



## HOW ENTREPRENEURSHIP CAN HELP THE AGRICULTURAL ECONOMY?

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### ABSTRACT

*The 21<sup>st</sup> century has been introduced as the Century of Knowledge. In this age, the societies' main capital is their human resources knowledge, skills, and attitudes. To serve society, this capital needs entrepreneurial capabilities. Entrepreneurship has been recognized as an important factor in the transformation toward sustainable products and processes. Studies have suggested that one important strategy for economic development in employment and its most important mechanism and the tool is entrepreneurship. Nowadays, the role of entrepreneurship as the engine of economic development has been widely recognized by policymakers in many countries, including Iran. Therefore, investing in human resources entrepreneurship capabilities has a special place. Entrepreneurship is closely linked to the economic and social development of countries and is one of the indices of development in developing countries. Promoting entrepreneurship in the agricultural sector is one of the most appropriate options for the prosperity of agricultural businesses and enhancing the value-added of agricultural exports is an essential strategy in replacing agricultural revenue with oil. Entrepreneurship reduces unemployment, increases people's productivity, resources and ultimately increases people's income in society.*

**Keywords:** Agriculture, Entrepreneurship, Economic Development, Human Resources, Employment

### INTRODUCTION

Agriculture is a fundamental and essential part of the rural and country economy and the basis for its growth and development. The growth and development of the agricultural sector provide the necessary background for the growth of other sectors and the factors and institutions necessary for the activity of other economic sectors cannot be established without it (Rokneddin Eftekhari et al., 2010). The agricultural sector, especially in developing countries, must act as a growth engine for sustainable rural development. The success of rural and agricultural development programs largely depends on empowering millions of rural households, i.e. those who must benefit from the facilities and support needed and move dynamically the agricultural and rural economy cycle. Sustainable development of the agricultural sector is a key area, or indeed a forefront, and needs to be incorporated into the national policy-making, appropriate strategies and working procedures for sustainable agricultural development. Because agriculture is closely linked to other sectors of society, agricultural growth can be a driving force for macroeconomic growth. Evidence suggests that agricultural development can play an important role in improving nutrition through enhancing the quality and quantity of food products, employment, income generation and the possibility of saving and capital formation for poor groups (Kazemi, 2002).

Nowadays, the agricultural sector is facing issues such as market competitiveness, commercial liberalization, reduced state control of economic activities, privatization, decentralization and internationally competitive agriculture. However, the increase in the unemployment rate in agriculture can be added to these conditions. So, we can conclude that the country's agricultural sector needs serious revision and reform. In this regard, studies show that the role of entrepreneurship in economic and social development is very essential. Therefore, it seems that attention paid to the development of entrepreneurship in the agriculture sector can solve many of the problems in this sector (Calagar et al., 2014).

## FINDINGS

Various studies have shown that one of the most important strategies for economic development - whether in the cities or the countryside - is employment creation and its most important mechanism and the tool is entrepreneurship. Entrepreneurship is a long-standing approach that has entered the new world in a new and innovative form and is considered as one of the mechanisms of development. Innovation, creativity, risk-taking and creating new businesses have existed in the distant past, and in recent decades, they have been named by the term entrepreneurship (Alvani et al., 2011).

Entrepreneurship is a process that plays a vital role in the continuation, growth, and development of national and even global economy. Therefore, it is necessary to create a suitable environment for the material, spiritual, cultural, research and scientific support of entrepreneurship and entrepreneurs in our country. The importance of entrepreneurship is to the extent that economists regard entrepreneurs as the engine of economic growth and development and the management scientists consider them as the most important factors in the evolution of society (Malek Mohammadi, 2007).

***Concept of Entrepreneurship and Entrepreneur.*** Nowadays, entrepreneurship is a common word for many people, a subject with a prominent place on the agenda of researchers in a variety of fields and disciplines including economics, sociology, political science, and psychology. Entrepreneurship is a topic that has attracted a great deal of attention of people from all classes including researchers, educators, and policymakers (Mokaya et al., 2012). The word entrepreneurship has been in the literature of management and economics for more than two centuries and, like many others, has undergone many changes. However, there is still no consensus on entrepreneurship at the international level. Of course, the common understanding of the word entrepreneurship is that an entrepreneur is someone who creates jobs, but it is not the case.

In general, the word entrepreneurship originates from the French word *Entreprendre* meaning "to commit". According to the academic dictionary of Webster, an entrepreneur is someone who is committed to organizing, managing and undertaking the risks of economic activity (Ahmadpoor Dariani and Moghimi, 2002).

Entrepreneurship is self-employment through business ownership that brings significant elements of risk, control, and rewards (Coleman Foundation, 2014).

Entrepreneurship is the process of creating something new and accepting its risks and benefits. In other words, entrepreneurship is the process of creating something new and valuable that comes to fruition by dedicating time and effort required to take financial, psychological and



social risks and reach individual, and financial satisfaction and independence. This definition has four essential aspects: 1. Entrepreneurship requires the process of creation. 2. Creation of anything new and valuable. 3. It must be of value to the entrepreneur and the audience for whom it is made. 4. Entrepreneurship requires sufficient time and effort. Considering the inevitable risks is the necessity of entrepreneurship -6. In entrepreneurship, personal satisfaction arises from job independence. There are several commonalities in all definitions of entrepreneurship: risk-taking, creativity, independence and reward (Feridonnejad, 2013). Entrepreneurship is a dynamic process created and managed by an individual (entrepreneur) who strives to exploit economic innovation to create new market value (Vertanen, 2006).

An entrepreneur is a person who has an entrepreneurial mind with a strong need for success. These people have effective and extensive social networks and have high emotional intelligence. They have self-confidence, feeling for the ability to change future, dominance over destiny and a long time horizon; and they accept short term failures to achieve long term victories (Mueller and Thomas, 2001).

An entrepreneur is someone who organizes and manages a type of business and takes the risk for profit. The entrepreneur evaluates perceived opportunities and strives to make decisions that will enable the company to achieve sustainable growth (Abrahamsson, 2007).

An entrepreneur has a different perspective, and he/she sees and portrays different what others see as ordinary. In general, entrepreneurship is a process in which an entrepreneur through coming up with new and creative ideas and identifying new opportunities by employing resources, embarks upon creating the new businesses and companies, innovative and growing organizations, that are risk-taking, leading to the introduction, and developing a new product or a new service to the community (Rezvani and Najjarzadeh, 2008).

An entrepreneur is one who explores opportunities and anticipates demand and takes the risk of fluctuations. He/she causes the production process, the organizing factor, and is responsible for the decision-making concerning what should be produced, how much should be produced and with what method, should it be produced (Samad Aghaie, 2014).

An entrepreneur is a self-employed individual who has a good economic prognosis, is willing to take risks and thus gains or loses in this way and consequently contributes to the equilibrium and stability of the market economy (Saremi and Alizadeh Thani, 2009).

Entrepreneurs are those who are capable of seeing and evaluating business opportunities, collecting the resources needed to profit from them, and starting an appropriate business to succeed. Perhaps the most common definition of an entrepreneur is the one who starts a business himself. That is, to create an important business, leading to the assumption that entrepreneurship is art for starting a personal business; every education about it will equip the person with the skills and abilities needed to do the job.

### *Historical Course of Entrepreneurship*

Entrepreneurship is an objective and practical concept that co-existed with the onset of human life on earth and the quest for achieving income and livelihoods. However, proposing this concept as a scientific one has no long background. The author who recognized the role of entrepreneurship for the first time was Richard Cantillon (Hebert and Link, 2011). By dividing economic factors into three groups of landowners, economic agents paid and those economic agents who are in the market while taking risks, he identified for the first time the entrepreneur



as one of the factors in the development of economic activities. After him, Joseph Schumpeter, a prominent economist in the early twentieth century, defined entrepreneurship as the engine of economic growth and examined its various aspects. His studies concerning economic development and entrepreneurship have had a significant impact on further research and so, he was referred to as the father of entrepreneurship science. In the seventies and eighties, as a result of severe structural changes in the environment of economic activities, the main characteristic of which was uncertainty in recognizing the consequences of these changes, the concepts of entrepreneurship and small business startups have been re-focused by the scholars of the various scientific fields such as economics, psychology, sociology, and management. The formation and development of entrepreneurial science at this time was a systematic effort to explain, describe, and predict success in establishing organizations adapted to the turbulent and unstable environmental conditions of the recent decades (Saeedi Mehrabad and Mohtadi, 2008).

Generally, the basic stages of entrepreneurship concept development are divided into five stages, including:

The First Period: The 51<sup>st</sup> and 57<sup>th</sup> centuries were known as the "Big Projects Owners" era. This period coincides with the era of powerful landowners and feudal governments in Europe. During this period, the entrepreneur is the one responsible for executing big projects. He does not take a risk in this way because the resources are generally provided by the local government and he solely manages. The prominent example of an entrepreneur in this period was the architects responsible for building churches, castles, and military installations.

The Second Period: The 56<sup>th</sup> Century was known as the period of "taking a risk". At this period as the Industrial Revolution began, a new dimension was added to entrepreneurship, namely taking a risk. Entrepreneurs in this period were individuals such as businessmen, craftsmen, and other private owners.

The Third Period: The 58<sup>th</sup> and 53<sup>rd</sup> centuries and the early twentieth century, which was known as the period of "Distinction of Entrepreneurs from the Other Actors in the Economy". In this period, the entrepreneur first was distinguished from the provider of capital. There is a difference between the entrepreneur and the business manager.

The Fourth Period: The mid-twentieth century became known as the era of "Innovators". The concept of innovation became a central element of the definition of entrepreneurship. Entrepreneurs start new businesses while; others, unlike them, make little changes to the existing products. The concept is added because of the increased competition in the market for products and the effort to use innovation to create competitive advantage in the existing businesses and their survival.

The Fifth Period: Contemporary Period from 5380 to the present was known as the "multilateral approach". At this period as the new wave of small business creation and economic growth occurred and the entrepreneurship was recognized as accelerating this mechanism, much attention has been paid to this discipline. Entrepreneurship was considered only from the point of view of economic researchers at that time, but it was also the focus of sociologists and psychologists in this period (Salehi Amiri and Shah Hosseini, 2010).

The Advantages and Benefits of Entrepreneurship: Entrepreneurship has many benefits and advantages. The most important are:

Entrepreneurship is the key to encourage investment.

Entrepreneurship is a stimulating and encouraging element of competition.



Entrepreneurship is the cause of change and innovation.  
Entrepreneurship creates employment.  
Entrepreneurship improves the quality of life.  
Entrepreneurship leads to the proper distribution of income.

According to the interests aforementioned, nowadays, in all investments of the world, the investors are trying to identify and absorb industrial thinkers because today's world is the world of science and technology and the main value of production lies in the human brain (Salehi Amiri and Shah Hosseini, 2010).

One of the strategic measures for the growth and development of entrepreneurship is the education of entrepreneurship, especially in the field of higher education. Also, the education of entrepreneurship can be one of the most effective ways to easily transfer graduates to the labor market. That is, such training has made people more accountable and entrepreneurial or entrepreneurial thinkers, who take a successful risk in business challenges, resulting in lower unemployment rates and business failure.

***Importance of Entrepreneurship Education:*** The education of Entrepreneurship is a policy that directly affects the quantity and quality of entrepreneurship in society. By implementing this policy, one can always pursue various goals such as identifying opportunities and how to exploit them, familiarity with new technology and technological knowledge and their application in various social sciences.

Researchers have come to anticipate and design training courses of entrepreneurship. Their goal is to train individuals with high-confidence, opportunistic, and generally more inclined to run independent businesses.

Researches show that entrepreneurship is educable, being able to be strengthened and trained. The first countries that did entrepreneurship education were Germany, Britain, the United States, and Japan. Entrepreneurship education today has become one of the most important and extensive academic activities. Throughout the 1930s, universities have designed numerous training programs for the public and private organizations, based on the characteristics of local, regional and national training groups. European governments have also provided special support for the activities aimed at encouraging entrepreneurship among young people (Ahmadpour Dariani, 2002).

One of the important issues regarding entrepreneurship education is the ability to teach entrepreneurship. In the past, entrepreneurship was seen as a set of individual's intrinsic characteristics that cannot be learned through education. But today, entrepreneurship is knowledge, skill and behavioral skill an individual is considered to possess and can be acquired through formal education (Hytti and O Gorman, 2004).

***The Concept of Entrepreneurship in Agriculture:*** The word agricultural entrepreneurship has long been a subject of considerable interest in the agricultural literature, about the crucial role of agricultural and rural development, to the extent that some countries establish responsible institutions for the development and practical exploitation of entrepreneurship in agriculture (Movahedi and Yaghoubifrani, 2012). The definitions and concepts of entrepreneurship in the different sectors of agriculture, industry, and services are the same in terms of principles and



foundations. Although the entrepreneurship in agriculture is not in its nature and essence different from the entrepreneurship in the urban areas or other economic sectors the required inputs to develop entrepreneurship such as capital, management, education, technology, institutions, transportation infrastructure, market access, distribution network, and skilled workforce are found easier in the urban and industrial areas and other economic sectors than in the rural and agricultural areas. Agricultural entrepreneurship is a specific condition, with a specific farm and specific product. The wider gap between the rural and urban areas in the developing countries and the dominance of industry over agriculture and the tendency of development strategies and policies towards industry, coupled with the socio-economic characteristics of the rural and agricultural societies, have led to the lower levels of agricultural entrepreneurship. In developing countries, the farmer is the weakest production agent in the country. He lacks the professional skills and support needed by government and local and national organizations to act as a dynamic entrepreneur. Even though the land is a rich resource in these countries and has good potential for entrepreneurship, the farmers are still poor and weak (Jaquobi, 2003).

Changes in the market, globalization, population growth, changes in the agricultural labor market, food security, market competitiveness, agricultural policies, moving towards market-based commercial agriculture (and society itself), increasing unemployment and underemployment, environmental issues, biodiversity, natural resources are some factors that make the need for entrepreneurship in agriculture ever greater. Due to these developments, a structural transformation in the current modes of agricultural production is necessary and the market-based agriculture in the context of sustainable development is a key development strategy. In this type of agriculture, the farmer must somehow produce to be able to sell his products in a competitive market based on customer demands. To this end, the farmer must be opportunistic and identify customer needs correctly and then design and execute a strategy to meet those needs. In other words, today's farmer must be an entrepreneur (Hosseini, 2013).

Since agriculture is the most important source of livelihoods for the poor and, also, it plays an important role in the production and productive employment, in the current conditions of the Iranian economy characterized by unemployment, lack of mobility, and limited investment, management of mobility and investment, the importance of this mission is doubling; because boosting agriculture and making changes in the agricultural and natural resources will lead to the non-agricultural employment, increased income and increased demand for the local agriculture and non-agricultural production. As a result, with a good understanding of the opportunities and taking advantage of liquid capitals, the agricultural entrepreneurs can provide possibilities and organize and manage ideas to put their ideas into practice. In this process, not only they do not remain unemployed, they can create jobs for others in the non-governmental sector without relying on government too. Agricultural entrepreneurs can leverage the power of creative solutions to the problems, taking a risk, enduring difficulties, and so on to transform the environmental threats and bottlenecks as quickly as possible into the opportunities; in complex and hard circumstances, such as accelerated technology development, globalization, and a multinational economy, they can discover and exploit opportunities that will benefit them and ultimately eliminate the bottlenecks of the rural community (Hosseini, 2013).

On the one hand, the most important goal of agricultural entrepreneurship development can be the modernization and restructuring of smallholder agriculture and the creation of new farming



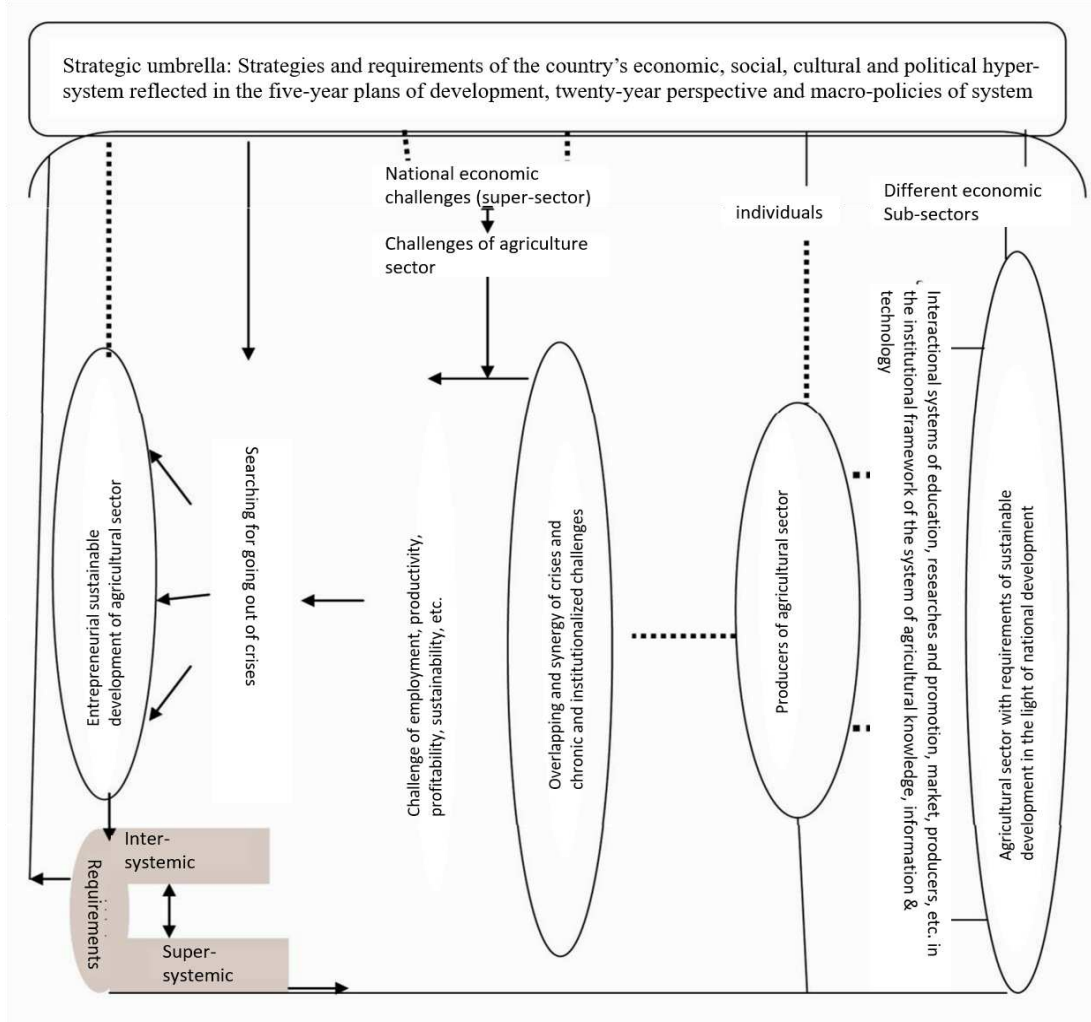
environments to create and develop new jobs in rural areas (Mc Elwee, 2005). The agricultural entrepreneurship is a role for creating a diversity of production and being emancipated from producing raw materials in the cycle of products supply and the move towards production for specific markets, providing services to other farmers and rural employed, utilizing agricultural capacities of farms and livestock units to attract tourists and employment (Warren, 2004).

*Necessity to pay attention to agricultural entrepreneurship.* In today's world, there are many changes such as globalization, market development, population growth and development of society, unemployment and transformation in the agricultural labor market, structural reforms and agricultural policies, globalization of trade, food security, environmental issues, etc. They have affected the agricultural sector of the countries, and dealing with these developments necessitates the promotion of entrepreneurial culture, ideas, and practices in agriculture (Higgins and Morgan, 2000).

Agricultural Entrepreneurship is one of the fields of entrepreneurship, which means accepting the risks arising from the creation of a productive, service and commercial unit related to the activities of the agricultural sector. Therefore, the development and promotion of entrepreneurship in the agricultural sector are one of the most appropriate options for rural development. There are three prerequisites for achieving this:

- Strengthening of the free system in the agricultural sector and definitive elimination of unnecessary government interventions in this sector;
- Infrastructural investment in the agricultural development needs; and
- Providing investment security and improving entrepreneurial conditions in the agricultural sector (Barani and Zarafshani, 2009)





### Entrepreneurship as a Strategy for Sustainable Development of Agriculture

Strategic umbrella: Strategies and requirements of the country's economic, social, cultural and political hyper-system reflected in the five-year plans of development, twenty-year perspective, and macro-policies of system

Different economic Sub-sectors, individuals, challenges of the national economy (super-sector), challenges of the agricultural sector

The agricultural sector with requirements of sustainable development in the light of national development

Interactional systems of education, researches, and promotion, market, producers, etc. in the institutional framework of the system of agricultural knowledge, information & technology

Producers of the agricultural sector

Overlapping and synergy of crises and chronic and institutionalized challenges

Challenge of employment, productivity, profitability, sustainability, etc.

Searching for going out of crises

Entrepreneurial sustainable development of the agricultural sector

Inner-systemic, super-systemic, requirements

***Obstacles to Entrepreneurship Development in Agriculture:*** One subject that must be taken seriously about the importance of entrepreneurship and its direct relation to the national excellence of a society is that despite its importance in Iranian society, it has unfortunately been overlooked and ignored. The role of rural entrepreneurship and entrepreneurs residing in rural environments should be taken seriously. If we know the villages as the rural strategic axes of agriculture and the society's food products that are increasingly in need, we understand their unparalleled role in progress, growth, and prosperity and realize that ignoring the share of the village and the villagers will have unfortunate costs and consequences. What is nowadays called social-economic problems in the society and causes social disorders and anxieties in the various forms, especially insecurity, behavioral abnormalities, social morbidity, immorality and the emergence of ominous phenomena such as irregular migration, increasing marginalization around metropolises and many other problems are some examples of these consequences (Ghambar Ali and Zarafshani, 2008).

Despite the benefits the entrepreneurial activities and entrepreneurship have in the various productive sectors as well as in the agricultural sector, some obstacles can hinder the development of entrepreneurial activities and to a large extent hinder the prosperity of the agricultural sector. In the following, we mention the barriers to entrepreneurship development in the agricultural sector:

Policymaking and planning, Economy, support, Education and information, Infrastructure, Culture (Nasiri Qidari, 2002).

## CONCLUSION

The most important factor of development in any society is the human factor. To achieve sustainable and balanced development, training of the specialized and efficient force required by the different sections of society in the educational institutions is an essential and necessary principle. Agriculture is one of the most important manufacturing and economic sectors in development programs, which plays an important role. The increasing need for food and the limited production opportunities necessitates agricultural development and the use of new and more efficient technologies. This can be achieved by acquiring knowledge and improving and enhancing the skills and abilities of human resources in this sector. Also paying attention to new concepts like "Entrepreneurship" in today's world has led many countries to take effective steps to benefit maximally from their existing material and human resources and transform their economy. Entrepreneurship means the process of presenting new ideas and taking advantage of opportunities, a concept that brings a lot of added value.

Given the role of the agricultural sector in the economy of the country, it is inevitable to pay attention to this sector and provide training that will lead to entrepreneurship among the audience and lead the society to the optimum use of the total production facilities.

The status of manpower and the current capabilities and failures of the agricultural sector must be identified from the perspective of entrepreneurship.

In this respect, it is necessary to have a systematic view of the balance and stability of the agricultural system and its interaction with other social and economic systems of society.

### ***A. Government policies***

Prioritizing Agriculture in Development Planning

### ***B. Agricultural Policies***



Prioritizing education in agricultural planning


### **C. Agricultural education policies**

Prioritizing Entrepreneurship in the Agricultural Education Planning, Training Business Skills, Developing and Enhancing Entrepreneurial Characteristics and Skills, Short-Term Entrepreneurship Training Programs for the Different Groups of Farmers, Developing Long-Term Entrepreneurship Training Courses in Graduate and Postgraduate Studies at universities for the Department of Agriculture, incorporating entrepreneurship themes into the textbooks can develop the element of entrepreneurship motivation in children.

### **D. socio-economic conditions**

Designing entrepreneurship counseling programs, creating and developing entrepreneurship networks, entrepreneurship information system, and network, research & development, creating tax credits and incentives, physical facilities, employing and paying attention to the successful patterns of entrepreneurial farmers, promoting entrepreneurship culture, and introducing sample entrepreneurs through the press and appreciation for them, expansion of entrepreneurship culture in the public and cooperative sectors, and providing strategies for launching a new agribusiness (Papzan, 2015).

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