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Understanding Entrepreneurship Training in Incubation Hubs

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ABSTRACT

Many scholars regard the incubation process as a mystery because little is known about what unfolds inside incubation hubs. The business incubation process is a critical initiative that can aid in the growth of new firms. However, little research has been conducted to corroborate what occurs within an incubation hub. The study was aimed at understanding what happens to start-ups in incubation hubs. The research was conducted among Harare start-up founding entrepreneurs. The case study approach was used in this qualitative study. Data was gathered using an interview guide. The sample comprised 21 start-up founders divided into three focus groups. Incubation hubs have a good impact on start-up development, according to the research. The findings offer a rare glimpse into the activities of incubation hubs. It was concluded that incubation hubs make a significant contribution that was critical to the development and survival of start-ups. The study contributed to the theoretical gap by adding more literature on start-up development.

INTRODUCTION

This research aims to present, explain, summarise and analyze the facts gathered by means of an investigation into what transpires during start-up business incubation. Specific aspects of what transpires in the incubation centers remain the preserve of start-ups that would have undergone the process and few scholars have explored the phenomenon. Literature showed that there was little that was known about what happens during and after company incubation since these aspects were considered black boxes and this includes the training process. Salamzadeh and Kesim (2015) noted that the start-up development stage remains a black box, as it is not well-defined at the level of analysis. Small business challenges are many and are not limited to lack of finance, team management, business knowledge, or technology lag but it is these development stages that are messy and highly uncertain (Salamzadeh and Kesim 2015).

This research provides an in-depth understanding of entrepreneurship training in

incubation hubs. Most often what happens in incubation hubs remains within the hubs themselves and what people ordinarily see are the outputs. Start-ups' financial knowledge, marketing capabilities, and business strategy are frequently improved through training programs offered by incubation hubs. According to Tselepis (2018), training programs at the incubation hubs allow start-ups to participate in innovative endeavors while also leveraging the hub's connections with formal businesses to gain access to markets outside their close environment. This paper goes a step further to understand what happens during the training programs and provides insight into the whole process of start-up development.

Entrepreneurship development is an evolutionary process that necessitates careful planning, close supervision of functional units, and the establishment of suitable facilities (Haghighi et al., 2018). According to Tubey et al. (2015), entrepreneurship development is the practice of developing entrepreneurial skills and knowledge through organized training and capacity-building

programs. It can be said that entrepreneurship development is a set of activities aimed at improving an individual's or a group's expertise, ability, behavior, and attitudes for them to take on the position of the entrepreneur (Lawal, Iyiola, & Adegbuyi, 2018).

According to Tende (2014), entrepreneurship development centers on broadening the base of entrepreneurs to increase the pace at which start-ups are developed, as well as focusing on individuals who want to start or broaden emerging businesses. Access to necessary programs, lines of credit, and infrastructure and coordinated teamwork and cooperation between organizations involved, regardless of fragmented bureaucracy, are prerequisites for entrepreneurship development. Entrepreneurial development addresses the issues of speeding up the economy's transformation, ensuring marketplace saturation with goods and services, sustaining a competitive climate, financial sustainability, and job creation (Yaluner et al., 2019). The importance of entrepreneurship creation can be seen from the standpoint of promoting economic growth, creativity, and sustainability (Lawal et al., 2018).

Yaluner et al. (2019) noted that the absence of a holistic systematic model and inconsistency of government policy for the control of the business operations, especially on the complexity of legislative compliance, approval, and tax systems, limited the development of entrepreneurial potential as the key driver of the transformation of the domestic market structure. Davari and Farkhmanesh (2016) analyzed entrepreneurship growth strategies in various countries and suggested that these strategies can be divided into the following six categories: (1) Encouragement of entrepreneurship to instill a constructive outlook toward it. (2) Training on entrepreneurship in the educational setting. (3) Improving the entrepreneurial climate by lowering administrative and regulatory standards, allowing for easier entrance, sustainability, and development of businesses, as well as quick exit. (4) Providing initial finance and running a business to raise funding for young businesses and start-ups. (5) Expanding the quantity and efficiency of market funding for existing and new businesses, with a focus on supporting start-up firms. (6) Devising strategies to concentrate on the target audience, such as raising the number of

creative entrepreneurs or enhancing the pace of business start-ups within neighborhood communities.

Entrepreneurship development is a complex and demanding process. Small businesses are more successful in using different resources and are stronger in areas where large corporations are unable to operate effectively, generate new jobs, or manage their manufacturing costs on a more consistent basis (Chernopyatov et al., 2018). As a result of the advent of new markets, sectors, structural forms, technologies, and increased wages, social capital is boosted, resulting in improved living conditions for the population.

Incubation is a crucial step in the entrepreneurial process which includes a variety of different tasks, the goal of which is to promote start-up development. The process may last a few years before the start-up has reached a sustainable level with resources such as coaching, finance, and access to office space (Jakobsen et al., 2017). The level of incubation in the company incubator involves the input, process, and output stages and pays critical attention to the effectiveness, performance, importance, utility, and sustainability of the processes (Amelia et al., 2018).

Amelia et al. (2018) argued that the depth to which the incubate implements the organizational goals laid out in the business strategy and the extent to which the incubatee's service meets the needs of consumers leads to success. Further to that, they observed that an incubatee's financial viability, level of demand for business incubation space and facilities, costs for incubatees relative to market prices as well as graduation rates, and retention of graduates in the local market are of paramount importance. The extent to which the incubator supports new start-ups in long-term work and the wealth generation segment of the local economy are also critical factors at this stage. The whole approach supports the cross-fertilization of ideas (Steiner & Teasdale, 2016).

The incubator tracks the success of its tenant firms and offers guidance to help mitigate risk by stopping them from making errors. When issues occur, the incubator will offer business support services if appropriate (Hausberg & Korreck, 2020). Ayatse et al. (2017) noted, however, that whatever happens inside the incubator including its internal dynamism remains a black box and the processes at

this stage are not exposed to the public to any great extent.

The entrepreneurship model is a philosophy that is structured to integrate entrepreneurial characteristics into enterprises (Baporikar, 2015). The establishment of a new business enterprise as a way of delivering jobs for a person is referred to as the entrepreneurial model (Cavanagh, 2013). The research focuses on two models of entrepreneurship education that is radiant and magnet models.

The radiant model features entrepreneurship programs outside of a business school that promotes content targeted at non-business entrants (Duval-Couetil, Shartrand, & Reed, 2016). The radiant concept is geared at non-business students and centers on context-specific programs and entrepreneurship expert interest. Entrepreneurial education is becoming more widely available in fields that are not specifically relevant to business (Amadi-Echendu et al., 2016). This may provide business skills for practitioners such as physicians, pharmacists, and other specialists who want to establish their operations but do not know how to manage a business. The radiant model uses a clustered approach, with the center of gravity in each academic unit and an external administrative unit tasked with coordinating entrepreneurship education programs around the campus (Pauna & Frank, 2017). Each institutional unit is responsible for the finance and administration of its entrepreneurship programs.

The magnet model attracts learners to entrepreneurship programs provided by business schools (Duval-Couetil et al., 2016). The magnet model is intended to draw entrants to a range of specific business school classes (Amadi-Echendu et al., 2016). The magnet model is a heavily concentrated approach with the center of gravity typically being the business school, which employs its own staff and does the administration (Pauna & Frank, 2017). A business school serves as the center of gravity, and the magnet model allows the business faculty to offer its entrepreneurship studies to everyone.

Although the radiant model is more appealing to teachers, parents, and alumni, the magnet model is easier to administer since funding, students, and programs are all centralized in one location. While the magnet model is simpler to adopt, it can create disagreements in the long run since every unit

concerned may need finances, instructors, and programs, and rewards may not be distributed evenly around an institution, according to Duval-Couetil et al. (2016). Moving towards competency-based learning and growth in entrepreneurship skills will see entrepreneurship education being more than just learning how to start a venture (Venesaar et al., 2018) but also how to sustain it in the future. To create practitioners with entrepreneurial skills, institutions that deliver entrepreneurship programs should provide skill-building subjects such as teamwork, innovative product creation, technical creativity, and creative thinking (Islam, Ali, & Niazi, 2018). To accurately forecast organizational outcomes and ensure sustainability, management's knowledge and competence are essential (Hanan et al., 2021). Considering the high unemployment rates, business preparation becomes ever more necessary even for start-ups at incubation hubs.

There is evidence that if a business incubator wants to create effective enterprises, it should have properly crafted selection criteria by which it reviews, recommends, and chooses tenants (Tsaplin & Pozdeeva, 2017). To enter the incubation tenancy, it is necessary to understand that start-up businesses undergo several stages of selection and this may have a bearing on the success of business incubation ideas (Lukeš, Longo, & Zouhar, 2019). Bose, Kiran, and Goyal (2018) suggest that there is a positive correlation between the presence of strong selection criteria, admission, and the performance of the incubator.

Tsaplin et al. (2017) say that many incubators have also developed mechanisms by which start-up businesses are assessed and accepted for entry to the incubator. It is typically the business incubation manager or the selection panel that is involved in the evaluation process although in some cases the board members are also involved. The selection panel must have a sophisticated view of the new firm's development process and the sector in which it will function, as this enables decision-makers to recognize fragile but promising firms and eliminate those that cannot be funded, including those that do not need incubation (Bose et al., 2018).

Start-ups can apply for placement in an incubator themselves but not all of them are admitted (Lukeš et al., 2019). There are various factors considered in the selection of start-ups for incubation. These may include tenant capacity,

selection criteria, the strategy of governance and exit policy, and rental and profit-sharing issues (Hausberg & Korrek, 2020). Tsaplin et al. (2017) observed that some of these requirements also tend to be generic and arbitrary including the need to generate jobs, cover operational costs, have a formal business plan, have a specific opportunity, be a start-up venture, be locally owned, have rapid growth prospects, and be highly technologically connected. While some regard financial performance as the most important requirement, the personal qualities of the executive team and the industry conditions, marketing strategy, and the competitive value of the service or product may also be critical.

Incubators set out the evaluation process by which they review suggested and chosen tenant entities. Typically, private incubators focus on investment potential, growth, and technology transfer while government incubators want to promote job creation and economic growth (Shannxi, 2016). Tsaplin et al. (2017) stated that there is no basis for comparison for determining whether a business will succeed or not when selecting them for incubation but that the more precise the selection criteria, the greater the probability of the incubatee succeeding. Van Rijnsoever et al. (2017) observed that there is no point in assessing the incubator's effect on start-up success if studies do not understand how incubators have such an impact and how to measure incubation results

Access to knowledge is important for entrepreneurs and information is communicated across through formal and informal social networks (Cunningham, Menter, & Wirsching, 2019). New knowledge is a major source of entrepreneurship opportunity and if it contributes to better solutions then it can also be a source of growth. New knowledge is developed in a variety of ways but investments in formal and informal research and innovation are perhaps the most well-measured. Awareness in both public and private entities can be a valuable source of entrepreneurship prospects (Stam & van de Ven, 2019). New knowledge initiatives are a significant source of entrepreneurship potential and if they contribute to better solutions then they may also be a catalyst for growth. New knowledge is developed in several ways but advances in public and private research

and innovation are perhaps the most well-measured (Stam & van de Ven, 2019). Incubation hubs provide a good platform to nurture and develop start-ups during their early stages of development.

Networks assist new entrepreneurs in learning the formal and informal skills required to be a high-tech entrepreneur as well as facilitating the flow of information about new markets, innovations, and prospects in an area (Stam & Spigel, 2017). Entrepreneurial and business networks facilitate the movement of information allowing for the efficient distribution of expertise, labor, and capital. These networks can be analyzed in a variety of ways, including network structure, business interconnectivity for new value development, and the number of venture firms in a region that cooperate for innovation (Stam & van de Ven, 2019). Networks provide support among start-ups as they act as a stimulus for learning business development through the cross-pollination of ideas.

METHODS

The study used a qualitative research approach. This method was used because the study is exploratory in nature and aims to understand the participants' opinions. A qualitative approach can be used to reach people who would not normally volunteer for research, such as incubation hub start-up enterprises. In this study, the target demographic was incubated start-up enterprises in Harare, Zimbabwe. The study employed a non-probability sampling design as the research required information from start-ups that had gone through the incubation process as they were able to provide accurate information. Participants were purposefully chosen. The participants' perceptions were gathered through three focus groups. An interview guide was used, and additional questions were asked as prompts or probes. The data were analyzed using NVivo software. According to McNiff (2016), NVivo is used extensively for organizing, analyzing, and presenting qualitative data, and is intended to enhance research variety.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results provide insight into what is done in incubation hubs. Incubation hubs provided a notable contribution that is crucial to the development and survival of start-ups. A number of factors were looked at and classified as follows.

Experimenting and Application

Incubation hubs foster the ability to experiment with new ideas, products, and machinery. Training at the hubs creates a multi-skilled person. The training is designed in such a way that an incubatee can apply the same knowledge and skill in several areas. This allows for the application of knowledge in practice as supported by the views shared below.

Focus Group 1

The hub helped us in the sense that we could apply the learned skills there and there hence we had time to experiment.

I have been able to apply the learned skills in my other businesses and can now talk with confidence to a client. I have been able to come up with new products thanks to the incubation process that molded me to be a person who can experiment.

The training gave me the ability to do other products which has seen my business doing more of the by-products but using the same concepts and ideas that I got from the hub. I am now able to try other things and am experimenting with what I have with the hope of coming up with new products.

Focus Group 2

The process helped us to experiment with certain machinery and even when exposed to new machinery, we now have confidence.

One thing that I learned there is the ability to make other products. I no longer fear to experiment.

I am now able to design and knit my fabric, something that I did not know [before]. I had to buy machinery to do so and through the exposure that I had at the hub; the process was smooth.

Focus Group 3

Our business model had to change. When we started, we had our business and ideas but as we interacted with others, we saw that there were other models that we could use.

Thinking and Analyzing

The hub gave respondents the ability to think deeply and analyze things at a deeper level. This fostered innovation and the ability to do things differently as noted below. The findings are reinforced by the following views.

Focus Group 1

The way the program was structured helped me to be a knowledgeable person who can analyze things and who can explore further.

The hub taught me to be analytical and innovative since innovation is the way to go. It transforms the economy,

Focus Group 2

Incubators help in making sure that people are skilled, access knowledge, and help start-ups to think deeper through the training they provide.

We can picture those certain things were possible and once we effectively utilize our skills. We can now do a lot of than before. The program opened our minds, and we are now thinking big and believing in ourselves.

Focus Group 3

The positive criticism that you would get at the hub makes you think and look at things that you would have just brushed aside.

It makes me think quickly and it also helped me with financial skills which were lacking in me before my enrolment.

New designs and opportunities

The hub allowed for new designs and opportunities to be explored which further improved marketability and skills. This resulted in start-ups exploiting new opportunities. The programs were designed to create a learning entrepreneur. The observations are backed up by the following responses:

Focus Group 2

I had to diversify and use the learned skills I am now able to do cutting and designing on other fabrics that I never trained at. Am now very innovative and I have designed new products using locally available materials.

In my case, I have now added one business that I had not thought of before using the same knowledge that I got at the hub.

Focus Group 3

It helped me to find out that there were opportunities to achieve my goals. I never thought that I could come up with new ideas but through the interaction that we had with the various stakeholders as well as amongst ourselves as start-ups, we saw opportunities coming.

We have been able to develop new products which started after our enrolment as we began to see new opportunities. We got a lot of support from the hub and that helped us in our creativity to the extent that we now can venture into completely new things.

Solution-driven

The hub allowed for a solution-driven culture to be fostered. This could stimulate incubatees to look more toward solutions rather than be hindered by problems. It facilitated progress.

Focus Group 1

The process taught me to be a person who must seek solutions to challenges. The solution is to either improve the status quo, value add, come up with innovations to something, or come up with better ways of doing things that save on costs and time.

At the hub, I started to visualize what I could do with the machines that were there. I could see that some of the components could be made locally. The hub taught me to come up with solutions to every problem that I face. The exposure made me start with my small machinery and I hope to grow faster and then procure bigger ones.

The exposure helped me to understand the food industry better, and I learned how to resolve some challenges and grow my business. I expanded my product line thanks to the innovation skills that I got at the hub.

Focus Group 3

The hub trains you to think outside the box to find solutions and opportunities for your business. There was an Innovation Manager who would help you whenever you had challenges and would force you to think outside the box. That way your innovation and creativity skills would then be nurtured.

Create Employment and Investment

The hub assists in the creation of employment via start-ups and attracts investors. Employment creation would mean that the ventures were growing and expanding.

Focus Group 1

They motivated us to create employment so that we could employ others.

It helps in the creation of jobs and attracts investors. I have learned to be innovative.

Creative Marketing

The hub allowed respondents to become creative in how they marketed their products. This could attract customers and boost sales.

Focus Group 1

Through incubation, I have learned to market, design, and attract customers.

Focus Group 3

It makes me think quickly and it also helped me with financial skills which were lacking in me before my enrolment. The process itself molded me to be a real business leader. It added value to my marketing side, and it helped me to grow both as an entrepreneur and as well as my start-up.

Mixing Theory and Practice

The hub bridged the gap between theory and practice. This had the effect of reinforcing lifelong learning.

Focus Group 2

The education that I received has helped me to apply both theory and practical skills in my everyday dealings.

Learning from others

The hub allowed people to learn from others and gain diverse knowledge.

Focus Group 1

Learning from others was good and because of that I am now able to process my products from my place I have bought equipment though small, but it has enabled me to start my production outside the hub.

Focus Group 2

They also referred us to experts who have helped assist us in our businesses.

Meeting like-minded people and having tutors who knew business management would train us on how to operate different machinery and equipment.

According to Dobson et al. (2017), incubation hubs, as both virtual and physical locations provide resources, and assistance with skills development, expertise, and information exchange, thereby responding to the demands of start-ups by giving them access to new technologies and spaces to operate. Entrepreneurs are given opportunities for professional development through the hubs to build long-term transferable skills for their enterprises and the global economy. Experiential learning proved to be the most effective method (Dobson et al., 2017). Ghina and Sinaryanti, (2021) opined that an incubator's intangible resources, along with the human capital of the founding team, increase a start-up's survival rate. Mentoring programs have a direct positive impact on the survival of start-ups. This is because their contact fosters knowledge-sharing and provides incubated companies with entrepreneurship-related information that is relevant to their stage of growth.

Growth and Support

The hub fostered growth and provided support. This is outlined below.

Discipline and professionalism

The hub instills discipline and professionalism in the business environment.

Focus Group 2

They train one to be committed as well as exercise professionalism in running your business. Discipline is another aspect that you learn at the hub.

Funding Opportunities

The hub allows for funding opportunities to be identified.

Focus Group 2

Incubation hubs can invite banks and other financial institutions to come and present to incubates on funding opportunities.

Low Fees and Cost

The fees are affordably low and resources such as machinery are available at a lower cost.

Focus Group 2

The training was provided at fees that were very low and I got a place to operate from at first which meant that even my customers would not doubt my credulity as a start-up. The hub provided machinery and the workplace which are critical aspects for any start-up at a very low cost when one starts production at the hub.

Focus Group 3

The incubation hubs have very low rentals and if your start-up is very small or you are a freelancer you can survive.

Networks

Networks become well-established which allows for one to become connected to investors, suppliers, customers, and other businesses. Networks help start-ups to meet with like-minded enterprises and get help from others who are already established in the same field.

Focus Group 2

We also get contacts from reputable companies and other incubatees who are already on the ground.

Focus Group 3

The hub exposes start-ups to the knowledge that they normally do not have, and they link them with people or personalities that have already made it.

They help you to get clients and the incubator hubs are connected to a lot of people who can assist

whenever possible. In my case, I was given several connections to assist me, and it helped.

The hub provided a platform to connect with other entrepreneurs and we could get resources easily.

Nurturing and Support

The hub promoted a nurturing environment, which gave respondents adequate support in a step-by-step fashion. It also nurtured the skills and creativity of respondents.

Focus Group 2

They help in that these incubation hubs know how to nurture small businesses from the start until one can survive on its own. There is no guesswork in terms of their approach as they take each start-up that passes through it stage by stage until it can survive on its own.

Focus Group 3

There was an Innovation Manager who would help you whenever you had challenges and would force you to think outside the box. That way your innovation and creativity skills would then be nurtured.

Mentors

Mentors assisted in identifying opportunities.

Focus Group 3

I had access to mentors, that is people who can assist and open opportunities for my business.

Push and growth

The hub gave participants a push in the right direction and this motivated people to continue and grow their start-ups in the process.

Focus Group 1

Once you start your business after getting the right coaching and mindset change you get the push to continue working hard.

Focus Group 3

You have access to coaches, mentors, and other personnel who will help you to scale up your business.

Space

The hub provided space at a relatively low cost while the incubatees grew and were able to eventually find space of their own.

Focus Group 1

The hubs provide the place for a start-up to grow while you as an entrepreneur find your own space and machinery so that you can expand your operations.

Focus Group 3

At the hub that I was in, some packages allowed start-ups in various stages to pay space rentals according to the level of the start-up and this allowed start-ups to grow.

The hub managed to give me space at a subsidized fee, and we also got data for free.

Structured Approach

The hub provided a structured approach from start to finish, thereby promoting good understanding and minimizing failure.

Focus Group 2

Hubs are very practical in their approach to business because of the structured way they take start-ups to. This approach helps in that most start-ups that pass through incubation hubs end up being formalized and succeeding.

You can tell with the level at which things are organized that the chances of failure are very minimum.

These findings are supported by Van Weele et al. (2018) who observed that start-ups have direct access to a variety of auxiliary resources and services through incubators and can achieve economies of scale. These services are meant to improve the efficient operation of start-ups. At first, incubators concentrated on providing start-ups with shared office space and other physical resources, such as conference rooms but have now shifted to offering professional consulting services, as well as mentoring and coaching to help entrepreneurs gain needed business expertise. According to Mwantimwa et al. (2021), partnerships, networking, information co-creation, and invention are all essential features of innovation hubs. Hubs provide an ideal platform for networking and instill a level of professionalism among incubatees.

Knowledge Dissemination

The hub became a source of knowledge creation and dissemination.

Knowledge

The main derivative from the hub was rich business knowledge in the form of theory, practical application, entrepreneurial skills, know-how, and machinery.

Focus Group 1

It helps start-ups to survive by transferring knowledge and they teach you skills in business planning.

Most start-up businesses lack the business planning aspect on what to sell and where to sell it, and this knowledge is there at hubs. Many start-ups lack knowledge on how to have their products certified for quality and am happy I got this knowledge from the hub.

The incubation hub provides knowledge, skills, and trains you to be a good entrepreneur.

The incubation hub helped me to understand how to formally register my business and I now understand all the processes and paperwork required to register a business.

The incubation hub created confidence in us by exposing us to the sources of various raw materials.

I went to the hub to do soymilk production and because of the exposure, I was able to start another production in Tofu a by-product of soymilk production which I did not know before getting to the hub.

Knowledge Exchange Platforms

Related to the above, the hub helped respondents to access knowledge exchange platforms such as fairs and conferences where they could market their products and learn more.

Focus Group 1

Hubs provide platforms such as fairs which enable start-ups to exhibit their products and services. During my time at the hub, we had the chance to attend international conferences where we made presentations and it exposed us to other platforms that we never imagined knowing.

Expert Training

The training was provided by experts in the field, and this ensured that the training was specialized, relevant, up-to-date, and applicable.

Focus Group 1

The incubation hub helps in that you as an entrepreneur you are trained by several experts, and you are exposed to a lot of practical business ideas.

In our case, after the training, we were able to use the machinery for free and only pay for electricity.

Focus Group 2

Hubs produce start-ups that are technically and business-oriented and they can access machinery upon completion.

Incubators provide training at an affordable fee, and they expose incubates to machinery which ordinarily you would not be exposed to.

Once you have been trained at the hub, they provide you with access to the use of their machinery, and once you have completed your incubation program. I still have access to the machinery for production although am not going there now.

Well-rounded Capacity Building

The hub ensured that respondents could be developed holistically and be well-rounded in entrepreneurial knowledge.

Focus Group 2

Incubator hubs teach finance, human resources, marketing, and all things that you need to run a business successfully as opposed to a person who has not gone past the process. Incubators teach others those aspects which may lack in other capacity-building programs.

Focus Group 3

The hub helps the start-up to grow, and mold better entrepreneurs and it makes sense to be part of the incubation process. Start-ups get free advice and consultancy services and when you pitch your idea, the hub will help you to address the rough edges on it so that it becomes a perfect business.

Start-ups must be encouraged to go for incubation and if there are chances for capacity development for those start-ups who would have gone past the incubation stages then it can help to keep them on the right track

Ideas

Ideas were developed with the help of the Innovation Manager and resources were allocated to ideas.

Focus Group 3

The Innovation Manager at the hub was dedicated to us as start-ups and helped me to develop my ideas with the possibility of being given additional resources to take my concepts to the market.

Mwantimwa et al. (2021) found that innovation hubs promote intellectual creation and interactive learning, and information transfer via collaborative networks. The hubs improve the dynamics of developing the skills and through differentiated instruction, promote participatory tacit knowledge creation, transformation, and dissemination among a variety of actors from information, formal businesses, and support organizations. Furthermore, Mwantimwa et al. (2021) noted that the creation and dissemination of

knowledge through face-to-face contact between specialists within and outside hubs and incubators were crucial in knowledge transfer. Knowledge hubs perform three primary functions: producing information, moving it to places where it may be utilized, and conveying knowledge to others through education and training. According to Evgeniev and Purcell (2019), hubs facilitate the formation, transmission, usage, and expansion of viable knowledge ecosystems. Klaasa and Thawesaengskulthai (2018) observed that incubation hubs serve as knowledge centers, encouraging start-ups and the community to share ideas both within and outside of the incubator. San et al. (2022) note that organizational knowledge and knowledge generating streams, as well as their effects on start-ups' performance changes and competitive edge, all have an impact on sustainable growth.

Economic Benefits

The hubs brought economic benefits which included customers being referred to start-ups by the hubs. They promoted the production of local products rather than relying on imports. The hubs promoted start-ups in contributing to the economy's growth through increased production levels. This is highlighted in the following responses.

Focus Group 1

Incubation hubs help to create an entrepreneur who can provide goods and services as opposed to the importation of finished goods or services.

They help in the development of a country by increasing the contribution of start-ups to the economy.

Focus Group 2

They also referred customers to us.

Mulas, Minges, and Applebaum (2016) found that local start-up centers can help communities stay competitive, alleviate poverty, and promote shared wealth. A start-up hub's economic benefits include demand-side economies of scale, lower transaction costs, the spill-over effect of geographical knowledge, urban innovation, and collective learning (Zhu et al., 2021). In areas of innovation, demand-side economies of scale may raise the scope of demand and subsequently extend collaboration among the sectors.

CONCLUSION

According to the findings, incubation hubs have a beneficial impact on start-up development. A lot is done within the walls that an ordinary person with no access to the hubs may not know. The results provided a synopsis of what happens inside the incubation hubs which ordinarily is not written about in much research on entrepreneurship. The hub's main output was a wealth of business information in the form of theory, application, entrepreneurism, know-how, and equipment. Hubs provided well-structured programs which made it easy for start-up development. The incubation hubs helped to promote a solution-oriented culture which encouraged incubatees to focus on solutions rather than being hampered by obstacles. The training was designed in such a way that incubatees may use the same information and skills in a variety of situations. It allowed people to learn from one another and develop a wide range of information. Training bridged the theoretical and practical divide and as a result, lifelong learning was reinforced. Thus, the development of start-ups can be aided by incubation hubs because of their ability to provide structured programs that enhance the chances of survival.

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