged in monotonic or ascending/descending order, then the accuracy of systematic sampling would exceed that of the simple random sampling since the sample would be more representative of the population.

The selection method of this study was grounded on a **stratified sampling method**. The selection of potential participants for interview was based on the total scores calculated for each individual participant from the twenty-nine questionnaire participants. These scores were further divided into a range of scores – high, medium, and low – and a few participants from each group were randomly chosen to represent each level of achievement. The members within each level were assumed to be homogeneous since their achievement level from the questionnaire results were considered to be in the same range.

I made a second assumption within this stratified sampling process, namely that there were variations in terms of achievement level in response to the program objectives between each subgroup: high, medium, and low. In addition, I *randomly* chose the interviewees from each subgroup to represent the population of program participants; to be specific, three members of each subgroup were selected. The decision to choose three members was based on my judgment, alone. Since the program participants were from regions all over Thailand, three members from each subgroup represented an appropriate number when timing and resources were taken into account. I have highlighted the scores used for selection in Table 5.3. This selection corresponded to the students I intended to interview according to the stratified sampling method I chose for this study.

In summary, I utilised the results from the questionnaire as the selection frame of the representatives of program participants to be interviewed. I also chose a sampling method that provided the best representation of the program participants. Finally, I believed that this selection process would be vindicated in the differences that would emerge between comments made during the interviews. I expected that the representatives chosen would give a considerable range of qualitatively different insights into entrepreneurship development.

TABLE 5-3 INTERVIEWEES' SELECTION CRITERIA

Score	Frequency	Participant Range
57.8	1	Low-range participants
65.8	1	
67.6	1	
70.2	1	
71.8	1	
74.1	1	
75.1	1	
76.0	1	Medium-range participants
76.4	1	
76.6	1	
79.8	1	
79.9	1	
80.8	2	
80.9 (median)	1	
81.2	1	
81.3	1	
83.2	1	
83.5	1	
84.1	1	
84.5	1	
86.8	1	High-range participants
87.3	1	
88.0	1	
89.6	1	
91.1	2	
92.0	1	
95.2	1	
Total	29	

Introducing the Representatives

I had the chance to interview three representatives from each range-group based on the responses made on the end-of-program outcomes questionnaire. I did not, however, have the chance to interview the persons with the exact scores chosen. The participants with total scores of 71.8, 79.9, and 95.2 were

not available for interview, so I chose to interview the persons randomly with the consecutive scores within the range who had time available to talk to me. The interviewees selected were as follows (pseudonyms are used):

Interviewees with score in the high range:

- Those selected, whose ratings in response to each program objective were relatively high, were:
 1. Tayan
 2. Nuna
 3. Vit

Interviewees with score in the medium range:

- Those selected, whose ratings in response to each program objective were medium, were:
 1. Sind
 2. Paad
 3. Rean

Interviewees with score in the low range:

- Those selected, whose ratings in response to each program objective were relatively low, were:
 1. Suutai
 2. Tanta
 3. Tao

In the following section I offer a brief introduction to the representatives from each group selected by this interview process with regards to who they were, how I approached each of them, and the nature of the project they undertook during the course of the program. The representatives selected for the interview came from different geographic locations – a circumstance that gave me the chance to travel and make full use of this ‘interview journey’.

High range representatives

The high range representatives consisted of two boys and one girl: Tayan, Nuna, and Vit.

Tayan

I met Tayan at a coffee shop located in the Central Business District of Bangkok, which was very close to his school. He agreed to meet with me after school. Since the coffee shop he chose was a quiet shop, with not so many people around, this allowed us to talk freely and openly in an appropriate atmosphere. From the moment of meeting, Tayan seemed like a confident person who was not afraid to talk; I could also notice his outgoing style from the way he walked towards me and shook hands with me firmly.

For his education background, Tayan was an average student without a really outstanding academic record. He mentioned to me several times that he was pretty much bored with his studies. He told me that he became inspired to undertake the project 'Learn in Rap' under this program from the fact that he was not particularly strong in terms of academic study. His project would potentially make it easier for those like him to study more efficiently and to attain a better academic performance. More details on his business concept are explained in Chapter 1.

Nuna

Nuna lived in the northern part of Thailand; therefore, she felt it was most convenient for her if I would drive up north to conduct the interview at her house. So I did. I was greeted politely by Nuna upon my arrival. My first impression of her was that she was a rather conservative and shy person. Before the interview, Nuna had the chance to show me the business concept she undertook during the program. It was a hydroponic vegetable plantation and was a new and strange concept for me. I witnessed that the vegetables, rather than being in soil, grew without soil in small plastic containers

containing only water, with space for the roots to grow. I thought to myself, 'No wonder she told me that those vegetables were perfectly clean.'

Vit

I met Vit at a university on the outer ring-road of Bangkok, not far from his house. He walked in with a couple of friends before they left me alone with him. What I could sense from Vit was that he seemed to be a very energetic person both from the way he talked, and the way he moved his hands when he was trying to explain to me his thinking. He started talking proudly of his business concept during the program, the 'Coffee Man'. He mentioned that if he could have only continued carrying out his business after the program, it would have been very successful now because he had already seen people doing the same business well in an office building that he went to.

Medium range representatives

The medium range representatives consisted of three boys, namely Sind, Paad, and Rean.

Sind

I met Sind right after I met with Vit. I found out that they were in the same group when they were in the program; they had known each other prior to the program. Sind spoke highly of Vit as the idea initiator; it was Vit who had introduced him to the Coffee Man business concept and to the program. One thing that I noticed was that Sind was rather different from Vit both in terms of personality and the way they talked. Sind was more reserved and quiet in nature. From the way he dressed, I could tell that he was quite an artistic person, long hair, baggy jeans, loose T-shirt, carrying a distinctive one-of-a-kind bag. It came as no surprise when he told me he was on his way to becoming an architect.

Paad

Paad had the look of an academic from the first moment that I met him at a coffee shop next to his school in Bangkok. He agreed to see me after class. With his uniform and eyeglasses, I could tell that he was a serious student. He was very polite: he waited for me to be seated before he would sit. He seemed calm and kind throughout our conversation. Paad told me that he did this project, the maths tutor book, with his brother; however, his brother had not been able to participate as much as he had hoped since he was busy with entrance exams. This left Paad pretty much alone with the program. Even though he had had to work pretty much as an individual, Paad was not worried and said that he managed to work through the program the best way he could.

Rean

Rean was another very polite person. He lived in the northern part of Thailand, but in a different province from Nuna. I met him at home and he offered to treat me with the snacks and drinks he had prepared prior to my arrival. I could sense right away that he was a generous person. Rean was not very talkative. He was even a little nervous when he first met me, but I tried to talk about his everyday living and made him feel more relaxed before going into the interview.

Low range representatives

The low range representatives consisted of one girl and two boys, namely Tanta, Suutai, and Tao.

Tanta

Tanta lived in the very northern part of Thailand. She came to see me at the hotel I was staying during my visit. From the way she looked and dressed, I could tell that she came from quite a wealthy family. Tanta was quite talkative and participated actively throughout the conversation. She was a

presentable young women whom I thought was sociable and kind. She talked proudly of her business concept, ‘Sticky rice ready-to-eat’, and mentioned that it was awarded the ‘most presentable business concept’ at the conclusion of the program.

Suutai

Suutai was one of the most ambitious people I met during this research. He was very passionate when he talked about his business ideas. He was the type of person who had a lot of drive and energy. His ‘Deluxe Pork Snack’ project originated from his passion to add value to existing local products through differentiation. Throughout my conversation with him, I felt that he was a fighter by nature. We met at a coffee shop located within a shopping mall in the northern part of Thailand, a relaxed atmosphere where we could talk freely. Other than being passionate about what he did in life, Suutai also had good sense of humour.

Tao

I met Tao at a tutoring centre in Bangkok. I waited for him to finish his tutoring class. My first impression of Tao was that he was a very easy-going type of person. He talked softly at a relaxed pace. The more I talked to him, the more I was aware of his calmness and peacefulness. He mentioned that his ‘Mama Ramen’ project started from an idea of his team mate to promote an innovative approach to noodle sales at school. He pitched in to join the team without hesitation, thinking it would be a great experience for him.

In summary, from first sight, I could see that the interviewees selected obviously had many differences in terms of their characteristics. The way I approached them all was no different; however, the response I got from each of them varied. For instance, some were laid back; others were enthusiastic and humorous. Fortunately, all of them cooperated well with me

and for that I was grateful. It was truly an overwhelming experience to have met and talked to each of them.

Vignettes from the Interview

After the brief introduction to my interview respondents provided in the previous section, the narratives that follow – in the form of vignettes – display my extended experience with each of the respondents.

Prior to the vignettes, I discuss certain background issues in order to summarise the findings from the quantitative evaluation described in Chapter 4, as well as emphasising the areas in which I hoped to gain further insights. Next, the vignettes of each group of respondents are presented, in order, for the high, medium, and low range interviewees. This section then ends with a summary of all the vignettes to conclude the generic findings primarily observed in each of the three vignettes.

Background to the Interviews

I conducted the interviews in order to explore more fully the evidence collected via the questionnaires and to obtain deeper insights into the entrepreneurship development aspects of the program. Since this impact evaluation was objective-based, my aim for the interviews was to gather qualitative information and implications related to the program's objectives, namely, entrepreneurial thinking, entrepreneurial practice, 'can do' attitude, future direction, and learning by experience, as well as dealing with issues that emerged during the course of the interview. Before addressing the qualitative data gathered during this interview phase, let me first summarise the overall quantitative implications of the data gathered from the questionnaires in light of the program objectives.

Entrepreneurial thinking

From the findings in terms of program effectiveness based on the questionnaires, the entrepreneurial thinking of the participants had been significantly enhanced as a result of the program. The desire to be entrepreneurs had increased; the program had strongly influenced their thinking to be entrepreneurs; overall, all of their incipient entrepreneurial characteristics had been enhanced by the program. My expectation, however, was that the interviews would clarify two essential issues: whether they really wanted to be entrepreneurs or not; how the program had influenced their entrepreneurial thinking.

Entrepreneurial practice

The results from the questionnaire suggested that their business implementation abilities had increased. All the interviewees had been through the program workshops, where they learned the steps of doing business; some had had the chance to operate their business as a real practice. Questions still existed, however, on how the program had helped them in implementing a real business. Their opinions about the program workshops would also help in evaluating if the program had successfully equipped them with the business implementation skills. Interviews helped me to gain access to the undiscovered facts and opinions as well as to support the discoveries of questionnaires regarding the program enhancement for entrepreneurial practice.

'Can do' attitude

The overall picture that I had drawn from the quantitative data was that the program participants had an increased level of confidence that they could be future successful entrepreneurs after they had been through the program. They also had increased their ability to cope with business failure and showed preparedness to start over again after such failure. The interviews

helped me to investigate these areas, more fully exploring if they really believed that they would and could do business on their own behalf.

Future direction

According to the questionnaires, the program had influenced the participants in their career choices; in particular, they had strengthened their intention to be business owners after completion of the program. The interview enabled me to examine further what they intended to do after the program; to find what direction they had in terms of their future career; to help me determine how the program had influenced their future study and career plans, and how significant the program had been in helping them to realise what they wanted to be doing in the future.

Learning by experience

The quantitative data led me to conclude that learning by experience helped to create entrepreneurs; that it increased the confidence of participants; that it could better deliver entrepreneurial knowledge; that the participants preferred it over formal classroom learning. The interviews enabled me to investigate if they really liked this way of learning, the effectiveness of the program in illustrating to them this method of learning, and how their thinking about learning by experience had been influenced by the program.

The interview process of this research was not designed to support or contradict the quantitative implications but rather to allow me to extend from the quantitative implications by gathering additional insights and explanations of program effectiveness in relation to the emerging themes raised during the interviews. As identified in Chapter 3, the Evaluation Design, these interviews were semi structured and proceeded very much like a normal conversation, except that they were focused on the context of the program by means of a set of pre-determined questions that were used consistently with each interviewee. The somewhat looser structure of the interview allowed for the open sharing of opinions by the interviewees since

there was no specific order in which the topics had to be covered. Some questions were able to be skipped over for some interviewees, depending on the preceding conversation.

During the course of the interview process, I kept in mind some of the interpersonal tasks necessary. According to Downs et al. (1980), these tasks included establishing rapport or a productive climate for the interview with the respondents, listening analytically, probing for additional information, motivating respondents, and maintaining control of the interview. To establish rapport, I tried to create a comfortable atmosphere by maintaining a relaxed and friendly manner. There were no disapproving or shocked responses from me as the interviewer to whatever the interviewees said. To ease out the expected anxiety of the interviewees, I responded with sympathy and support when appropriate. To identify incomplete or inadequate responses to questions, I tried to listen analytically. I paid close attention to what each interviewee said and was prepared to mentally link the information from different parts of the interview to identify inadequate responses or clarify certain responses on the topics of research interest with the interviewees. I also probed for additional information, in some cases requesting further elaboration and clarification. Sometimes, I kept silent, conveying the message that more was expected. I also used conversational phrases that indicated my attention, such as 'I see' and 'Uh huh', to motivate the interviewees to talk more and to let them know that I was paying attention to what they were saying or trying to say. I did not, however, intend to impose any of my own judgments or evaluations during this time. I tried to be interpersonally neutral when interacting with the interviewees in order to eliminate bias and to gain the most benefit from these interviews.

I decided to display the information gained from the interview, in the form of vignettes derived from 'snapshots' of responses from each interviewee under the topics related to each program objective. Vignettes, from the researcher's point of view, basically involve storytelling in order to make a point; they are filled with details that are carefully selected to explain,

support, or illustrate the story with facts. I drew together the relevant facts and quotations from the interview that related to each program objective, followed by a synthesis of findings, for the three groups of participants being interviewed: the high, medium, and low range participants, selection of whom is described in the earlier part of this chapter. The emerging themes from the interviews were also captured to aid in the formulation of findings from this research. Detailed information on narrative and qualitative data display techniques were discussed in Chapter 3, the Evaluation Design.

First narrative: High range interviewee vignettes

The scores of interviewees in the high range were relatively higher than other participants; according to the scoring of questionnaires, they had been accounted as having achieved the program objectives better than the others (see Table 5.2, above). The scores of the three representatives selected as representing the high range are shown in Table 5.4.

The high range group consisted of three kinds of persons – ambitious, conservative, and active; they also came from different family and financial background. The *ambitious* Tayan was from a family of public servants and was expected to be the same. The *active* Vit was raised in a family of long-time entrepreneurs and was designated to take over the construction business in the future. The *conservative* Nuna was also from a family of entrepreneurs yet they were just starting out in a gas station business. Despite their diverse background, they did share one common matter in life: *high expectations*. The expectations presented themselves in different forms and were responded to differently; however, all of them were mainly derived from their parents and teachers. Tayan was expected by his parents and teachers to enter a traditional and secure government position; instead he did the opposite:

TABLE 5.4 THREE REPRESENTATIVES FROM THE HIGH RANGE AND THEIR SCORES

High range	Entrepreneurial thinking (35)	Entrepreneurial practice (35)	'Can do' attitude (10)	Future direction (10)	Learning by experience (10)	Total Score (100)
Tayan	33.3	30.0	9.0	10	8.9	91.1
Nuna	31.8	34.1	6.7	10	8.5	91.1
Vit	32.8	31.8	6.4	10	8.5	89.6

Parents pressured me not to do business and better get a secure job working for the government. With that, I'm even more eager to even try to do more on business. Teachers also pressured me to read textbooks but I wanted to read business books instead. I started doing business since high school and have kept practicing. Money is my motivation!

Instead of being pressured by his parents to be far away from business and by his teachers to study, Tayan was able to shift such pressure to provide him with a motivation towards business. He is opposed to the security in life that his parents have suggested. I would not consider him to be a rebellious teenager; he clearly emphasised to me his belief that the way to make lots of money was through business and he simply wanted to be a rich man.

From a wealthy background, Vit was pressured in a different way. Even though he was expected to carry on with the family business, his parents still questioned his maturity and seriousness towards business:

My parents did not believe me in doing things seriously since I'm always full of ideas but never had the chance to really implement them. I wanted to prove that on my own, my business idea could be done and put into reality.

Vit was able to shift the pressure of his parents' lack of belief in him to provide him with the motivation to prove his business capabilities; he, like Tayan, was able to convert pressure into a similar type of motivational drive. They were convincing examples that certain 'pressure' could 'motivate'.

There are different consequences of pressure. One may try to react to it independently while others may just accept it the way it is. For instance, Nuna was expected by her parents to quit school and she modestly had agreed to do so:

I quit high school and did not study anymore because my parents wanted me to better help out with the family business, the gas station.

Unlike other Thai parents, especially Tayan's and Vit's, Nuna's parents were not constrained by the educational importance of having their children graduate with a degree. They expected Nuna to get involved with the family business right away. Tayan, on the other hand, while opposed to the expectation of becoming a public servant, had agreed to do something for his parents:

I did not do business full time now because I have to graduate with a degree first because it is the duty of a son to live up to what my parents have expected of me. However, I decided to study and work at the same time. I may start my own business now from something small and from my core competencies, first with food processing since I'm majoring in Industrial Agriculture.

Getting an educational degree to satisfy his parents had prevented Tayan from stepping fully into business right away. Nevertheless, he had found the way to achieve a balance: doing business as a part-time activity and basing these on activities suggested by the subjects that he had studied. Like Tayan, Vit had decided to graduate with a degree first before getting to business. However, as a compromise, he had chosen to study in a field that is applicable to business:

I chose to study Industrial Engineering since that is mixed with a lot of subjects regarding management and business. I think I can find ways to apply everything I learn usefully in my business.

At this point, I noticed the issues of educational expectation and different levels of compromise. To live up to their parental expectation, one – Tayan –

had decided to practice business in his own free time other than his studies; the other – Vit – had chosen to incorporate business into his study and vice versa. So, is this educational expectation from parents slowing down the process of becoming entrepreneurs or is it actually securing the risk of business by having to obtain a status or guarantee in life first? If this question were to be put to Tayan, he would probably say ‘Yes’. Even though he had had to study, he could always find time for business; perhaps he could do much more if he had all the time he needed:

Talking about my business in high school, I used to borrow money from a teacher and opened a computer shop near school but business did not work out since I’ve got no time and I have to study. Anyway, my customer base from the shop still remained and I still do it on a case by case basis for them. I didn’t give up on business because to fail when I’m young is good. I still have my parents to support me.

Tayan claimed that the time he had to spend with education was partly responsible for his business failure. Even so, he had not given up and had exhibited ‘can do’ ability through his resistance to failure and his drive to carry on. Unlike Tayan, Vit and Nuna did not have previous business experience; they thought differently about getting business experience:

Vit: If I have enough time, I will start a business. If I fail, I will definitely try again.

Nuna: I do not know really what business to do yet, maybe I could do business about plants but I am not sure. I needed guidance.

Vit would start a business when he had time, while Nuna was still hesitant about starting a business by herself. The argument that parental expectations might be slowing down the process of entrepreneurship is subjective and these expectations varied from person to person. While applicable to Tayan, this argument would not be applicable to others who were not rushing into business by themselves in the first place.

Despite the differences in their business background, Tayan, Vit, and Nuna experienced a similar business training opportunity when they joined the entrepreneurial incubation program. Each of them had found out about the program in quite different ways. Tayan read about it from the 'Make Money' magazine; Nuna was recommended to join the program by her homeroom teacher; Vit saw the advertisement on a school noticeboard. Tayan and Vit were attracted to the program on the basis of their previous interest in business and decided immediately to join. In addition, Tayan was already very eager to be an entrepreneur prior to commencing the program; his intentions were not changed after the program:

My strong interest in business started a long time already. I always read and study about it. After the program, my attitude about wanting to be entrepreneur has not changed much but I am filled with more confidence. The program has made me more thorough, focused, and precise in what I have to do to get there.

The program just gave him more confidence and detailed direction. Like Tayan, Vit is a very active person who has always been learning about business. He was always learning new things at his family business. He volunteered to be an employee in his parent's company because he wanted to learn every aspect of the family business in order that, one day, he could be an employer and take over. He is a young man full of ideas. The program had made him more mature and thinking more systematically about business:

I learned about business all the time at home. From the program, I learned about the specific business thinking and procedures. Before, I just had the overall concept. Now, I had more detailed knowledge about business. I know knew the ways on how to make dream into reality.

With a significant background in business, Vit and Tayan had become more confident and more aware of business procedures. On the other hand, Nuna who, despite being in charge of accounting for the family business, had not been familiar with any other aspect of business. She found that the program made a significant difference for her:

I have no idea and not much interest in business before. But after the program, I thought that business could actually be done. I really learned a lot about business from the program.

Business background played an important role in determining the entrepreneur program influence on participants. It influenced the different levels of development of entrepreneurship as a result of the program. In this case, the program added onto Tayan and Vit's business knowledge; for Nuna, it built up such knowledge from scratch. This uneven background corresponded with Vit's recommendation for the program:

The program should warm up participants with some business knowledge before writing the business plan for submission to be selected as program participants as well. That way, all the participants have the same ground business knowledge.

Since the program participants came from different business backgrounds, it would only be fair to level them out at the starting point with a warm-up period before joining the program, for they could learn together cooperatively in the program; however, this did not mean that the development of entrepreneurship would be the same. For instance, Tayan's considerable business background took years to accumulate and could not possibly have been delivered during a warm-up period.

Business knowledge delivery after entering the program took place in the program workshop. The workshop, as part of the program, was designed to facilitate the business implementation and its procedures to the program participants. For Tayan, the workshop equipped him with more extensive business techniques and work procedures:

The workshop has helped me learn a lot about business procedures and implementation techniques. My Learn in Rap project that converted textbook content into rap songs has been better since the program workshop, especially on the derivation of work procedures.

Yet, he did get something else out of the program workshop – future business partner prospects:

Going to the workshop gives me the chance to know a lot of friends with the same ambition as mine. We could be business partners in the future.

The program workshop unexpectedly opened up new opportunities for Tayan; it also delivered a propelling push for Nuna as she not only learned aspects of business that she had never experienced before, but she also discovered specifics that she both liked and disliked:

I learned a lot from the workshop. I learned to analyse strength/weakness of the project, pricing, and etc. that I never knew about them before. I also liked the guest speaker in the workshop, a very smart lady, telling story from real experience. I wanted to be like her. But, a lot of subjects were repeated all over again in the workshop.

Other than the delivery of business knowledge, the workshop also had other positive advantages. First, it provided a meeting place for potential business partners. Second, the guest speakers at the workshop served as role models for motivating young Thais to become entrepreneurs. Stories from real business experience conveyed and enlightened them to the fact that business was in fact a practical thing to do, and there were examples of people who had done it before. Role models stimulated the drive to be entrepreneurs.

Aside from its advantages, Nuna had a recommendation for future program workshop improvement: some content of the workshop seemed redundant. The program organisers must pay more attention to the overlapping subjects of the workshop.

The coaches, who facilitated the participants' learning in the workshop, were also available for consultancy after the workshop. Tayan and Nuna mostly consulted with their project advisors at school. They both made mention of the time constraints on seeing the coach:

Nuna: I was closer to my project advisor. I also consulted with the program coach but not as much. I talk to her over the phone.

Tayan: I mostly consult my project advisor at school. I had little time to see the program coach, only at time of work follow-up.

I was interested in determining if, in the future, coaches needed to spend more time with participants. For this program, the participants did not get as much time as they needed with their coaches. They tended to turn to the person who was close and readily available to them. Tayan added his suggestion for the program: that closer attention should be paid to the projects:

I think the program should follow up on the work more after the program ends. Work should be taken into accreditation for inspiration for the next program generation.

If current projects were used as examples for other young Thais, they might serve as the inspiration to get them to join and participate in the next entrepreneurial programs. Program participants from a previous batch could be the role models for the next batch just as the guest speaker in the program workshop could do to the participant.

After the program workshop, the participants had the chance to really implement their business and action plans. Vit did not have the chance to go through with this process because he was occupied with his exams. Tayan, who had the chance to really sell his products in the program, was not fully convinced that his project really could be his potential life-long business:

Now after the program, I don't continue with the Learn in Rap project I started in the program because I don't think that my product was good enough yet. I might bring up this project again but I should make it into easy songs before going to rap music because the market would respond to that better.

The program provided a pilot testing process for his products. This led him to realise the business flaws that existed, and ways to correct them. On the other hand, the real business implementation introduced Nuna to the practicality of business:

I did not get much profit. My product has to be sold cheaper than others or the market won't buy. I could only produce them in small quantities, so it was not worthwhile to continue.

Nuna experienced the difficulties of business implementation, as did Tayan who commented that

My business in the program may not be very successful, but it could serve as the driver and at least shows that we have the courage to start.

The program gave a preview of what real business is like. Not all elements turn out as planned. Nevertheless, it is up to the participants themselves as to how they would interpret and deal with their unsuccessful businesses. Some may not want to continue anymore; while others may cherish it as a precious lesson for further practice.

Despite the different influences and consequences that real implementation had on them, learning by real practice was favoured by all. Nuna had not experienced this before, while Tayan and Vit already had favourable experiences before commencing the program:

Nuna: I never knew this way of learning before, but I really like it. I like the real implementation part. I got to know more from real practice.

Tayan: I believed strongly in practice and implementation. For instance, how could a person who studied about football be better than those who have played for 8 years in the field? Real implementation is the best way to learn.

Vit: I did not like studying in classroom. I like to learn in the real world better.

All of them expressed their appreciation of learning by real practice. One thought it was the best way to learn; another thought it was better than the formal education way of sitting and listening to lectures; the third had just learned this way for the first time and found herself liking it. This was considered as a dominant strong-point of the program.

In summary, the program had influenced the three of them in different ways with respect to the different kinds of expectations being put on them and their unequal business backgrounds. The interesting point was how each of their responses corresponded to those expectations and how their unequal business backgrounds had resulted in diverse levels of entrepreneurship development within the program. The extent to which the program could develop entrepreneurship on the participants was subjected to various kinds of other factors aside from the program itself; nevertheless, there were unanticipated issues in the program that had led to attracting or creating a drive towards business, for instance, the use of role models. Of course, there were likes and dislikes of different aspects of the program. All of these served as a precious resources for the program organisers.

Second narrative: Medium range interviewee vignettes

The people in this group had performed moderately compared to other program participants in accordance to their questionnaires' scoring (see Table 5.2, above). This group comprised Sind, Paad, and Rean; their scores are contained in Table 5.5. Each made me realise other aspects of the impact of program towards the participants, aside from its direct encouragement towards entrepreneurship.

The medium scorers all came from families of non-entrepreneurs; they came from a variety of academic backgrounds. Paad and Rean were studious and top students of their classes, pursuing their studies in medical science and engineering, respectively. Sind, laid-back and conservative, was studying to become an architect. The reasons for their career choices, interestingly, were very different. Paad was substantially influenced by his father:

My career choice has always been a doctor for my father and an entrepreneur for myself. But, I have to study medical science and finish that degree for my father first. Maybe I could start my own clinic: that way I could be both.

TABLE 5.5 THREE REPRESENTATIVES FROM THE MEDIUM RANGE AND THEIR SCORES

Medium range	Entrepreneurial thinking (35)	Entrepreneurial practice (35)	'Can do' attitude (10)	Future direction (10)	Learning by experience (10)	Total Score (100)
Sind	27	29.6	5.6	10	8.8	80.9
Paad	23.2	29.8	8.7	10	9.8	81.3
Rean	26.3	26.2	6.6	9.5	8.0	76.6

This is another case where parental expectation played an important role in a youngster's decision. Paad was expected not only to obtain a degree but specifically a degree in medical science. Nevertheless, he had planned a compromise path of not letting his father down while trying to ensure that his career choice as an entrepreneur remains possible. This is an example of both 'pressure' and 'compromise'.

Rean provided another example of compromise in order to please his parents and to satisfy his own goals:

I'm going to study in engineering. I also plan to do a masters degree to make my parents proud. Actually, I could study anything and still be an entrepreneur if I study with objectives to become entrepreneur. Things I study could be integrated towards entrepreneurship.

Rean intended to finish a masters degree to satisfy his parents; however, he chose to study engineering by himself. Significantly, Rean believed that business and the field of education were not highly correlated; he was satisfied, however, that he could incorporate whatever he studied into business.

So I wonder, is direct formal education in business compulsory for entrepreneurship development? If not, what kind of business learning is significant for entrepreneurship? This study may not be able to pinpoint directly the significance of formal education in business; however, it is able to indicate, to a certain extent, how the business incubation program under

this study was significant in entrepreneurship development. For instance, Paad, Rean, and Sind had changed their perception of business as a result of the program:

Rean: After this program, I realised that doing business is harder than I thought.

Paad: I learnt that doing business takes more than what I expected. It could not be done immediately. There were steps to follow, which were more complicated than expected.

Sind: I used to think that starting and doing own business is easy, actually it was a lot harder than expected. Going through the program has made me realise that there are a lot of things about business that I have never knew before.

All three claimed that business was in fact not as easy as it seemed and required more than they had first expected. One thought it was hard; another thought it took more than expected; the third found himself exposed to issues he had never previously come across. Ultimately, the program had made each realise what doing business is like in the real practical environment. This program found its significance in reinforcing the ‘reality of business’ as compared to their previous perceptions of what business entails.

The next interesting point is the extent to which the program had affected the participants in their orientation towards entrepreneurship once they realised the reality of business. Two simple alternatives would be either ‘in’ or ‘out’. Rean will persist in doing business in the future despite its evident difficulties:

Previously, I was very eager to own a business. Even after this program, I have not given up yet but I have to be more thorough and have to have some more experience first. I think that I am capable of doing business, but small at first. I have already learned how work is to be done.

While being a business owner is still the path that Rean wants to pursue, he realised that he needs more experience. The program had shown him that he was not yet ready to become an entrepreneur.

In contrast to Rean, Sind discovered more about himself through the program, realizing that he did not want to become an entrepreneur and that he would rather do something else:

I am afraid to start a business. It is no longer as easy as I used to think it would be. There were more problems than expected. To be successful in business, one must really know what he was doing. He must not go beyond his own capability. I wanted to be an employee after graduation. I wanted to be an architect.

The program had made him realise that business was not what he wanted to do anymore. He chose to exit from entrepreneurship!

Two contrasting impacts that the program made on its participants emerge from the discussions with this group. One is the ‘readiness’ of the participants for entrepreneurship after being exposed to the ‘reality of business’: the program had triggered them to think if they were ready for, and capable of undertaking business. The other was the ‘self-realisation’ of participants that business might not be for them: the program had made them realise that their future would not be that of an entrepreneur. This may be opposed to the program’s intention to explicitly encourage participants towards entrepreneurship; however, it could be seen as a ‘conscious’ way of encouragement by enabling program participants to understand more about the reality of business, to let them know if it was right for them, and if they really wanted to go further down the business path.

The workshop offered more than just making the decision to engage in, or to swing away from entrepreneurship. Sind, commenting on the various business concepts and business procedures encountered in the workshop, suggested that he was discouraged by some aspects of the workshop’s structure:

I see the business concepts that other teams have come up with. It was very good to see the ideas I've never come across before. Before entering the workshop, my thinking process was not in steps. After the workshop, I got to know the business procedures and that I have to consider a whole lot more factors. I have to be very thorough. But, the content being taught was too brief and advanced for me. I got confused.

The workshop did broaden his business perspective and encouraged him to think systematically; however, he pinpointed the negative aspect of the condensed nature of the workshop and its advanced teaching. Paad also learned of the specific business knowledge and planning but was disappointed at the lack of coaching opportunities within the workshop:

At the workshop, I learned how to do the action plan which helped detailed the project plan. I got to have more knowledge on target group, accounting, and investment planning. But, I did not have a coach to help me.

The program failed to equip Paad with a coach. This failure should really capture the attention of the program organisers. Since other team members were not available at times of the workshop, Paad was the only representative from his group; he went to the workshop alone, and a coach was not assigned to help him. No matter what was the reason for this failure, the program organisers should, in future programs, pay attention to the availability of coaching for every team, despite its size.

In spite of this structural failure, Paad, as a result of the business planning and implementation processes taught in the workshop, realised the importance of following his own instincts when it comes to reality:

I learned from the workshop that there were steps to follow to do business. But, I would not follow exactly all the business procedures I have learned from the program. I would rely on my own judgment and take short cuts sometimes.

There is nothing wrong with this decision. Paad is the type of person who would like to try his way first instead of merely following what he was taught

to do. This suggests that while the workshop equipped the participants with business procedures and other specific knowledge, it was still sufficiently open-ended to encourage individuals to choose what aspects of their learnings to apply, when and where they thought was appropriate.

Unlike the other two medium scorers, Rean did not have any problems with the program workshop, either in its coaching or its content. Significantly, there was one distinct topic from the workshop – marketing – that really interested him:

I learnt a lot on the techniques on marketing and how to penetrate the market as well as the knowledge to improve the product itself. I liked to learn with the coach. I was very close with him, even closer than my project advisor. But, I would prefer more knowledge to be delivered specifically on sales and marketing. Also, I would like the program to increase the funding amount to enhance the flexibility of carrying out the project.

Rean displayed a great interest in marketing and indicated that he would like to learn more about it. He raised an interesting point, which might be beneficial for the program organisers to consider: Is the funding amount of this program sufficient, or could it be increased to expand the flexibility and creativity of the participants' business concepts?

After the workshop, the next phase was business implementation. Paad and Rean were impressed with this real business implementation experience:

Paad: I was the youngest in the team, but I took the role of the team leader for the first time when carrying out the project, since other members are occupied with exams. I was responsible for everything. At last, I sold my products, the maths books, at school. I got a lot of profit; sales were successful.

Rean: I'm impressed with the real sales of our products. A lot of profit was gained.

Both of them were excited by their business success, particularly as each had made a considerable profit in their enterprise. In addition, Paad also had the opportunity to take on a new leadership role during the implementation, a position involving considerable responsibility. He gained significant inspiration from these experiences:

I got more desire to do business partly from the success and the real business experience part of this program!

Together, according to Paad, profit and the real business experience of the program appeared to have served as a significant motivational drive towards entrepreneurship. This suggests that a certain level of real business success inspired participants towards entrepreneurship.

For these medium scoring participants, the program reinforced the reality of business procedures and practice, and how these are actually planned and carried out. As a consequence, one of them decided to exit from entrepreneurship after being exposed to the business reality of the program. The other two have chosen a compromise path of entrepreneurship while continuing courses that enable them to cope with parental expectations. The relevant issue drawn from this section of the case study is the impact of the program on their 'perception' of business. Business is not seen to be as simple as they had previously thought; that realisation had triggered them to question if they are capable of real business practice. The motivational drive towards entrepreneurship that the participants experienced by actually achieving profits was an unanticipated outcome of the program. Three structural deficiencies in the program that were identified offer valuable advice for future program organisers: the difficulty of some of the workshop content; the accelerated nature of the teaching; the importance of all groups, no matter how small, of having access to coaches.

Third narrative: Low range interviewee vignettes

This group had, in terms of the questionnaire results, relatively lower performance than the other two groups (see Table 5.6). I found them, however, to be equally illuminating in terms of outcomes of the interviews.

TABLE 5.6 THREE REPRESENTATIVES FROM THE LOW RANGE AND THEIR SCORES

Low range	Entrepreneurial thinking (35)	Entrepreneurial practice (35)	'Can do' attitude (10)	Future direction (10)	Learning by experience (10)	Total Score (100)
Suutai	24.6	25.7	5	4	8.4	67.6
Tanta	22.7	24.9	5.4	8.5	8.6	70.2
Tao	18.7	17.9	5.9	7.5	7.8	57.8

Suutai, Tanta, and Tao, the group of 'low scorers', were from diverse family backgrounds. Suutai's parents owned a small restaurant. He did not come from a wealthy family; he grew up trying hard to become successful in life. On the other hand, Tanta was raised in the family of successful entrepreneurs. Her father owned a construction business. According to Tanta, her father is a man with great vision and business abilities. Tao, a quiet and conservative person, came from a family of non-entrepreneurs. He is a self-contented type of person who does not expect too much from life.

Of the three low scorers, Suutai was the only one who was expected by his mother to both graduate with a degree and to be successful in life:

My mother is very supportive. After all, I know that she expects to see me succeed some day. Actually, it's because of her that I'm studying. I would only get a degree to live up to my mother's expectation of me. For me, I don't care about graduating. I don't think it's a necessary step in order for me to have my own business one day.

Suutai did not believe highly in education; nevertheless, he could not resist what his mother had expected of him. This is another case of parental

expectation influencing a child's education. Suutai did not see an educational degree as a compulsory step to becoming a business owner. Completion of the entrepreneurial incubation program had made him realise that a business path requires rather more than he had originally expected:

Previously, I was very eager to own a business. But after this program, I realise that doing business is a lot harder than I thought. It made me realise that I only had a little knowledge of business compare to what it takes. I have not given up but have to be more thorough. I need to obtain more experience first.

The program had prompted him to reconsider his readiness for entrepreneurship. Obviously, he realised that business is harder than he expected it to be and that he needed to gather more business experience.

Like Suutai, Tanta and Tao also shared similar perceptions about the difficulty of business following completion of the program:

Tanta: One must have enough knowledge first before getting to business real practice. One must really know what he's doing.

Tao: Business is not easy. I first thought that doing business is nothing, but it is not that easy. One has to be thorough.

All three agreed that business takes a lot more than they had previously perceived it would. This suggests that the program had succeeded in introducing 'the reality of business' to these low scorers and had prompted them to think more carefully about their capability of succeeding in entrepreneurship. For instance, Tanta, realising that she had constraining capabilities, made the decision not to become an entrepreneur:

The program has confirmed for me that business is a high risk, high return situation. I'm too afraid to do things with risks. I do not have enough potential. I am going to be a doctor. It is a secure job. I prefer a job with higher security, and becoming a doctor gives me just that.

Tanta needed security in her life. The program had exposed her to ‘risks’ of entrepreneurship which, in turn, led her to exit the field. She clearly did not believe in her business potential to conquer such risks. Her disbelief might have resulted from her father’s success:

Even though my father is a very successful entrepreneur, I never ever pay much interest in his business. I clearly did not have a vision and courage like he does. It is impossible to be like him.

Tanta was highly influenced by her father’s success. She thought very highly of him and had expressed the fear that she would never be able to match up to his expectations. This turned out to be an interesting yet contrasting case. Instead of being encouraged by a strong family background in entrepreneurship, young people can be driven away from the field because of the high benchmark that is set by other members of their family. It is an example of an inverse relationship between ‘background’ and ‘business capabilities’.

Like Tanta, Tao also chose to exit entrepreneurship. The program made him realise that he did not want to be an entrepreneur; it confirmed for him that he should follow his original intentions:

This program has made me realise that I do not want to be an entrepreneur. I never was a leader before and I never plan on being one. I did not like to do planning or be in control of too many things at the same time like when doing a business. I want to be a specialist rather than doing broad work like entrepreneur. I may enter the fields of pharmacy or entertainment.

Tao was not used to ‘leadership’ and ‘control’; certainly, he was not ready to take the leadership role demanded by entrepreneurship. He liked to focus on one thing at a time rather than integrating different aspects all at once. His was a case of the roles and responsibilities of entrepreneurship scaring off a respondent. While the program had failed to encourage him to be a future entrepreneur, it was significant in helping him realise what he liked to do and what he was good at. In terms of career selection, this program had closed

one window of opportunity while giving him the chance to look through other windows that were still open and that were likely to provide a better 'fit' for him.

Unlike Tao and Tanta who wanted to exit entrepreneurship, Suutai was determined to become an entrepreneur despite the difficulties that might present:

The factor for business success is to be able to rely on myself. Failure can be taken as a teacher to help make sure the next work will be more perfect. Even though business is harder than I thought, I still would like to be successful in owning a farm one day. I could start from being an employee at a farm to gain experience for some years and will then find funding and operate my own farm. I would like to learn from the source.

Suutai exhibited a 'can do' ability through his resistance to failure and drive to carry on even though he would have to become an employee first. As well as being driven by the desire to succeed, Suutai was also a strong self-believer, as well as having faith in 'learning by experience'. He indirectly illustrated such belief when he was assigned a coach in the program workshop:

It was good to have a coach, someone with experience to guide me. But, I did not plan to follow exactly.

Suutai is the type of person who would work out things his own way first, instead of directly following what he was instructed to do. When asked to make recommendations about the program, Suutai indicated he was not satisfied with the coaching within the program:

The coach was too bossy. She did not suggest; she ordered sometimes. Also, the workshop period should be extended, not to be so tight with its contents. It was too stressful for me.

His comment regarding the tiring workshop timeframe and content corresponded with a similar comment made by Tanta:

The workshop was quite stressful and I was not given enough time, while I also have to be creative about the business planning.

In addition to the rigid workshop timeframe, Tanta raised the compelling topic of teaching creativity. Could creativity in business be built within a relatively short period of time?

Even though Suutai was not content with the coaching aspect of the workshop, he did emphasise that the workshop itself had helped him significantly:

The workshop was packed with a lot of subjects and knowledge. I used to think doing business was easy but now I have to think thoroughly first, as it requires a lot of planning and analysis. My project plan changed significantly after the workshop.

The workshop equipped him with the tools to start a business. It also played an important role in pointing out to Suutai that business is in fact tougher than he thought it was. This also was relevant in the case of Tanta and Tao. The program workshop made them realise that there were improvement possibilities that could be applied to their project plans:

Tao: Our project plan changed after the workshop in terms of sales, location, finance, etc. I learn different techniques that could be used in business. In selling the products, I got to know more when there were problems to be fixed.

Tanta: In the workshop, I had to analyse many things, strength, weakness, and new marketing channels; I have also become aware that if this project is to be put in real implementation, it would require significant amount of investment to export the product. High risk incurs high return; considering the risks involved in our project, we decided not to implement it.

Tao's project had been enhanced by the program workshop; this had led him to a real implementation. By comparison, Tanta came to the conclusion that her project was not worthy of further investment of time and money. In her case, I wondered if she were to initiate a project that had more potential for

success, would she be motivated to become business owner? Tanta admitted that even if a business was likely to be successful, she still needed a certain level of security in her life before embarking upon it:

To have a business, one must have vision and differentiated mind first. Without those, I fear that business would not work out. Even if I did really start a business, I would still need a team to help me. I couldn't do it on my own. I plan to become a doctor for a few years to become stable first in terms of my career. Later on, I might become an entrepreneur by owning a clinic.

Even though she had the potential to come up with a great business opportunity, Tanta insisted that she needed some stability to hang onto, either in terms of a secure career or by having a team around her to give her advice. She did not have the 'can do' ability to initiate and carry out a business on her own. The obstacle that prevented entrepreneurship in this case appeared to be the fear of business failure.

Unlike Tanta, Tao had the chance to really implement his business plan in the program. He was impressed with the sales and profit he had obtained:

The sales were a big success. There were a lot of customers. We got a lot of profit. Even so, I don't enjoy it that much. There were too many things to take care of. I rather be heading for a stable career that is not too challenging for me.

Profit from sales, however, was insufficient motivation for Tao. He still insisted in pursuing a career with a greater level of security.

Two of the low scorers decided to exit entrepreneurship. One did not believe in her business capabilities while the other realised that he was better disposed to do something else. Two interesting aspects arise from the low scorers' case study. The first is that the high benchmark set by family members might act as a disincentive to young people to become future entrepreneur because they do not believe in, or realise that there are flaws in

their business capabilities. The second is concerned with the issues of ‘leadership’ and ‘control’ which appeared to de-motivate participants who found themselves less able to handle a number of tasks at once; this led them to pursue a career path with more security and stability. A number of them clearly expressed the fear of business failure as an important obstacle towards entrepreneurship.

Despite their discouragement in business, the program introduced the three low scorers to the reality of business and the risks that come with it. Even though two of them might have felt discouraged by the program, one of them, with a clearer picture of business in mind, insisted on continuing to pursue the goal of being a future entrepreneur. Finally, their recommendations to the program organisers were consistent with the respondents in the two previous case studies: the stressful nature of the workshop content, its limited timeframe, and the inappropriateness of the coaching style.

Summary of vignettes

Regardless of the group to which interviewees were assigned – high, medium, or low – I found that there were significant diversities both among and between the groups of interviewees. Differences in background, attitudes, and objectives in life had brought about different responses from each of them on different occasions. Such difference required further analysis on how themes emerged were connected with one another. Some of themes from the three vignettes, e.g., background, parental expectation, and previous business experience are deserving of further study, but lie beyond the scope of this research. Ultimately, there were enough instances in the vignettes to believe that these themes played significant roles in encouraging the participants to become future entrepreneurs and that these need to be taken into account when evaluating the program’s effectiveness.

In terms of the program itself, some implications are able to be drawn regarding the effectiveness of program delivery. The issues mentioned by the interviewees about the program included the program workshop content, the availability of program resources, the program's inspirational factors, and the program's display of business practice. I am convinced that all of these issues impact on the evaluation of the program's effectiveness in terms of the process of the program, implications on its strengths and weaknesses, its opportunities for future program improvement, and its contribution to entrepreneurship development.

Conclusion

The main purpose of this chapter was to outline the steps of the process I took in choosing my interview respondents as well as to display the narratives, in the form of three vignettes, from my experience with them. Many themes emerged from the interview that allowed me to gain not only the insightful information regarding the program's role in entrepreneurship encouragement but also the better understanding of their desire to become entrepreneurs and the factors that supported or hindered their entrepreneurship development. The findings from the narratives could be well utilised to specifically analyse the facts and perceptions from the participants to ultimately evaluate the program impacts and the resulting development in entrepreneur, to be discussed in the following chapter.

CHAPTER 6

Can Entrepreneurship be Taught? Implications from the Impact Evaluation of the Program

Introduction

This research, though primarily aimed at evaluating the program impacts on the encouragement of entrepreneurship among young Thais with its primary audience as the program organisers, cannot neglect the contribution of attributes other than the program in entrepreneurship development. There is an ongoing debate on whether entrepreneurs are born or made and whether entrepreneurs can be taught or trained (Henry et al., 2005). Shane (2003) has described entrepreneurship in terms of the psychological and non-psychological attributes of an individual that have drawn them towards exploring a business opportunity in the first place. Regardless of the significance of entrepreneurial personality, Drucker (2004) believes that anybody can learn to be an entrepreneur. So, despite the controversy of entrepreneurship creation, the extent to which the program can act as a catalyst and the program's contributive role towards entrepreneurship is to be explored in this chapter.

The concept of entrepreneurship presented by this program can be considered as an 'innovation', an idea or practice that is perceived as new by an individual. Rogers (1995) indicates that such newness need not just involve new knowledge but also the idea that one may have known about it

for some time but have not yet developed a favourable or unfavourable attitude toward it, and have neither adopted nor rejected it. Relative advantage, compatibility, complexity, trialability, and observability are the five main characteristics of an innovation that could lead to the decision whether or not to adopt an innovation. The previous practice, norms of the social system, personal values and beliefs are some examples of the prior conditions of an individual that influence the degree to which an individual can be persuaded through the mentioned characteristics of innovation. This program can be evaluated in its position in displaying the characteristics of entrepreneurship in terms of its relative advantage, compatibility, complexity, trialability, and observability to the program participants.

The quantitative ratings from the thirty-two program participants' questionnaires (Chapter 4) provide the general overview of how the program had influenced their awareness towards entrepreneurship and explored the degree of program exploitation in terms of the participants' business practice and future directions. Nevertheless, through the case studies, I have encountered various themes that are significant to program evaluation. They suggest that program effectiveness is not solely based on the program itself but that it also provides insights into the context of entrepreneurial learning.

Entrepreneurship literature shows that certain individual-level characteristics are directly associated with the decision to engage in entrepreneurial activity and that the individual-opportunity nexus argued that individual differences in terms of psychological and non-psychological factors exerted powerful influence over who exploits entrepreneurial opportunities and who does not (Venkataraman, 1997; Shane, 2003). As a result, this chapter explores the individual differences of program participants in relation to the implications that they might have towards the entrepreneurship development of the program. Such exploration of individual differences is congruent with the applicability of Rogers' *Diffusion of Innovations* theory that people's reaction to an innovation can vary by how it is related to existing beliefs, previous practice, and norms of existing social

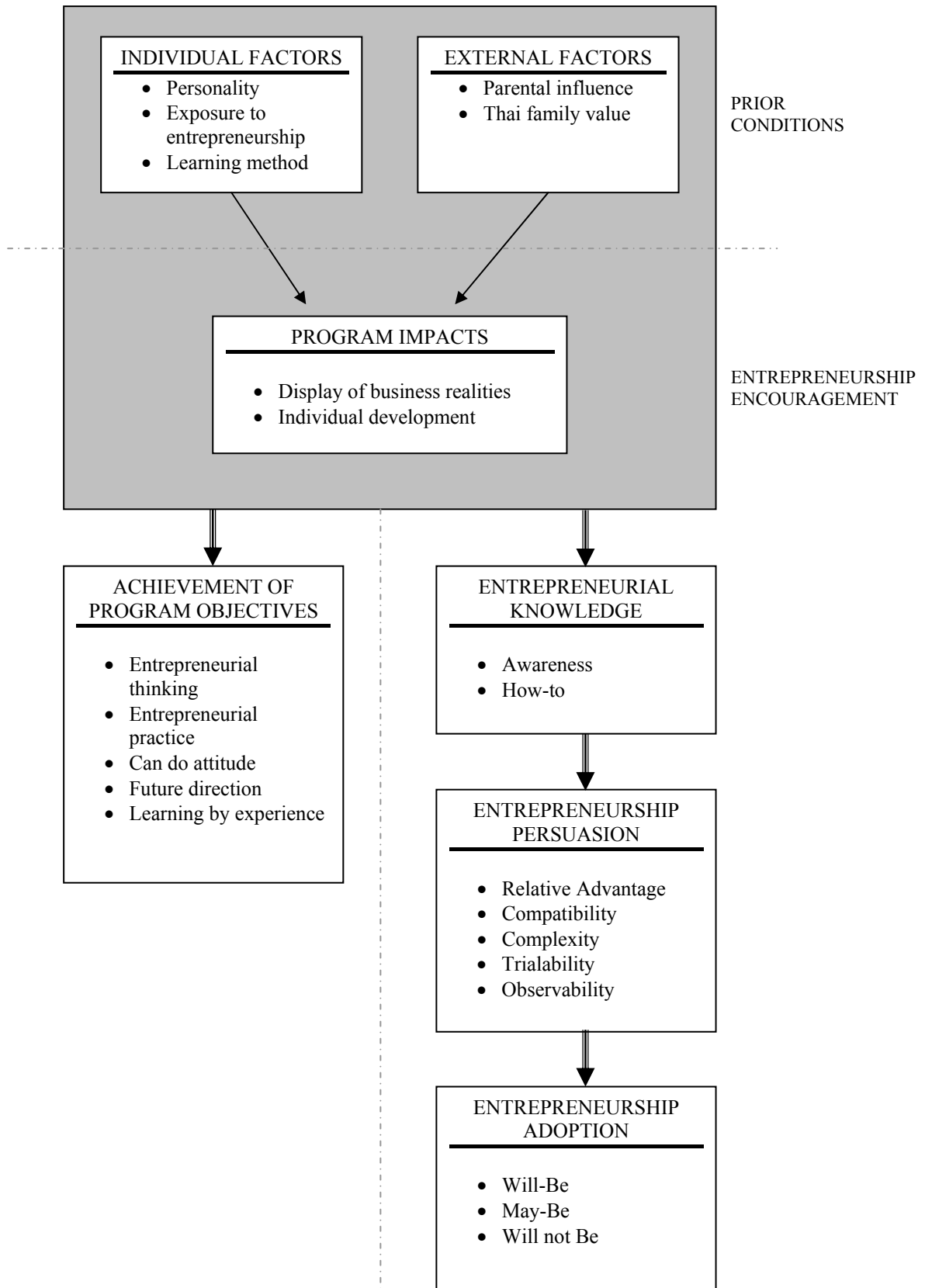
systems (Rogers, 1995). Hence, entrepreneurship – if perceived as more consistent with the individual’s existing values, past experiences, and needs – is more likely to be adopted by program participants.

The program facilitation of entrepreneurship is affected by other factors aside from the program itself, namely individual and external factors. It would be proper to display how the factors that emerged from the interview connectively contribute to the evaluation of program effectiveness. The program effectiveness in encouraging its participants to be future entrepreneurs takes into consideration three emergent themes: the individual differences of the participants; the influence from their parents; the impacts from the program itself (see Figure 6.1, below). In this chapter coherent evidence regarding each theme independently is first discussed. As illustrated in the Logic of the Evaluation, the relevance of these themes is collectively evaluated in terms of program evaluation in its achievement of the five program objectives as well as in terms of the entrepreneurship encouragement process, in persuading entrepreneurship towards its adoption. Such logic is explained in details as follows:

Objective-based evaluation: evaluation of the achievement of program objectives to encourage thinking entrepreneurially; to increase the familiarity with business practice; to stimulate a ‘can do’ attitude; to be aware of future direction; the significance of a ‘learning by doing’ method, given the differences in background, beliefs, and past experiences of the participants. This allows for the determination of the impacts from the individual differences and the parental influence in addition to the program impacts in achieving the program objectives.

Entrepreneurship encouragement: evaluation of knowledge and persuasion towards entrepreneurship in reinforcing the attributes in relation to entrepreneurship’s relative advantage, compatibility, complexity, trialability, and observability to participants. The outcomes of such persuasion are described in terms of entrepreneurship adoption.

FIGURE 6.1 LOGIC OF THE EVALUATION



The individual factors, external factors, and the program impacts are interrelated; they also play significant roles in evaluating program effectiveness in encouraging participants to be entrepreneurs. With our primary audience as the program organisers, the evaluation of program effectiveness in achieving program objectives is a necessity; however, such evaluation does not necessarily provide the outcomes of whether or not the participants would adopt entrepreneurship. With entrepreneurship as an innovation to be diffused among program participants, the decision to adopt entrepreneurship results from persuasion. They are persuaded towards entrepreneurship by the program in light of their individual backgrounds and other external factors. This chapter describes how well the program was in encouraging the participants, with different prior conditions, to be entrepreneurs.

Individual differences

Each entrepreneur brings their own set of personal motivations and characteristics to interact with their society and business environment. Traits that are relatively stable over time, like personality, as well as skills that can be learned through experience, such as knowledge of markets, constitute the individual differences (Morrison, 2000; Shane, 2003). As a result, it is the possession of such differences that lead a person to recognise the business opportunity he or she has encountered. Similarly, the program participants, raised from different background and lived through different society, have had their differences in various aspects. The aspects I have recognised and considered significant to this program evaluation are their personality background, prior exposure to entrepreneurship, and their previous learning methods.

Background in personality

Personality is the fundamental characteristic of people that leads them to act in certain ways. Certain personalities, such as risk taking, leadership, independence, and need for achievement, are often found in entrepreneurial personalities (Shane, 2003; Klatt, 1973). The prominent personalities that emerged from the interviews, however, were not concentrated on the personalities of potential entrepreneurs but rather on the opposition of entrepreneurial characteristics. Tanta and Tao had neither favourable nor unfavourable attitudes towards entrepreneurship prior to the program. Nevertheless, they had certain personalities that may have made it more difficult compared to others to be compatible with entrepreneurship. Tanta preferred to live her life with certainty while Tao was opposed to the idea of being a leader:

I prefer a job with high security... I'm too afraid to do things with risks
(TT).

I never was a leader before and I never plan on being one (TO).

The embedded beliefs of these two have made them different from the other participants. They had not decided on entrepreneurship nor had they developed a favourable attitude towards it prior to the program. Up to this point, it is compelling to examine whether or not the program can persuade them towards entrepreneurship.

Prior exposure to entrepreneurship

The participants came from different levels of exposure to entrepreneurship. Such exposure can be expressed in terms of business interests and real business experience. People with more experience in business will be more likely to exploit entrepreneurial opportunities than people with less or without experience. While some of the information and skills can be learned through education and entrepreneurship training programs, much of the

necessary information about doing a business can only be learned by doing (Timmons *et al.*, 1987; Shane & Khurana, 2001). Of the nine interviewees, Tayan was the only person who had prior experience in starting up a business:

My strong interest in business started a long time already ...I started doing business in high school and has kept practicing... Talking about my business in high school, I used to borrow money from a teacher and opened a computer shop near school but business did not work out... I did not give up because to fail when I'm young is good... I'll definitely try again.

Tayan had already decided to adopt entrepreneurship even before joining the program. He had even started and failed a business in the past; however, he had not given up about business. Business failure had not stopped him towards entrepreneurship. He had thus illustrated the can-do ability to go through with business regardless of potential failures. It would be appealing to examine, further, how this program might influence a participant who had decided to practice entrepreneurship.

In terms of business interests, most of the interviewees had prior interest and eagerness towards business before joining the program. These made them interested in applying for the program in the first place – except for Nuna:

... I had no idea and not much interest in business before.

Among all the interviewees that I encountered, Nuna was the most naïve about business. It is interesting to explore how the program might influence a participant with zero business knowledge towards entrepreneurship. By contrast, Vit and Tanta both grew up in families of entrepreneurs. Vit had made use of this vicarious learning opportunity by close observation of his family business but had not yet decided on his own business. According to Minniti (1999), observation of parents' efforts in running a business provides the necessary tacit knowledge to further engage in the same activity. As for

Tanta, she never paid attention to what was going on in her family business. Entrepreneurship is not consistent with her preference of security, as mentioned earlier in her personality background, and that she felt intimidated by her father's business success:

...my father is a very successful entrepreneur, I never ever paid much interest in his business. I clearly did not have a vision and courage like he does. It is impossible to be like him.

Vicarious learning of children of entrepreneurs, though it affects the likelihood that a person will exploit a business opportunity, is also found to be dependent on the children's personality and the high benchmark set by the parent as successful entrepreneur. This is congruent with Tanta's case.

There were different levels of noticeable prior exposure to entrepreneurship before the program as I observed from the interviews.

- The participant had previous entrepreneurial experience.
- The participants have favourable interests in entrepreneurship but have not decided to adopt entrepreneurship.
- The participants are aware of entrepreneurship but have not developed a favourable attitude towards it.
- The participant had no idea about entrepreneurship.

Previous learning methods

Learning by doing complements the entrepreneurial learning approach yet contrasts with the classroom learning situation. Potential entrepreneurs spend most of their time dealing with problems and learn through experiences as opposed to the class situation which involves a high level of dependence on authority (Gibb, 1987; Heinonen, 2006). Most of the interviewees were familiar with classroom learning. In spite of that, two – Tayan and Vit – indicated their familiarity with the learning by doing method. Tayan had been

a big fan of learning by doing; Vit was never much fond of classroom learning:

...I believed strongly in practice and implementation...how could a person who studied about football be better than those who have played for 8 years in the field. Real implementation is the best way to learn (TY).

...I did not like studying in classroom. I like to learn in the real world better (VT).

Their familiarity with learning by doing increased their compatibility with the program. These two were able to adapt easily to the learning by doing method compared with the rest of the interview group.

Parental Influence

Despite the contribution of individual differences, parents also play an important role in influencing participants' decisions and thus affect the extent to which a program impacts on them. The two types of parental influence that were identified in the case studies relate to education preference and pressure. The former – education preference – is influenced by a Thai value while the latter – pressure – is exerted in the form of parental opposition and disbelief. It is interesting to see the reactions of the program participants towards the mentioned types of influence. This section explores, in the parental context, the relationship between a national Thai value and its corresponding actions from their children; thus, it explores how parental pressure affects participants' motivation towards entrepreneurship.

6.1.1 Ka-tan-yu: Thai national characteristic

With the continuous new venture initiations in different countries across the world and beyond traditional boundaries, it is expected that contextual factors such as culture have a significant impact on entrepreneurship (Thomas & Mueller, 2000). The specifically Thai cultural value that emerges

from the case studies as a major influence on entrepreneurship development is the act of being 'ka-tan-yu'. Allyn (1992) defined *ka-tan-yu* as:

...selfless, altruistic, compassionate deeds for another individual, done freely and willing and corresponding deep gratitude by the recipient; as between parents and child

The *ka-tan-yu* quality, the reciprocity of kindness, is a highly valued and characteristic trait in Thai society. It is an expression of relationship, not bound by time or distance, which constitutes the root of any deep, meaningful relationship like a grateful bond towards one's parents (Komin, 1991). It is thus classified in the grateful relationship orientation, one of the nine value clusters of Thai national characteristics, the common characteristic elements within the national norms of Thai culture. Within this Thai characteristic, *ka-tan-yu*, most program participants had deep reciprocal relationships with their parents. Being grateful for their parents' kindness in raising them, they all have complied to what their parents expected of them, especially in terms of education.

6.1.2 Compromise vs. conform

The apparent *ka-tan-yu* act presented by the participants in the program is a form of satisfying their parents' academic expectation, in some cases, in terms of graduation with an educational degree. Boocock (1972) states that:

It is clear that high achieving children tend to come from families which have high expectations for them, and who consequently are likely to 'set standards' and to make greater demands at an earlier age.

A close link exists between parental expectations and children's actions. In Thailand, a Thai value on education is expressed in terms of parental belief that education will enable their children to make choices in their way of life, to get a better job, and that education gives people a higher status (Tanya, 1999). Among most interviewees, education is a necessity in the perception of their parents. Such perception has led to different levels of

parental expectations; for instance, Suutai is *ka-tan-yu* to his mother as he had agreed to graduate even though he does not believe in it:

My mother is very supportive. After all, I know that she expects to see me succeed some day. Actually, it's because of her that I'm studying. I would only get a degree to live up to my mother's expectation of me... For me, I don't care about graduating. I don't think it's a necessary step in order for me to have my own business one day.

Suutai had decided to *conform* to his mother's expectation.

Like Suutai, Tayan is expected by his parents to graduate with an educational degree; however, his reaction was quite different:

I have to graduate with a degree first because it is the duty of a son to live up to what my parents have expected of me. ...I have to study to graduate...I did not do business full time now. Since I have to study, I decided to study and work at the same time. I may start my own business now from something small and from my core competencies, first with food processing since I'm majoring in Industrial Agriculture.

Tayan had made a breakthrough decision to run a business and study at the same time by applying the educational skills and the industry experience that he already has. For him, being *ka-tan-yu* to his parents to at least graduate and owning a business are of mutual importance. He had chosen to *compromise* with parental expectations.

Another level of parental expectation goes beyond just academic degree attainment to include career choice. Paad is *ka-tan-yu* to his father's desire for him to become a doctor:

My career choice has always been a doctor for my father and an entrepreneur for myself. But, I have to study medical science and finish that degree for my father first. Maybe I could start my own clinic; that way I could be both.

Paad agreed to *conform* to his father's expectation. However, it is interesting to notice that he had not given up entrepreneurship as a career

completely; he may become an entrepreneur in the future. This is considered as an example of *prolonging* entrepreneurship. A similar example that resulted in entrepreneurship prolongation is through Rean's decision to *conform* to his parents' educational expectation, while still believing that he might become an entrepreneur regardless of his field of study:

I'm going to study in engineering. I also plan to do a masters degree to make my parents proud. ...Actually, I could study anything and still be an entrepreneur if I study with the objectives to become entrepreneur. Things I study could be integrated towards entrepreneurship.

Entrepreneurship is still a possibility for Rean; nevertheless, he had not yet made a decision to become an entrepreneur for the time being. The Thai value of being *ka-tan-yu* towards parents had caused the program participants to proceed differently in their education. The two apparent reactions are to *compromise* or to *conform* to their parental expectations. To *compromise*, in this case, is to study and concurrently do business; on the other hand, to *conform* means to focus on studying only while entrepreneurship is still a possible alternative of their future careers. The act of being *ka-tun-yu* may be a limitation for the program participants to proceed as one wants; nevertheless, it can also serve as a reason to prolong entrepreneurship for the time being since some of the interviewees were not absolutely certain of their career as an entrepreneur as they have never really been engaged in the entrepreneurship experience prior joining the program.

Pressure and Motivation

Another kind of parental influence, other than the attainment of an educational degree, is pressure. One of the interviewees received pressure from his parents to live his life a certain way and another was pressured by his parents' questioning his seriousness towards business. First and foremost, Tayan was expected to gain a secure governmental position; however, he insisted on following the entrepreneurship path:

...Parents pressured me not to do business... get a secure job working for the government...I'm even more eager to even try to do more on business... Money is my motivation...

Tayan had found his own motivation towards business. He had a desire to succeed and simply wanted to be a wealthy man. On the other hand, Vit, who was raised in a wealthy family, found himself being pressured by his parents in a different aspect:

...My parents did not believe me in doing things seriously...

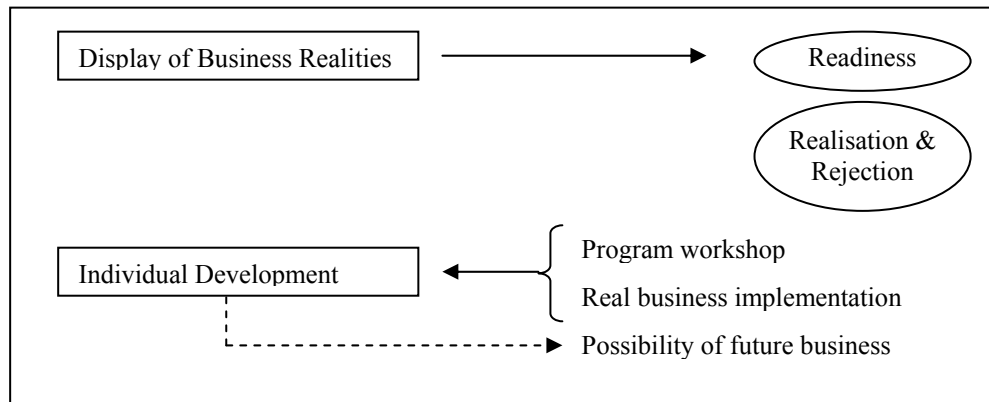
...I wanted to prove ...on my own that my business idea could be done...

His parents' disbelief had motivated Vit to stand up and do business by himself. Both Vit and Tayan have illustrated that certain pressure can be converted into a motivational drive. Similar to the way a competition that keeps players focused and dedicated to win the game, parental pressure in this case increases these two participants' enthusiasm and eagerness to explore their potential in the business world. With this kind of drive behind them already prior to the program, the program would more likely influence them differently compared to other program participants.

Program impacts

This section describes the program impacts on participants. From these descriptions, the effectiveness of the program in directing the participants towards entrepreneurship may be implied. The 'program persuasion' towards entrepreneurship arose from two dominant issues identified by the interviewees: the display of business realities and the extent of individual development towards entrepreneurship brought about by the program. These dominant program impacts are displayed in Figure 6.2, below.

As the program developed concepts of entrepreneurship for the program participants, it has inevitably revealed a number of business

FIGURE 6.2 DOMINANT PROGRAM IMPACTS

realities. First, the participants recognised that business was, in fact, difficult and to deal with such difficulty requires hard work, thoroughness, and dedication. This triggered the participants to question whether or not they were ready to walk down the road of entrepreneurship. Second, the program provoked them to reflect on whether or not entrepreneurship was a suitable career for them. Some participants had found entrepreneurship to be incompatible with their interests and goals, and so they finally rejected it. Thus, the program provided a beginning point where they realised that it would be better to pursue other careers.

The program allowed the participants to have opportunities to develop individual business interests and capabilities. The extent of individual development varied. Such development had resulted from two main elements considered within the program: the program workshop, and the implementation of an individual business plan. The area of development resulted from each will later be explained in detail. After the individual development of participants resulted from the workshop and implementation, the success levels of their development are then reflected in terms of their capabilities in starting their own business in the future.

Display of business realities

Business is not as easy as it seems. This generalisation is a significant finding of the program. Participants suggested that the program had made them realise that business is either difficult or not as easy as they expected it to be. This finding is illustrated through many of the interviewees; for instance, Rean, Paad, and Sind stated clearly that the program had showed them the difficulty of business:

...I realised that doing business is harder than I thought (RN).

...I learnt that doing business takes more than what I expected ...more complicated than expected (PD).

...there are a lot of things about business that I have never knew before...it is no longer as easy as I used to think it would be...there were more problems than expected (SD).

The program had a significant impact on the participants in that it triggered their thinking, thus: business may not be as simple as it looks. The program informed them of the rocky aspects of business. I think this is comparable to the 'tip of the iceberg' scenario, where the sight of a small frozen island above the water gives no indication of the huge iceberg that lies underneath. In this case, the program made them conscious of what business is like in reality, thus leading them to think of entrepreneurship not as a plain effort but rather as a dedicated and fulfilling course of living.

Readiness

Taking into consideration the reality that business is difficult, the program prompted the participants towards considering their readiness for entrepreneurship. They decided that they needed more experience or had to be more comprehensive in considering their steps towards entrepreneurship. Rean, Paad, and Suutai stepped back to reconsider their position:

...I have to be more thorough and have more experience first (RN).

...it (business) could not be done immediately. There were steps to follow (PD).

...I had little knowledge of business compare to what it takes. I have not given up but have to be more thorough. I need to obtain more experience first...I could start from being an employee at a farm to gain experience for some years and will then find funding and operate my own farm (ST).

These three interviewees have not yet given up on entrepreneurship. On the other hand, the program made them realise that they were not fully equipped for entrepreneurship at the time the program was run. They thought that they needed to continue learning and to accumulate more experience before eventually becoming entrepreneurs.

Realisation and rejection

The program led some of the participants – Rean, Paad, and Suutai – to critically reflect on their readiness for entrepreneurship. The program, for others, revealed their incompatibility with business. Three of the interviewees – Sind, Tanta, and Tao – made a decision not to adopt entrepreneurship:

...I am afraid to start a business...To be successful in business, one must really know what he was doing. He must not go beyond his own capability. I wanted to be an employee (SD).

...The program has confirmed for me that business is a high risk, high return situation. I'm too afraid to do things with risks. I do not have enough potential...I am going to be a doctor. It is a secure job (TT).

...This program has made me realise that I do not want to be an entrepreneur. I did not like to be in control of too many things... I want to be a specialist rather than doing broad work like entrepreneur (TO).

Even though all three decided to exit entrepreneurship, the program indirectly made them realise that they would be better off in playing other roles or pursuing other kinds of careers. While the program showed them

what doing business was like, it failed to direct them towards entrepreneurship. The program, however, displayed sufficient criteria of business to make it possible for them to make individual decisions on whether or not to adopt entrepreneurship.

Individual development

Individual development of participants through the program resulted mainly during the program workshop and the implementation of business plans. The participants had the opportunity to further their business knowledge; the concepts of entrepreneurship were also facilitated through real business practice. This section focuses on the individual development in different aspects as a result of the program, as well as exemplifying other possibilities of future business that the participants might follow as a result of their involvement in the program.

Program workshop

An essential part of the program was its workshop. The workshop allowed the participants to learn the concepts of entrepreneurship and the detailed processes of business. The workshop made its impacts on participants in many ways. According to Rean, the workshop equipped him with the marketing techniques; Paad learned how to convert his business plan into an action plan as well as gaining knowledge about marketing:

I learnt a lot of techniques on marketing ... how to penetrate the market as well as knowledge to improve product itself (RN).

I learned how to do the action plan which helped detailed the project plan... I got to have more knowledge on... accounting and investment planning (PD).

The program provided each of these participants with both knowledge and detailed business procedures. It taught them techniques from various business

disciplines as well as showing them how to derive implementation procedures for their businesses.

Nevertheless, some of the participants felt that the workshop was difficult to comprehend. According to both Tanta and Sind, the content and timing of the workshop were tough; Suutai formed a negative impression of his workshop coach:

The workshop was quite stressful and I was not given enough time, while I also had to be creative about business planning (TT).

Content being taught in workshop was too brief and advanced for me. I got confused (SD).

...the workshop period... so tight with its contents. It was too stressful for me. The coach was too bossy. She did not suggest but ordered. Also, the workshop period should be extended (ST).

There was simply a lot to do in the workshop. These three participants found the workshop to be stressful in its contents and in the brevity of the allocated time. Suutai was not particularly fond of his coach at the workshop; however, Rean was fond of his:

I liked to learn with coach. I was very close to him.

Coaching was a subjective aspect of the workshop – with a range of likes and dislikes; a certain level of standardisation of coaching needs to be considered.

Despite differing responses to its delivery of knowledge and procedures – as well as criticism of its contents, timing, and coaching – the workshop had some unanticipated impacts on the participants. First, Nuna expressed her admiration of the guest speaker at the workshop: a successful entrepreneur who, to her, was an encouraging influence towards entrepreneurship:

I liked the guest speaker in the workshop, a very smart lady, telling stories from real experience. I wanted to be like her.

Nuna thought highly of the guest speaker as her potential role model. This factor of the program can have been expected to encourage the participants towards entrepreneurship through the act of imitation.

Another unanticipated impact of the workshop was its ability to be a meeting place for people who shared common interests in business. For instance, Tayan had the chance to meet potential partners:

Going to the workshop gave me the chance to know a lot of friends with the same ambition as mine. We could be business partners in the future.

The program workshop allowed participants to share business ideas and provided them with an alliance network of potential young entrepreneurs.

Real business implementation

A significant aspect in the participants' development towards entrepreneurship was the exercise in real business implementation. This exercise allowed them to learn about business practice from real experience: participants had the chance to really do business according to their business plans. Nuna learned about market behaviour and her business capability; Paad had the chance to become a leader and was able to sell his products successfully through the program's real business implementation:

I didn't get much profit. My product has to be sold cheaper than others or the market wouldn't buy. I could only produce them in small quantities, so it was not worthwhile to continue... I liked the real implementation part. I got to know more from real practice (NN).

I was the youngest in the team, but I took the role of the team leader for the first time... I got a lot of profit... I got more desire to do business partly from the success of the real business experience part of the program (PD).

Both of these participants were impressed with their real business practice, despite their different business results. Real business experience allowed

them to learn, first-hand, about business; for Paad, in particular, it encouraged him towards entrepreneurship.

Interestingly, Tayan – the only interviewee with prior business experience – found the implementation of his ‘Learn in Rap’ business plan to be more than just another chance for his real business experience:

...I don't think that my product is good enough yet. I might bring up this project again but I should make it into easy songs before going to rap music because the market would respond to that better.

Tayan had the chance to test his business plan and had identified flaws in his business. He came to realise how he might adapt his products in response to the market feedback that he got from the real implementation part of the program.

The opportunity for the program participants to learn business from a real business experience was generally different from the formal approach encountered in classroom learning. The program introduced the participants to a new learning method. Nuna, for instance expressed a very positive reaction. Suutai realised that he would like to continue using this learning method in the future:

I never knew this way of learning before, but I really like it (NN).

I could start from being an employee at a farm to gain experience for some years. I would like to learn from the source (ST).

The program facilitated their learning in a way that differed from their normal experience. They preferred this new approach and found it to be most applicable.

Possibility of future business

As a follow-up to the workshop and real business implementation, it is worthwhile to first examine the responses from participants describing how they had felt strengthened by the program. Starting with the participants with

prior interests in business, the program had stimulated their confidence in terms of a guided roadmap on how business should be carried out. This was exemplified in the cases of Tayan and Vit, both of whom realised what they would have to do in order to become future entrepreneurs:

...After the program, my attitude about wanting to be entrepreneur has not changed much but I am filled with more confidence... the program has me more...precise in what I have to do to get there (TY).

...I know now the ways on how to make dream into reality (VT).

The program reassured them regarding their choice of entrepreneurship; hence it also had pinpointed the steps in becoming one. It had turned a grey concept of entrepreneurship into an illuminating and non-abstract understanding.

The program resulted in Nuna becoming more aware of basic business concepts:

After the program, I thought that business could actually be done ... I learned a lot about business...

The program had expanded Nuna's thinking about entrepreneurship: it showed her what business is all about.

The impact on participants thus can be viewed from two different perspectives: the first is that the program added to the confidence that the participants had in the application of business concepts; the second, and more modest perspective, is that the program was limited to increasing participants' awareness of entrepreneurship.

Second, the exploration of the participants' business capabilities to start off in their own business, after the program, is of great importance in evaluating the impact of the program. After the program, the perception of the reality of participants being able to do business on their own significantly had been enhanced. This is particularly evident in terms of discussions about the possibility of their involvement in future business activity. Nuna and

Tanta affirmed that they would need help if they were to engage in starting up their own business:

I do not know really what business to do yet, maybe I could do business about plants but I am not sure. I would need guidance (NN).

...I fear that business would not work out. Even if I did really start a business, I would still need a team to help me. I couldn't do it on my own (TT).

They were not convinced that they could do business, especially if they had to do it by themselves. They had recognised that they would need a considerable amount of assistance.

Unlike Tanta, with his openly expressed fear of failure, Suutai viewed failure from rather a different perspective:

...I would like to be successful in owning a farm one day... The factor for business success is to be able to rely on myself. Failure can be taken as a teacher to help make sure the next work will be more perfect.

With farming as the focus of his future business, Suutai intends to learn and improve from failure. He believed that he must rely on himself in order to be successful.

Paad, like Suutai, believed that he could now start up a business by himself:

I think that I am capable of doing business, but small at first. I have already learned how the work is to be done... But, I would not follow exactly all the business procedures from the program. I would rely on my own judgment and take short cut.

The program had shown Paad the necessary business steps; however, he decided to trust his own judgment in terms of their specific application. He also believed that he could start a small business if he wanted to.

The program enabled the participants to think differently about their individual capabilities to be involved in business. For some, it pointed out

that they were not capable of doing business on their own; for others, it had shown particulars of business practice and had made them believe that they would be capable of doing business without being scared of the prospect of failure associated with business processes.

Objective-based evaluation

In this section, the three themes that emerged from the interviews – individual differences, parental influences, and program impacts – are collectively evaluated in terms of the program objectives. In the evaluation of each program objective the role of one particular theme might be more significant than either of the others. In spite of this qualification, this section will display the relationships between each theme in evaluating the performance of the program participants development with respect to the five stated program objectives: development of entrepreneurial thinking, entrepreneurial practice; developing a can-do attitude; being aware of future directions; being aware of the significance of learning by experience.

Entrepreneurial Thinking

The level of development in entrepreneurial thinking varied and was dependent on the participants' prior level of exposure to entrepreneurship. Such thinking was also affected by the family environment in which the participants grew up, as well as by the personality variables of the participants themselves. The program was able to further the development of a few entrepreneurial characteristics yet these characteristics seemed to have been evident prior to the program. The program, however, failed to develop certain entrepreneurial characteristics since these conflicted with some of the participants' personalities. Nevertheless, the program broadened the business knowledge of most of the participants in a systematic manner, especially those with no business background.

Development of entrepreneurial characteristics

Under this program objective, the program organisers planned to encourage entrepreneurial characteristics in participants. As described in Chapter 4, the questionnaires showed that the ratings on characteristics of entrepreneurship under investigation mostly had shifted to a higher level; however, based on the interviews, the emerging characteristics that were, in fact, enhanced by the program were self-confidence and systematic thinking. The program heightened the confidence of those who already had a prior business background in revealing to them a guided roadmap of what it takes to become successful, shaping their overall business concepts with reference to business specifics. The program also encouraged participants to think systematically: most of the interviewees indicated that the program allowed them to think in terms of the steps needed to be taken in business.

Other characteristics of an entrepreneur, such as the desire to succeed and commitment to recovery, resulted not from the program but from parental influence and the participants' individual factors. For instance, Tayan was motivated towards business as a result of his desire for wealth and his being resistant to the pressure from his parents to obtain a secure job.

Another significant aspect of the development of entrepreneurship derives from the areas in which it failed. The development of entrepreneurial thinking failed when it conflicted with the participants' individual beliefs. In the cases of both Tanta and Tao, the program associated entrepreneurship with the risks involved as well as the leadership role required. These were in opposition, respectively, with Tanta's avoidance of risk and Tao's disfavour of leadership; thus, these two participants neither developed their leadership nor were they willing to take the risks that the program identified.

Enhancement of business knowledge

In terms of entrepreneurial knowledge, the program widened the knowledge of most participants regarding business analysis methods, marketing and

accounting. Also, it raised the general awareness of overall business concepts of those participants with no specific business background.

In summary, the program had limited success in achieving this program objective since development of entrepreneurial thinking relies on significant matters such as individual background and other external factors which take years to accumulate. The program can only stimulate the opportunities for development in entrepreneurial thinking for those with prior interests in business; it is able to do no more than raise the awareness of business concepts significantly for those with only a sketchy knowledge of business before joining the program. This confirms that entrepreneurial characteristics take a significant amount of time to develop, and that they cannot really be developed from a single program such as this one. The program, however, had found its significance in raising the awareness and widening the business knowledge of all participants.

Entrepreneurial practice

This objective set by the program organisers aimed at equipping the participants with business practice abilities. Compared with entrepreneurial thinking, this program objective was more successful in terms of the program's visibility and trialability of business practice. The workshop allowed the participants to gain insights into business procedures while the implementation of their individual business plans gave them real business experience. Nevertheless, there is still room for program improvement. The following recommendations were drawn from the responses of participants regarding the workshop design.

Acknowledgement of business procedures

The program was effective in providing the knowledge and techniques needed for business practice as well as in teaching the participants how to

convert their business concepts into an action plan. A wide-range of business procedures were displayed throughout the workshop, allowing the participants to learn a number of implementation techniques in addition to gaining working knowledge from various business disciplines.

Development of business practice through implementation

The program was particularly effective in its implementation of business plans. The participants were not only able to get hands-on experience of what business is really like, but were able to observe the end results of the implementation of their particular business plan. One participant regarded such business implementation experience as a motivating factor for him to consider entrepreneurship. It gave those participants who had had prior business experience a great opportunity to test the market and adapt to the feedback while pinpointing flaws in their business plans.

Barriers to development in entrepreneurial practice

For some of the participants, the program workshop was found to be difficult to comprehend. Its content and timeframe were stressful; also, the coaching was not sufficiently standardised. The recommendations to reconsider the content, the timing, and the delivery methods of the workshop will be particularly useful for the program organisers. While the program was compatible with the needs of many participants, it is crucial to think further on how to design the workshop to be compatible with the needs of the majority of participants.

In summary, two important components of the program, namely the workshop and the implementation of business plans, were significant in increasing the familiarity of participants to business practice. Regardless of the prior business background of participants, the program had found its significance in providing insights into business experience. This was all possible through the program knowledge delivery methods that were tailored

towards real practice rather than classroom theories. The use of a workshop structure and a concrete implementation of business practice were effective in directing the participants towards entrepreneurship and in developing business practice capabilities.

Can do attitude

According to the program organisers, can-do attitude was to be reflected in terms of the participants' confidence towards starting a business on their own while not being afraid of possible business failures. In practice, it was found that the can-do attitude of participants greatly relied on their prior business experience and on their own particular personalities.

Existing can-do attitude

A can-do attitude was most likely to arise when the participants had gained previous business experience and could appreciate the importance of developing resistance to failures in the past. For instance, Tayan had been engaged in different businesses prior to joining this program; he had not been discouraged from previous business failures and had developed a persistence to succeed. For him, failures at a younger age were considered to be an advantage enabling him to recover later on. A level of can-do attitude was embedded in his personality through this prior exposure to entrepreneurship, rather than having been stimulated by the program.

Developing can-do attitude

Because the program provided a preview of how business is done in real practice, a number of the participants were convinced that they were capable of starting a new business on their own after the completion of this program. This was demonstrated in Paad's belief in his capability to start up a small business on his own. Suutai, realising as a result of the program, that he should have more business experience before he would be able to start up his own business, intended to willingly learn and improve from failures without

being afraid of them. Both of these participants showed a continuing interest in developing their can-do attitude after the program; however, what makes them different from Tayan is that they have not yet proven their can-do ability and resistance to failures in real practice. Their statements were based, only, on their beliefs and intentions, and not on actions and outcomes.

Obstructing can-do attitude

Can-do attitude was not congruent with the existing personalities and beliefs of many of the participants. They were not convinced that they could do business by themselves; clearly, they needed considerable assistance. They were also afraid of failure as it confronted their preference for security in life. In addition to personality, exposure to entrepreneurship also had a role in obstructing can-do attitude development. For instance, Tanta, raised in a family business environment, was intimidated by his father's business success: she thought that she would not be able to match-up to such a high benchmark.

In summary, can-do attitude can, to a certain extent, be encouraged by the program since it was able to show the participants how business is done and familiarised them with the difficulties of business; in particular, it led them to regard business failure as an ordinary outcome. The program failed to encourage can-do attitude with those who thought it would be in conflict with their personalities and attitudes to life. Any existing can-do attitude of participants largely arose from extensive exposure to entrepreneurship experience and background gained through family experience.

Future direction

Under this program objective, the program organisers intended to make the participants realise that their future career paths could include entrepreneurship as well as other careers. Since all program participants were

about to graduate from their high school, the time to make decisions about their future direction was apparent.

Confirmation of entrepreneurial career

The program confirmed that the selection of entrepreneurship as their career choice was more likely amongst those participants with substantial prior exposure to entrepreneurship. This prior exposure made them more confident and specifically driven to take the necessary steps towards an entrepreneurship career.

Readiness for entrepreneurial career

The program lead some of the participants to question their readiness for entrepreneurship as a future career. It triggered them to engage in further entrepreneurial learning and the accumulation of more experience before finally taking on entrepreneurship as their career.

Rejection and realisation of other career

The program failed to persuade some of the participants towards entrepreneurship; however, it sufficiently demonstrated the significant matters of business necessary for them to make a decision about their entrepreneurial career, provided that they felt a level of compatibility towards business as a career. It also made a number of participants realise that they might be better off pursuing other kinds of career paths that were more suited to their personalities and individual needs

In summary, the program was effective in displaying the relevant business realities that made it possible for the participants to think further on their future direction. Despite most of the participants not having chosen a career path in entrepreneurship (and some having rejected outright entrepreneurship as their future career) the program successfully provided a clearer understanding of what it takes, and what has to be done in business, in

order to embark on an entrepreneurial career. In the end, what matters is that the program was able to assist the participants in making a decision about their future direction – whether or not it was a direction towards entrepreneurship.

Learning by experience

The program organisers aimed at making the participants recognise the value of learning by experience. They were also convinced that this way of learning would be suitable for entrepreneurship development.

Existing preference

Some of the participants were already familiar and had been practitioners of this method of learning; they were convinced that it is superior in comparison to the traditional classroom learning method. They were then easily able to adapt to the delivery methods being used in the program since it was consistent with their background of practice.

New method of learning

The participants who were new to this method of learning preferred it to more traditional methods and realised that it was applicable, especially in terms of business. Some mentioned that they would like to continue this method in the future, where they would be able to gain business experience at its source.

In summary, the program has successfully introduced this learning by experience method to the participants. They found it either to be consistent with their background or recently enlightened by its applicability. The participants came to like this method in comparison to traditional classroom learning.

Entrepreneurship encouragement

The entrepreneurship encouragement process, in the context of this research, comprises mainly the stimulation of entrepreneurial knowledge, the persuasion towards entrepreneurship and the decisions for entrepreneurship adoption. Aside from the previous section's program-objective based evaluation, the program could be further evaluated in light of a theoretical application. The theory chosen here is called the 'Diffusion of Innovations', an appropriate theory that captures the essence of how an innovation, an idea perceived as new by the participants, is diffused towards its adoption in a systematic process. This section starts with an introduction to such theory followed by the results of program impacts on each of the stages under the entrepreneurship encouragement process.

Diffusion of Innovation

Diffusion of innovation has found its implications in many multi-disciplinary fields, such as marketing, social science, consumer behaviour, psychology, and other fields. Diffusion research, although conducted by researchers in different disciplines over many decades, has emerged as a generalised concept (Rogers & Shoemaker, 1971). Rogers (1995) has successfully captured the essentials of this theory hence the implications from his book, *Diffusion of Innovations*, 4th Edition, will be applied throughout this section. Rogers (1995) has identified the following key concepts:

- **Diffusion** is the process by which an innovation is communicated through certain channels over time among the members of a social system.
- **Innovation** is an idea, practice, or object perceived as new by an individual. Its adoption is persuaded by five attributes of innovation: (1) relative advantage; (2) compatibility; (3) complexity; (4) trialability; (5) observability.

Within the context of this research, entrepreneurship is an innovation. Entrepreneurship is communicated through the program to the program participants to encourage its adoption.

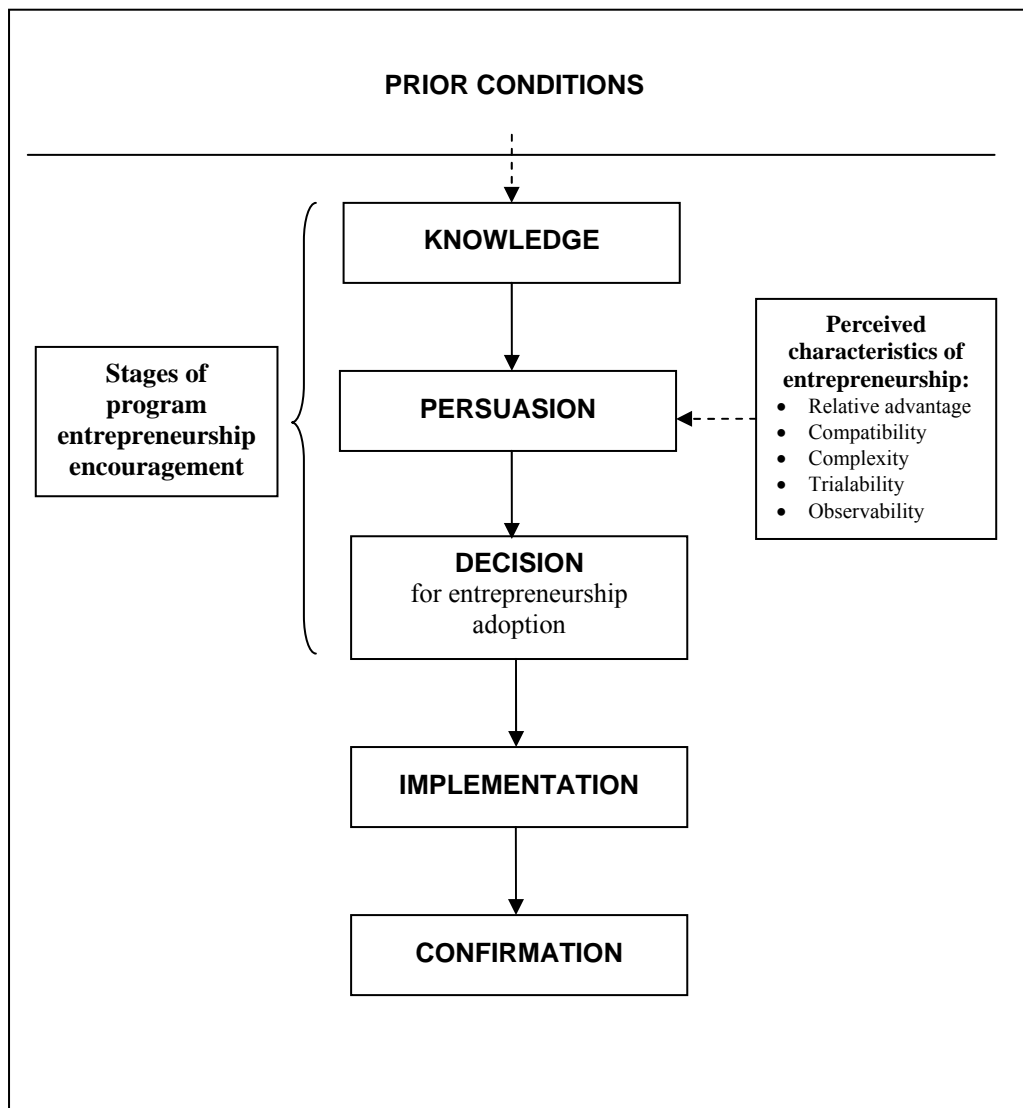
Rather than providing a complete specification of what diffusion of innovation theory is about, this research captures the implications in light of entrepreneurship encouragement. Entrepreneurship encouragement by the program can be well explained by the innovation-decision process. This process consists of different stages essential to innovation adoption. Entrepreneurship was an innovation which the program participants were encouraged to adopt; thus the resulting decision whether or not to adopt entrepreneurship reflects the success level of entrepreneurship encouragement. According to Rogers, the innovation-decision process is:

...the process through which an individual passes from first knowledge of an innovation, to forming an attitude toward the innovation, to a decision to adopt or reject, to implementation of the new idea, and to confirmation of this decision.

Such process is conceptualised into five stages: (1) knowledge, (2) persuasion, (3) decision, (4) implementation, and (5) confirmation. These five stages are adapted into the entrepreneurship encouragement framework in relation to the issues being studied in this research (see Figure 6.3, below).

Since the program had facilitated the concepts of entrepreneurship and provided the trial on business implementation in order to encourage its adoption, the program had been actively involved in three main stages of the entrepreneurship decision process, which are the knowledge, persuasion, and decision stage. In some cases, the program may go beyond these three stages to not just encouraging but confirming to some participants of their prior decision in entrepreneurship adoption.

FIGURE 6.3 ENTREPRENEURSHIP ENCOURAGEMENT FRAMEWORK



Adapted from Innovation-Decision Process (Rogers, 1995)

- Prior conditions:** These conditions existed prior to the program. They are the participants' personality variables, previous exposure to entrepreneurship, previous learning method, parental influence, and family value. These factors contribute to certain extent to the participants' decisions towards entrepreneurship in the following steps of this entrepreneurship encouragement framework.

- **Knowledge:** This stage is when the program participants gain some understanding of what entrepreneurship is and how it functions as well as how to adopt entrepreneurship properly. The activity at this knowledge stage was mainly cognitive.
- **Persuasion:** At this stage, the participants form favourable or unfavourable attitudes toward entrepreneurship, given the five attributes of entrepreneurship being perceived, namely its relative advantage, compatibility, complexity, trialability, and observability. The main type of thinking at the persuasion function is affective. The participants know about entrepreneurship and began to form an attitude toward it.
- **Decision:** This stage occurs when participants engaged in activities that lead to a choice to adopt or reject entrepreneurship. Adoption is a decision to make full use of entrepreneurship in order to embark on an entrepreneurial career. Rejection is a decision not to adopt entrepreneurship.
- **Implementation:** The participants put entrepreneurship into use. Before this stage, entrepreneurship may be tried on a probationary basis in order to determine its usefulness, but entrepreneurship under implementation is no longer the mental exercise to explore its suitability but rather an actual course of practice.
- **Confirmation:** At this stage, the participants seek reinforcement of the decision already made or they may reverse a previous decision to adopt or reject entrepreneurship if exposed to conflicting messages.

The details on how the program had facilitated entrepreneurial knowledge, persuaded its participants towards entrepreneurship, and led to a decision on entrepreneurship adoption are to be explored in the three highlighted stages of entrepreneurship encouragement.

Entrepreneurial knowledge

There were different levels of entrepreneurial knowledge facilitated by the program, given the different business backgrounds of program participants. The two apparent types of knowledge provided by the program were the awareness-knowledge (knowledge of what an innovation is), and the how-to knowledge (knowledge necessary to use an innovation properly).

Awareness knowledge

This type of knowledge is about creating an awareness of what entrepreneurship is and that it exists. Most of the participants already knew what entrepreneurship was from their prior conditions before joining the program; however, the program had informed of entrepreneurship to the participant with no background in business. It had made such participants aware of business and had reinforced them of its existence since they did not even know what entrepreneurship was until they joined the program.

How-to knowledge

How-to knowledge is about understanding how to utilise entrepreneurship properly and usually an adequate level of how-to knowledge is required before the trial of entrepreneurship. Since during the program workshop, the participants were taught the steps of entrepreneurship and how to apply its concepts in real practice prior to the program's trial business implementation. The program has successfully displayed the how-to knowledge of entrepreneurship. It has equipped its participants with the important knowledge from various disciplines of how to correctly utilise business concepts in real practice. For some participants with intensive business background, the program has made it clearer to them how to apply the business concepts they already had known step by step and in a more systematic manner.

Entrepreneurship persuasion

At this stage, the program participants formed a favourable or unfavourable attitude towards entrepreneurship from the program's display of its five characteristics, relative advantage, compatibility, complexity, trialability, and observability. It is common that selective perception plays an important role in determining the individual's behaviour at the persuasion stage; selective perception is how the participants chose to interpret the information that is relevant to their needs and consistent with their beliefs.

Relative advantage

Relative advantage is the degree to which entrepreneurship is perceived as being better than existing practice. It is often expressed in terms of economic incentives, social prestige, and other benefits such as a decrease in discomfort and savings in time and effort. For most of the participants, the program had failed to motivate them towards endorsing this characteristic of entrepreneurship. In contrast, some participants had long recognised the relative advantage of entrepreneurship through their prior conditions. One stated that the desire to gain status in family is the motivational drive to adopt entrepreneurship while another realised the relative advantage of entrepreneurship through its monetary offerings.

Compatibility

Compatibility is the degree to which entrepreneurship is perceived as consistent with the existing values, past experience, and needs of the program participants. Prior conditions played an important role in determining the compatibility of participants with entrepreneurship. Parental influence of their expectation of an educational degree from participants decreased their compatibility with business since most of them decided to conform to their parents' requests; however, pressure from parents had motivated some participants to compatibly realise a felt need for action towards

entrepreneurship. Prior exposure to business also contributed to increased compatibility with entrepreneurship due to the participants' existing familiarity of the business concepts. In the case of existing personal like of learning by doing method, the participants thus found it easier to adapt to the program's learning method as well.

In contrast, entrepreneurship was not compatible with some of the participants' individual values of security in life and opposition to leadership. Nevertheless, the program allowed participants to examine their suitability to adopt entrepreneurship, triggered the readiness for its adoption, and allowed them to make decisions, since the program had revealed to them the degree of their compatibility with entrepreneurship.

Complexity

Complexity is the degree to which entrepreneurship is perceived as relatively difficult to understand and use. As mentioned earlier, the program had shown its participants the realities of business. It had made them perceive business as relatively difficult and not as simple as they expected it to be prior joining the program. Once entrepreneurship had high complexity in the eyes of the participants, it is negatively related to its possibility of adoption.

Trialability

Trialability is the degree to which entrepreneurship may be experimented with on a limited basis. It is perceived as positively related to entrepreneurship adoption since ideas that can be tried on the trial basis are generally adopted more rapidly than those that are not divisible. The program had successfully allowed testing of entrepreneurship experience, which in some cases created motivation towards business; while in some other cases it discouraged the participants due to the fact that business try-outs did not give them any meaning to entrepreneurship since they had not found how it would work under their own conditions and could not pass through its difficulty in real practice.

Observability

Observability is the degree to which the results of entrepreneurship are visible to the participants. The program allowed its participants to see the end results of their business in the program after the end of its real business implementation. Evidently, for many participants, business success from the program served as a drive towards entrepreneurship.

Entrepreneurship adoption

In terms of adoption, the participants usually made a decision to adopt or reject entrepreneurship. Adoption is a decision to make full use of entrepreneurship as the course of action available. Rejection is a decision not to adopt entrepreneurship. For this program, there were some participants who already made a decision to either adopt or reject entrepreneurship while the others were yet to make a decision. Hence, I categorise the participants into three apparent groups based on their common characteristics and their behaviours under this decision stage, namely the 'will-be', 'may-be', and 'will not be'.

Will-Be

The 'will-be' is a group of participants who were already equipped with entrepreneurial knowledge and desire to become entrepreneurs long before entering the program. They found out about the program by themselves and decided to apply without hesitation. It was something that they had longed for. They sought to elevate their business learning and experience. The program did not have significant impact on them in building entrepreneurial desire; nevertheless, the program did add onto their knowledge, experience, and thinking to a certain degree. For this group, their entrepreneurial thinking had been based on their interests in business in childhood. In their studying period, this group had simultaneously kept on capturing business opportunities. Working and studying at the same time did not seem to be a problem for them; they continue to do so at the present time.

The 'will-be' group had made their decision to adopt entrepreneurship mainly based on their prior conditions. The program persuasion only had minor implications on their decision to adopt entrepreneurship; however, this group had mainly been influenced by the program in terms of confirming to them their choice of continued adoption of entrepreneurship.

May-Be

The 'may-be' is a group of participants who were mainly introduced to the program by others, and then they decided to apply for it, thinking the program was new and different from their previous practice. In terms of their readiness towards entrepreneurship, none of them was running a business of their own at the moment. They only 'planned' to in the future. This differentiated them from the 'will-be' group who was already ready for business and tended to grasp any opportunity within their reach. This group was quite different. According to their current intentions, they plan to start off a business in the future and must be after they have graduated with an educational degree. Even though what they graduated with may have less to do with business, they did not see it as a constraint. One of them stated that he could study anything and still be a future entrepreneur if he studies with the objective of becoming entrepreneur. Another added although he was into medical science, he may start his own clinic. That way he could be both a doctor and an entrepreneur. Either way, they were not yet ready for entrepreneurship.

The 'may-be' still had not made any decision on whether to adopt or reject entrepreneurship at the moment. They needed more time to think it through or to have more experience first. The program had failed to reinforce them to make any decision at this decision stage. This group was seen as the 'work-in-process' waiting to be groomed further to be the finished product of entrepreneurs. The program had encouraged them to be more lenient towards entrepreneurship, but there was still hesitation in their future decision.

Will not Be

The 'will not be' is a group of participants who had been discouraged away from entrepreneurship by the program. As a result, they decided to reject entrepreneurship at this decision stage. Such rejection had a lot to do with the compatibility of the participants with entrepreneurship. For instance, some participants came into the program and realised that they were better off being specialists, being told what to do, rather than being the owner who had to figure out and manage everything. They did not enjoy concentrating on too many tasks at the same time. Others, though raised in families of entrepreneurs, had never paid much interest to their family business. They claimed that they did not have the vision and courage like their parents, and that they found out from the program that business was too risky for them. As a result, they decided to say 'good-bye to business'.

The 'will not be' group, though being discouraged and having decided to reject entrepreneurship, found out, nevertheless, that the program had influenced them significantly. It showed them real business, which had led them to make an important decision in their lives. They all had been affected substantially by the program, which made it easier for them to decide what they would want to be, though not entrepreneurs.

Conclusion

Selection of respondents to become future entrepreneurs is crucial. This research reveals that only those individuals with their prior conditions geared towards entrepreneurship had decided that they 'will be' entrepreneurs. In a broader perspective, this raises an important issue as to whether the resources allocated to the initiatives to create future entrepreneurs is justified – especially to the fund providers and the academics involved. Fayolle et al. (2006) have recently pointed out that evaluation of entrepreneurship education programs, on the basis of their impact in terms of new business, can be 'misleading' and 'short-sighted'. The impact of entrepreneurship

education programs can be complex, and only becomes ‘visible’ after some delay. This conforms with the findings of this research: it is evident that this was so for the program in this study. The greater the urgency for the creation of entrepreneurs, as well as having entrepreneurship education program developers who share this urgency, the greater the likelihood of a positive impact.

If the program developers want to create a focused group of new entrepreneurs within a limited timeframe, I suggest that they should concentrate on individuals who have had previous practice and prior exposure, coupled with individual personalities that are positively disposed towards entrepreneurship. It will be better only to ‘groom’ the ‘will-be’ groups. If the program developers are willing to delay making a judgement on an anticipated impact on development of entrepreneurial attitudes, skills, and personal qualities, the program under consideration in this study – an ‘initial program’, aimed at identifying ‘will-be’ types – would enhance such development. The participants, so identified, would then have to be ‘groomed’ to become fully-fledged ‘will-be’ types.

CHAPTER 7

Recommendations and Conclusion

Introduction

This last chapter summarises the recommendations of the researcher to the program organisers as well as to Thailand as a whole. From my experience with the information gathered, I should like to make some recommendations, hoping that they will benefit the development of Thailand in light of this specific development in entrepreneurship education.

Recommendations to the Program Organisers

Despite the limited success of the program to create future entrepreneurs, the program had many positive influences on the participants. Participants had experienced great benefits from the program; however, there is still room for program improvement; there are some other relevant factors to consider. All in all, this impact evaluation should be utilised to provide useful advice to the program designers towards their future course of action, specifically regarding the possible ways to improve the program for future implementation and critical points to consider on the impact and role of the program.

Consistency of program delivery

A number of inconsistencies were revealed in the delivery of the program. Some of the participants, for instance, were unaware that there was a coach available to guide them through the program; others had been impressed with their relationship with their coach. It is crucial for the program designers to provide for, and ensure delivery of the same treatment among participants. With regard to coaching, whether in terms of coach availability, ensuring standardised methods of coaching, or assessing the capabilities of each coach is essential.

Tools should be used to help increase the program consistency. The use of a Gantt chart, in the form of a program weekly update sheet, should be used to monitor the performance of the participant groups. A Gantt chart gives graphical display of the different stages of a program in relation with dates and times. Such a chart would help remind and give the big picture to the staff of this program for mutual understanding of what is going on in the program at any point in time. A program weekly update sheet would also help the program staff and group coaches/mentors in monitoring the progress of each group.

The staff should be briefed regarding their role, and be made aware of the process to be undertaken for contacting or advising the participants on a systematic and continuous basis. The coaches also should be aware of the group's progress and should be able accurately to make judgments of when and how their advice would be most beneficial to the group.

A final element that should help increase the consistency of program delivery in terms of coaching is to organise manuals for the coaches/mentors. The manual should contain list of instructions of what to expect would be in the participants' mind at each stage, and a list of questions to be put to them during at specific points in time in order to give them directions, enhance

their own thinking capability, keep them on track on their goals, and to ensure they work as a team.

Difficulty of program content

Even though the program was successful in revealing to its participants what to expect from entrepreneurship as a business reality, complaints were received about the level of difficulty of the program content, especially in the training workshop. The program designers should somehow take this into consideration offering various alternatives, either by diluting the program's overwhelming content, expanding the duration of the program workshop, or arranging for a more appropriate time schedule to reduce the stress being experienced by most of the participants.

The program organisers should also divide the program workshop content into levels; for instance, for beginners and for intermediate, from which the participants might choose. The program organisers should test their training content with a trial group prior to the real program date; this way, they would ensure that the content being offered was understandable and applicable for the majority of participants. Alternatively, the program organisers might maintain the level of difficulty in terms of the program content to ensure that whoever made it through would ultimately deserve to be an entrepreneur since it is a requirement of practicing entrepreneurs that they go through all the problems and challenges in business without worrying about any level of difficulty. There are two issues to be considered: whether *difficulty* should be experienced and overcome as a reasonable expectation of entrepreneurship; whether the *content* should be adjusted to fit the participants' background capabilities.

Program warm-up period

Since the program participants came from various backgrounds and disciplines, it would be fair to give them a warm-up period before the

program application process, providing them with relevant business concepts as well as a short run-through of what they would be facing once they joined the program. This way, they would feel that no participant had gained a significant advantage over the other, or that they were disadvantaged because of their relatively lower level of business knowledge.

Other than organizing the warm up period prior to the business concept submission stage, the program should also make available a detailed manual on the Internet. Such a manual would provide step-by-step implications of required background business concepts as well as examples of the business concepts from the previous year and how these ideas were initiated, presented, and implemented.

Program encouraging factors

Other than the fascination of the business concepts themselves that attracted a number of participants towards entrepreneurship, the program's guest speakers made a significant contribution to entrepreneurship persuasion by acting as role models in business success that the participants were disposed to imitate. Aside from the guest speakers, participants who had displayed high-level business and presentation skills also had inspired their peers to become like them. In addition, the program had been successful in its role as a meeting place for future business partners who shared the same business enthusiasm.

Limited entrepreneurship persuasion

Evidence from the previous chapter suggested that the program had a limited, yet positive net effect on participants. Whether the participants decided to actually become entrepreneurs or not – 'to be' or 'not to be' – the program had influenced them one way or the other. At the end of the program, they had been briefly introduced to 'real' business. It was up to them to continue with it, reject it, have plans for it, or to get back to it. The most successful

development of entrepreneurship lay with the ‘will-be’ group, those already practicing business; however, the program should not take full credit for it. This group had studied, practiced, and been groomed for entrepreneurship long before entering the program.

The changing role of the program

A significant principle to be tested by this program was that a short-term entrepreneur incubation program like this should be able, ultimately, to develop entrepreneurship. There was insufficient evidence to support this principle. Aside from the ‘will-be’ group who had long been operating in an entrepreneurial context, none of the other participants had decided to become entrepreneurs. Nor had they proved themselves to be capable of becoming entrepreneurs at the time of their completing the program; at best, they only planned to return to it at some later date.

Either way, all participants had been given a preview of entrepreneurship. Their future intentions, however, may alter over time as they mature and are exposed to a whole lot more in this world. At a certain future point in time, they will at least be able to look back and reflect on what they experienced with this program and to decide whether or not it is actually what they now want to do. This is a significant end result for the program.

Since the program failed to create a significant number of future entrepreneurs as its end result, it is appropriate for the program organisers to reconsider the objectives of the program. Should the program shift its objectives from encouraging young Thais to be future entrepreneurs to the new objective of making it a vehicle to identify potential entrepreneurs and to screen out those with a non-entrepreneurial mindset? This is the direction I should like the program designers to think about thoroughly. Since their program had been successful in distinguishing between the ‘will-be’, ‘may-be’, and ‘will not be’ groups, it is clear that it could be used as an effective identification process to locate respondents on whom resources should be

invested and an effort should be invested in grooming them to be future entrepreneurs in Thailand.

Recommendations for Thailand

The findings of this research were not limited to giving feedback to the program organisers but could be extended to make recommendations for Thailand's entrepreneurship development in its entirety.

A Degree in Entrepreneurship

The research findings suggested that parents played a very important role in their children's study and career decisions. As a norm in this country, children tend to obey their parents. To be assured of a certain level of security in life, parents often demand that their children at least graduate with a degree. At this point in time, a bachelor degree in entrepreneurship that employs learning by experience does not exist. Furthermore, since this short-term entrepreneur incubation program had limited success in entrepreneurship creation, a four-year bachelor degree should be introduced in Thailand. In such a degree, students should engage in a project-based real-life business experience as part of the course. Students should choose to enrol in those portions of the coursework for which they require specific know-how to carry out real-life projects. For instance, there should be some prerequisite courses in which all students have to enrol; however, alternative courses should be provided to accommodate the knowledge and disciplines required for their real-life project implementation. The course selection process should offer a menu of courses from which the students could freely choose. The prerequisite courses would consist of elements of accounting, finance, economics, resource management, and sales and marketing. The menu of alternative courses should provide selection from specific courses such as chemistry, biology, languages, manufacturing, organisation management, and service marketing.

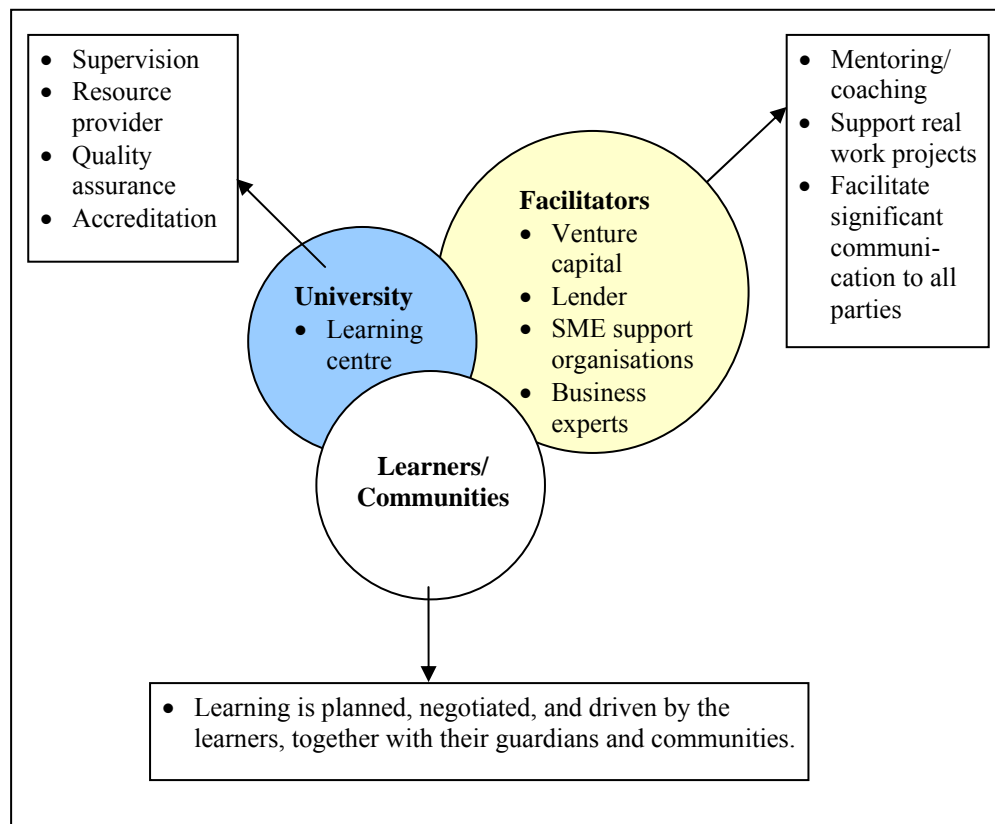
Once the students complete the four-year real business experience plus some portion of coursework, they should be formally awarded a bachelor degree. This would enable them to comply with parental wishes. At the same time, they would become entrepreneurs without having had to compromise the opportunity to graduate with a degree. At the end of the four-year entrepreneurship degree, graduates would be expected to graduate with their own real-life business operating, or at least be highly capable of starting a potential business.

I believe that to make such an entrepreneurship degree most effective in the methods of learning by experience, the university/ies offering this degree should form agreements with industry to allow the students to be immersed in how real business is done, from the very front end with customers to the very back end of raw material acquisition from real industry situations. The methods of learning should focus on what each student wants and needs to know in order to carry out their real-life project as part of the four-year course. Jones & English (2004) point out that in the contemporary approach to entrepreneurship education, a teaching style that is action-oriented and which encourages experiential learning, problem solving, and project-based learning is the process that best provides the mix of enterprising skills and behaviours required to create and manage small business compared to the traditional lecturer-centred and passive learning approach.

The essentials of this entrepreneurship degree, shown in Figure 7.1, should consist of three main players, the university, the facilitators, and the students themselves. The role of the three different players should be explained as follows:

1. **Universities**

The university in charge of this entrepreneurship degree should act as the learning centre in charge of supervision, resource provision,

FIGURE 7.1 ESSENTIALS OF THE ENTREPRENEURSHIP DEGREE

quality assurance and accreditation. It should also be the centre where the curriculum should be researched, evaluated, and further developed.

2. Facilitators

The facilitators should be formed from a network of financial institutions, industry specific institutions, Small and Medium Enterprises' (SME) support organisations, and a network of business experts. These groups of facilitators should be composed of different types of players. For instance, the financial institutions should be a bank, venture capitalists, business groups, or equity financiers who would be likely to invest early in potential businesses as primary investors. The facilitators should be in charge of mentoring, coaching,

supporting and consulting within the real-life project work. As their name suggests, the facilitators should also coordinate and facilitate student learning processes by communicating to all the parties involved. A primary facilitator, in charge of communication, should be designated.

3. **Learners**

The students should be the focus of learning within this entrepreneurship degree. Learning should be planned, negotiated, and driven by learners together with the support of both their guardians and their communities. The learners should be evaluated individually, or as a team; they should also be judged from the success of their real-life businesses initiated as part of the degree.

This entrepreneurship degree should also serve as an alternative in which participants in the short-term entrepreneurship incubation program might participate, thus avoiding conflict between students and their parents. The program would then screen respondents suitable for the full entrepreneurial degree.

Development of a practical career test

Part of the program objectives was to encourage participants to make decisions about their future career directions. The program gave participants the opportunities test if entrepreneurship was right for them. Most participants were able to realise by themselves what suited them best. During the high school period, students were often encouraged to take a career test to determine with which disciplines they were best suited; however, such career tests are paper-based tests, with limited practical implications. Such tests do not allow students to be aware of what they really have to go through and what a specific career really entails. I am not a strong believer that paper-based career tests are the most effective method of directing students into a career option.

Through my experience with this program, I think the program should be adapted to be a kind of practical career test. During the test, students would be able to get to know themselves better and to realise what they were capable of. What should make this practical career test program different from the ordinary career test normally done at schools is the fact that such practical career trials should allow participants to identify a set of parameters: what they want to be in the future based on their hands-on experience; identifying the existing levels of their skill sets; realising the extent to which those skill sets should be developed according to their specific career needs. On the other hand, the students may find out from the practical career trial that certain skills were impossible for them to develop, and that they should seek alternative careers that do not require such skills.

The untapped creativity in young Thais

This research has indicated to me that we should never take for granted the creativity of young Thais. The business ideas that the participants generated, and which were reported in Chapter 1, were not only creative but also practical as proven by the students who were able to implement them during the course of this program. It is likely that extraordinary things will happen if the untapped creativity in business concept generation is harnessed.

Conclusion

As pointed out by Honig (2001), formal education should enrich young adults' knowledge. He suggests that both direct and indirect experiences are crucial in developing entrepreneurial competencies in the entrepreneur incubation process. The SBYEA program tried to groom young Thais who were interested in doing business by directing them towards entrepreneurship. Grooming of entrepreneurship may be interpreted in different ways, depending on the objectives of each particular program. For

the SBYEA program, I have categorised the level of entrepreneurship grooming into two levels of success: to encourage and to incubate.

First level of success: To encourage

The first level of success was that the program should *encourage* the participants towards entrepreneurship. Encouragement of entrepreneurship means that the program should stimulate more awareness of entrepreneurial concepts to the program participants in terms of what entrepreneurship is all about, what it takes to actually become an entrepreneur, and the disciplines and knowledge with which to be equipped in developing entrepreneurial competencies. This program was able to achieve successfully all these through its emphasis on entrepreneurial learning by experience. The participants learned more about entrepreneurship once they had direct experience with it. Entrepreneurship encouragement through this program was particularly acknowledged by those participants who had limited business backgrounds prior to joining the program.

For those participants who had a prior awareness of business or who already perceived of entrepreneurship in a certain way, the program was able to point out to them the reality of business, either reinforcing their current perception or introducing them to new ways of thinking about business. For the group with a limited business background, the program was unable to immediately convince them that entrepreneurship was an appropriate career choice. There was no significant suggestion that these people would actually become entrepreneurs as a result of the program. By way of comparison, those participants for whom entrepreneurship was already a priority in their lives, the program was able to tailor their business concepts in a systematic manner.

Second level of success: To incubate

The other level of program success was whether the program should *incubate* its participants to actually become entrepreneurs. Before I proceed further with this concept, I should like to clarify the incubation aspects of this program. Incubation may be represented metaphorically by the state where eggs are being hatched or are enabled to grow under conditions that promote development. In relation to this program, incubation represented the process of grooming participants to finally create young Thai entrepreneurs. This program was unable to incubate those participants with limited business experience as well as those who did not already have a vision of becoming an entrepreneur prior to joining the program; however, the program provided accommodating opportunity to those who had their minds set on becoming entrepreneurs to actually develop business concepts that matched their interests while being funded by the bank. The latter group, the entrepreneur-oriented, were able to utilise the opportunity of real business implementation to initially test the feasibility of their business ideas; later, they could decide whether or not they should pursue such business to its fulfilment, or to consider it in the longer term. The program was also able to educate the entrepreneur-oriented or the 'will be' group on the practical steps of business implementation as well as to provide them with the knowledge required to manage their resources in a systematic manner to potentially increase the success rate of their business concepts.

Another significant impact of the program was that it allowed the participants to learn more about themselves. They should figure out what they wanted, or did not want to do in life; thus, the program had pointed out to them what they were good at as well as what they were not good at. It also demonstrated to them that if entrepreneurship was compatible with them they might decide to pursue this as a career. This prevented the participants from making poor decisions in terms of their career, thus reducing the chance of a wasted investment in terms of their tertiary education.

Since the program should not *encourage* those who are not tuned into entrepreneurship to become entrepreneurs, yet should *incubate* those who were readily persuaded towards entrepreneurship to become a real entrepreneur, the program was best able to position itself as an initial tool to separate the ‘entrepreneur-to-be’ from the ‘will not be’. Once potential entrepreneurs were identified within the program, it was either inadequate or too short to actually groom them to be equipped for the competition in the business world despite the fact that the program had efficiently provided the participants with accommodating conditions for their entrepreneurial competencies to be developed.

Let me illustrate the point I am trying to make here with a scenario. Suppose you knew that you wanted to be a swimmer and one day you were put into the swimming pool to test your abilities in order to re-affirm if swimming was still the aspiration you wanted to pursue further. The fact that you could swim in the pool does not mean that you would be ready to swim in the ocean where the realities of challenges lie. You would certainly need further practice and techniques on your swimming skills in order to be strong enough for swimming in the deep blue sea.

As I have discussed earlier in my recommendations, an entrepreneurial degree would be one of the solutions to further incubate and develop sustainable competencies in entrepreneurship in the long run. Essentially, development of such competencies takes time and effort. A bachelor degree that would take four years to complete would seem to be a reasonable timeframe and approach for competitive entrepreneurial development.

Finally, I am convinced that given a path and the impetus to take the next step, the selected ‘entrepreneur-to-be’ from the program could be groomed to be successful entrepreneurs who would play an important role in driving Thailand towards long-term competitive global positioning.

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APPENDIX A QUESTIONNAIRE

PLEASE RESPOND TO EVERY QUESTION.

1. Desire in becoming entrepreneurs

<i>Measure of your response at the beginning of the program.</i>		<i>Measure of your response now, at the end of the program.</i>
weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	2. How strong is your wish to become a future entrepreneur?	weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

3. Influence from the Krung-Thai Young Enterprise Awards program (SBYEA)

How strong has the SBYEA program influenced you to become a future entrepreneur?	weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
--	--

4. Reasons that have supported / prevented you to become an entrepreneur

How strong are the following reasons why you might wish to become an entrepreneur?

➤ Encouragement by parents	weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
➤ Encouragement by society	weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
➤ Tired of academic program	weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
➤ Not wanting to be an employee	weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
➤ Freedom to operate independently	weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
➤ Financial return of a business	weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
➤ Personal satisfaction	weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
➤ To leave a legacy for my family	weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
➤ Other (specify): _____	weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Appendices

5. How strong are the following reasons why you might NOT wish to become an entrepreneur?

➤ High risk and uncertainty	weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
➤ Hard work and long hours	weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
➤ Too much stress	weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
➤ Possibility of business failure	weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
➤ No capital to invest	weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
➤ Want a family life	weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
➤ Other (Specify): _____	weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

6. How strong were the following in helping you first come up with a business concept for the SBYEA program?

➤ Working all by myself	weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
➤ Teacher's guidance	weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
➤ Family's guidance	weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
➤ Surrounding environment	weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
➤ Friends' influence	weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
➤ Other (Specify): _____	weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

7. How many years from now do you think you will have a business of your own? (Please put a 'X' on the selected answer.)

- | | |
|---|--------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Less than 1 year | <input type="checkbox"/> 2-5 years |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 5-10 years | <input type="checkbox"/> 10-15 years |
| <input type="checkbox"/> More than 15 years | <input type="checkbox"/> Undecided |

8. How strongly interested are you in establishing the following kind of business?

<i>Measure of your response at the beginning of the course.</i>	Interest	<i>Measure of your response now, at the end of the course.</i>
weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	4. Consumer goods	weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	5. High-tech products	weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	6. Service	weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	7. Agricultural products	weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	8. Products from local resources	weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	Other (Specify): _____ _____	weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

9. Do you have a role model of successful entrepreneur? (Please put a 'X' on the selected answer.)

Yes

No

If 'Yes', specify your ideal, or name a person: _____

10. How strong do you think a successful entrepreneur must be in the following characteristics?

➤ Out-of-the-box thinking	weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
➤ Awareness of opportunities	weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
➤ Desire to succeed	weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
➤ Willingness to take risks	weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
➤ Self-confidence	weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
➤ Commitment to recovery through experimenting with new possibility	weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
➤ Need for control	weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
➤ Openness to new information	weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
➤ Tolerance of ambiguity	weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Appendices

➤ Ability to make judgmental decisions	weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
➤ Great vision and insights	weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
➤ Systematic thinking and derivation of vision into action	weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
➤ Team leadership	weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
➤ Other (Specify): _____	weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

11. How strong do you think you are in relation to the following characteristics?

<i>Measure of your response at the beginning of the course.</i>	Characteristic	<i>Measure of your response now, at the end of the course.</i>
weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	1. Out of the box thinking	weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	2. Awareness of opportunities	weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	3. Desire to succeed	weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	4. Willingness to take risks	weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	5. Self-confidence	weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	6. Commitment to recovery through experimenting with new possibility	weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	7. Need for control	weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	8. Openness to new information	weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	9. Tolerance for ambiguity	weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	10. Ability to make judgmental decisions	weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	11. Great vision and insights	weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	12. Systematic thinking and derivation of vision into action	weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	13. Team leadership	weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	14. Other (Specify): _____	weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

12. Have you ever implemented any of your business ideas? (Please put a 'X' on the selected answer.)

Yes

No

If 'Yes', indicate the level of success of this implementation by answering the following item:

➤ How successful was the implementation?	unsuccessful << >>successful 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
--	--

13. How strongly do you agree about the following statements, given a specific business concept?

<i>Measure of your response at the beginning of the course.</i>	Statement	<i>Measure of your response now, at the end of the course.</i>
weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	1. I could translate this business concept into series of action plans.	weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	2. I am certain that I could identify all the resources needed (e.g. human resource, funding source, etc.) in putting this business concept into implementation.	weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	3. I am certain that I know how to acquire all the resources needed (e.g. human resource, funding source, etc.) in putting this business concept into implementation.	weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	4. I could bring all the resources together by systematic planning.	weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	5. I could identify the steps to be taken in starting this business.	weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	6. I understand how the resources needed and the steps in implementing the business would be different, depending on the nature of the business.	weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	7. I am confident that I could be successful in implementing this business concept.	weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

14. During the SBYEA course, to what extent were you involved in the following areas with the group in the implementation of the following business concepts?

Area	<i>Measure of your involvement during the course.</i>
1. Planning	weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
2. Marketing and sales	weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
3. Production	weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
4. Distribution	weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
5. Acquiring of raw material or inputs	weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
6. Funding	weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
7. Accounting	weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
8. Other (Specify): _____	weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

15. If you were to implement a given business in the future, how strongly would you like to be involved in the following areas of the implementation?

Area	<i>Measure of your involvement in the implementation</i>
1. Planning	weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
2. Marketing and sales	weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
3. Production	weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
4. Distribution	weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
5. Acquiring of raw material or inputs	weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
6. Funding	weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
7. Accounting	weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
8. Other (Specify): _____	weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Appendices

16. Are you still continuing to get involved in the project you have started in the SBYEA program? (Please put a 'X' on the selected answer.)

Yes

No

If 'Yes', indicate the strength of your continuing involvement:

weak <<	>>strong
1 2 3 4 5	6 7 8 9 10

17. The following statements are designed to indicate the strength of your feelings about the following statements before and after the SBYEA program:

<i>Measure of your response at the beginning of the course.</i>	Statement	<i>Measure of your response now, at the end of the course.</i>
weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	1. I am convinced that I could be one of the successful entrepreneurs.	weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	2. It would be better to start my career being an employee before first owning my own business.	weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	3. I believe that the higher education I can get, the more likely this would help me to become a successful entrepreneur.	weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	4. I find it acceptable to have started a business and failed.	weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	5. Failure in running a business would not stop me from becoming successful entrepreneur.	weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

18. If you had a friend who started owning a business but then failed, how strongly would you suggest the following to him?

<i>Measure of your response at the beginning of the course.</i>	Advice	<i>Measure of your response now, at the end of the course.</i>
weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	1. Start over again.	weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	2. Get more knowledge in running a business.	weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	3. Get more experience as an employee.	weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	4. Quit and find something else to do.	weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Appendices

weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	5. Other (Specify): _____	weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
--	------------------------------	--

19. In which field you would like to continue your study?

Your thought before you joined the program

What is your career choice?

Your thought after you joined the program

What is your career choice?

20. The SBYEA program's influence in decisions regarding your career choice

How strong has this program help you make decisions about your future career?	weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
---	--

21. After graduation, how strongly do you want to become the following?

<i>Measure of your response at the beginning of the course.</i>	Career	<i>Measure of your response now, at the end of the course.</i>
weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	➤ Employee.	weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	➤ Own business owner.	weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	➤ Government's officer	weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	➤ Other (Specify): _____	weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

22. How strongly do you feel about the following statements?

<i>Measure of your response at the beginning of the course.</i>	Statement	<i>Measure of your response now, at the end of the course.</i>
weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	1. Hands-on training in entrepreneurship helps create future entrepreneurs.	weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	2. If I had been trained by an entrepreneurial workshop using hands-on training, I would feel more confident and stimulated to start owning a business.	weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	3. Knowledge of entrepreneurship could be better delivered to me by experience.	weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	4. I prefer learning by experience or hands-on training more than my class of formal education.	weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	5. I believe that formal education could help create future entrepreneurs once they have the chance to continue their study within the field of interest.	weak << >>strong 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

APPENDIX B SCORING SHEET

EXAMPLE OF A SCORING SHEET

MAIN OBJECTIVE 1: MEASUREMENT OF ENTREPRENEURIAL THOUGHTS			
Criteria	Weighing factor	Scale	Derived score
1 Desire in becoming entrepreneur	6.67%	10	6.67
2 Time to be entrepreneurs	6.67%	0	0.00
3 Entrepreneurial characteristics	86.67%	9	9.55
Out-of-the-box thinking	10.612%	5	4.42
Opportunity awareness	8.844%	5	4.86
Desire to succeed	9.728%	5	5.31
Willing to take risks	10.612%	9	7.96
Self-confidence	2.653%	5	1.33
Commitment to recovery	5.306%	5	2.65
Need for control	2.653%	5	1.33
Open to new info.	2.653%	5	1.33
Tolerance of ambiguity	6.190%	7	4.33
Judgmental decisions	7.959%	8	6.37
Vision	5.306%	9	4.78
Systematic thinking/vision to action	5.306%	10	5.31
Team leader	100%		66.18
		Total score	100
Objective contribution to the Final Score	35%		24.2%

MAIN OBJECTIVE 2: MEASUREMENT OF PRACTICE SKILLS TO PROCESS THOUGHTS TO IMPLEMENTATION			
Criteria	Weighing factor	Scale	Derived score
1 Translation of concept into action plan	12.50%	9	11.25
2 Identification of resources needed	12.50%	9	11.25
3 Acquisition of resources needed	12.50%	9	11.25
4 Systematic planning	12.50%	9	11.25
5 Identification of necessary steps to be taken	12.50%	10	12.50
6 Understanding the differences of steps and resources in relation to business type	12.50%	7	8.75
7 Confidence in implementation	12.50%	7	8.75
8 Field of involvement perception	12.50%	8	10.00
*Planning		10	
*Marketing/sales		9	
*Production		9	
*Distribution		9	
*Raw mat'l/inputs		9	
*Funding		9	
*Accounting		1	
	100%	Total score	85
			100
Objective contribution to the Final Score	35%		29.8%

SUB OBJECTIVE 3: MEASUREMENT OF 'CAN DO' ATTITUDE			
Criteria	Weighing factor	Scale	Derived score
1 Confidence of being future entrepreneur	33.33%	9	30.00
2 Prompt belief to start own business	33.33%	9	30.00
*Thoughts to be employee first before own buz		7	
*Thoughts to pursue higher education first		8	
3 Ability to cope with failure and ready for recovery	33.33%	8	26.67
*Acceptability to start business and fail		8	
*Failure does not stop them from entrepreneurship		8	
*Advice to a friend to start over after started business and fail		8	
	100%	Total score	86.67
			100
Objective contribution to the Final Score	10%		8.7%

SUB OBJECTIVE 4: REALIZATION OF FUTURE DIRECTION OF WHAT THEY WANT TO BECOME			
Criteria	Weighing factor	Scale	Derived score
1 Career choice realization	50%	10	50.00
2 Career intention	50%	10.00	50.00
*Employee		1	
*Business owner		10	
*Government's officer		5	
	100%	Total score	100.00
			100
Objective contribution to the Final Score	10%		10.0%

SUB OBJECTIVE 5: SIGNIFICANCE OF EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING			
Criteria	Weighing factor	Scale	Derived score
1 Contribution of experiential learning	25%	10	25.00
2 Confidence gained by experiential learning	25%	10	25.00
3 Knowledge deliverance by experiential learning	25%	10	25.00
4 Experiential learning dominance over formal edu.	25%	9	22.50
*Preference		10	
*Formal education helps create entrepreneurs		2	
	100%	Total score	97.50
			100
Objective contribution to the Final Score	10%		9.8%

FINAL SCORE 81.3

ATTACHMENT 1: DESCRIPTION OF RESEARCH STUDY

STATE BANK YOUNG ENTERPRISE AWARDS

This research study to be undertaken by me, Mr Sumit Champrasit, is an evaluation of the State Bank Enterprise Awards (SBYEA) that commenced in September 2000 and was completed in 2002. The SBYEA program was organised by State Bank PLC as a program for business support in order to deliver awareness to high school students on entrepreneurship and encourage the development of future entrepreneurs through a competition. As part of the program process, the students developed a business concept in form of a written report and some were selected to join a workshop in deriving the action plans to implement the concepts that they had developed.

What have the students learned from the SBYEA program? What do they think about entrepreneurship? Do they believe that the program could encourage young people like you to be future entrepreneurs? These are the sample questions for this study and I am asking permission for the potential research participants to take part on a voluntarily basis.

In PHASE I of the study, the research participant will be asked to fill out a questionnaire, which will be mailed to his/her residence. It is expected that topics such as their future direction, their attitude towards becoming entrepreneur, the program advantages and disadvantages, the method of learning by experience, and entrepreneurial practices would be addressed in the questionnaire.

In PHASE II of the study, the research participant will be invited to join an interview (45 – 60 minutes) at the school that they used to study when they participated in the SBYEA program. The students' comfort will be my first priority for the interview. They will be free to ask any questions beforehand. The interview format will be a conversation during which the student will be free to express their opinions about the concepts of entrepreneurship and the total program.

The discussion will be audio recorded. The audio recording will be made so that the researcher does not have to take notes and can concentrate on the conversations with the students. The students will be asked for their permission for audio recording. If they do not feel comfortable with audio recording, then it is not necessary. Participant numbers will be used instead of names to ensure confidentiality. It is highly unlikely that there will be any risks to the students and I anticipate that they will find it an enjoyable experience. Their participation will be fully voluntary and whether they choose to take part or not will not have any future impact on them in any way.

All information will be strictly confidential. No names will be used in the analysis or reporting of the study. The findings of this study will provide feedback on developing a more efficient program that will be able to produce a new breed of learning entrepreneurs with the potential to drive a secure and sustainable Thai economic recovery.

Please feel free to ask any questions that you may have.

Mr. Sumit Champrasit (Researcher)
Tel: 02-2041677 ext 102
Email: champsumit@hotmail.com

ATTACHMENT 2A: PARENTAL CONSENT FORM

FOR RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS RECRUITED FOR BOTH THE SURVEY OF QUESTIONNAIRES AND INTERVIEWS (PHASE I & PHASE II)

PARTICIPATION IN THE STUDY

The research participants will be participating in both phase I and phase II of the study as detailed in the information sheet enclosed. In phase I, they will be asked to fill out a questionnaire. In phase II, they will be invited to join an interview (45 – 60 minutes).

I confirm that I have discussed with my son or daughter

about the State Bank Enterprise Awards study, which is to be conducted by researcher Mr. Sumit Champrasit of Victoria University and Burapha University, and that he/she has my permission to take part in this study.

The purpose and the procedures of this study together with any risks have been fully explained to me in the information sheet provided and I understand that I am entitled to ask questions about this study to the researcher at any time.

I consent to my son/daughter to take part in the study. All information will be strictly confidential. I understand that in giving my permission, the study will be explained to my son/daughter and he/she will be given opportunities to ask any questions at any time. His/her participation is entirely voluntary and he/she may withdraw at any time without jeopardizing him/her in any way.

Name.....

Signature.....

Witness name.....

(other than the researcher)

Witness Signature.....

Date.....

* This form is required in case that the research participant is aged under 18 years old.

If you have any queries the participation in this study, you may contact the researcher Mr. Sumit Champrasit (tel: 02 204 1677 ext. 102) or Dr Ian Ling (tel: +61 3 9857 9837). If you have any complaints about the way your son or daughter has been treated, you may contact the Secretary, University Human Research Ethics Committee, Victoria University of Technology, PO Box 14428 MC, Melbourne, 8001 (tel: +61 3 9688 4710).

ATTACHMENT 2B: PARENTAL CONSENT FORM*

FOR RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS RECRUITED FOR THE SURVEY OF QUESTIONNAIRES (PHASE I)

PARTICIPATION IN THE STUDY

The research participants will be participating in phase I as detailed in the information sheet enclosed. In phase I, they will be asked to fill out a questionnaire.

I confirm that I have discussed with my son or daughter

about the State Bank Enterprise Awards study, which is to be conducted by researcher Mr. Sumit Champrasit of Victoria University and Burapha University, and that he/she has my permission to take part in this study.

The purpose and the procedures of this study together with any risks have been fully explained to me in the information sheet provided and I understand that I am entitled to ask questions about this study to the researcher at any time.

I consent to my son/daughter to take part in the study. All information will be strictly confidential. I understand that in giving my permission, the study will be explained to my son/daughter and he/she will be given opportunities to ask any questions at any time. His/her participation is entirely voluntary and he/she may withdraw at any time without jeopardizing her in any way.

Name.....

Signature.....

Witness name.....

(other than the researcher)

Witness Signature.....

Date.....

*This form is required in case that the research participant is aged under 18 years old.

If you have any queries the participation in this study, you may contact the researcher Mr. Sumit Champrasit (tel: 02 204 1677 ext. 102) or Dr Ian Ling (tel: +61 3 9857 9837). If you have any complaints about the way your son or daughter has been treated, you may contact the Secretary, University Human Research Ethics Committee, Victoria University of Technology, PO Box 14428 MC, Melbourne, 8001 (tel: +61 3 9688 4710).

ATTACHMENT 3A: PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM

FOR RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS RECRUITED FOR BOTH THE SURVEY OF QUESTIONNAIRES AND INTERVIEWS (PHASE I & PHASE II)

PARTICIPATION IN THE STUDY
The research participants will be participating in phase I and phase II as detailed in the information sheet enclosed. In phase I, they will be asked to fill out a questionnaire. In phase II, they will be invited to join an interview (45 – 60 minutes).

I confirm that I have volunteered to take part in the State Bank Enterprise Awards study, which is conducted by researcher Mr. Sumit Champrasit of Victoria University and Burapha University.

I certify that the aim of the study and what I will have to do together with any risks associated has been fully explained to me by the researcher and I have had an opportunity to ask questions.

I agree to participate in this study. All information will be strictly confidential.

I understand that my participation is up to me and that I have the right to withdraw at any time and that this withdrawal will not jeopardise me in any way.

Name.....

Signature.....

Witness name.....

(other than the researcher)

Witness Signature.....

Date.....

If you have any queries the participation in this study, you may contact the researcher Mr. Sumit Champrasit (tel: 02 204 1677 ext. 102) or Dr Ian Ling (tel: +61 3 9857 9837). If you have any complaints about the way your son or daughter has been treated, you may contact the Secretary, University Human Research Ethics Committee, Victoria University of Technology, PO Box 14428 MC, Melbourne, 8001 (tel: +61 3 9688 4710).

ATTACHMENT 3B: PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM

**FOR RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS RECRUITED FOR THE SURVEY OF
QUESTIONNAIRES ONLY (PHASE I)**

PARTICIPATION IN THE STUDY

The research participants will be participating in phase I as detailed in the information sheet enclosed. In phase I, they will be asked to fill out a questionnaire.

I confirm that I have volunteered to take part in the State Bank Enterprise Awards study, which is conducted by researcher Mr. Sumit Champrasit of Victoria University and Burapha University.

I certify that the aim of the study and what I will have to do together with any risks associated has been fully explained to me by the researcher and I have had an opportunity to ask questions.

I agree to participate in this study. All information will be strictly confidential.

I understand that my participation is up to me and that I have the right to withdraw at any time and that this withdrawal will not jeopardise me in any way.

Name.....

Signature.....

Witness name.....

(other than the researcher)

Witness Signature.....

Date.....

If you have any queries the participation in this study, you may contact the researcher Mr. Sumit Champrasit (tel: 02 204 1677 ext. 102) or Dr Ian Ling (tel: +61 3 9857 9837). If you have any complaints about the way your son or daughter has been treated, you may contact the Secretary, University Human Research Ethics Committee, Victoria University of Technology, PO Box 14428 MC, Melbourne, 8001 (tel: +61 3 9688 4710).

ATTACHMENT 4: BANK APPROVAL FORM

LETTER OF APPROVAL FROM STATE BANK PLC

Date _____

State Bank PLC certifies that Mr. Sumit Champrasit is given the consent to conduct a study on the State Bank Young Enterprise Award Program. The objectives of the study, together with the study procedures listed hereunder have been fully explained to us and that we willingly give permission to Mr. Sumit Champrasit to conduct an evaluation study about our program and to recruit the program participants as part of his research procedures.

Procedures:

Phase 1 is a survey by questionnaires to (1) 30 students of all program participants and (2) 30 students those who were not selected into the program but have initially applied to join the program by sending in their business concepts. These students also got similarities to the program participants in terms of their age, education level, geography, and that all have been taught under the formal education methods.

Phase 2 is an in-depth interview of the program participant group only (number of interview sample is subject to the result of the survey).

State Bank PLC will provide full cooperation in any requested supports needed in conducting the study.

Signed: _____

()

Authorised Person of State Bank PLC

<p>If you have any queries the participation in this study, you may contact the researcher Mr. Sumit Champrasit (tel: 02 204 1677 ext. 102) or Dr Ian Ling (tel: +61 3 9857 9837). If you have any complaints about the way your son or daughter has been treated, you may contact the Secretary, University Human Research Ethics Committee, Victoria University of Technology, PO Box 14428 MC, Melbourne, 8001 (tel: +61 3 9688 4710).</p>
