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A Study on the Progressive Innovation and Entrepreneurship Talent Education Model of "Golden Ideas－Competitions－Practical Training－Entrepreneurship" Based on the OBE Philosophy

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Abstract: With the accelerating pace of industrial transformation and upgrading, employers are increasingly emphasizing innovative thinking and hands-on capabilities, while the limitations of traditional innovation and entrepreneurship education models have become progressively evident. Grounded in the philosophy of Outcome-Based Education (OBE), this study examines a progressive talent cultivation pathway structured as "Golden Ideas–Competitions–Practical Training–Entrepreneurship," encompassing idea incubation, competition engagement, scenario-based practical training, and independent entrepreneurship. Based on the operational realities of higher education institutions, the study identifies key challenges in innovation and entrepreneurship practices, including curriculum design, competition organization, training implementation, and entrepreneurial support. It further explores the integration of the OBE philosophy with a staged cultivation model and proposes actionable optimization strategies. By embedding outcome-oriented thinking throughout the entire innovation and entrepreneurship process, a coherent pathway is established from idea generation to project implementation and operation, thereby overcoming the longstanding issues of fragmented instruction and an overemphasis on form over effectiveness. The findings contribute to refining institutional innovation and entrepreneurship education systems, effectively enhancing students' comprehensive innovative competencies, improving the survival rate of entrepreneurial projects, and providing practical references for peer institutions.

Keywords: outcome-based education (OBE), "golden ideas–competitions–practical training–entrepreneurship", innovation and entrepreneurship education, talent cultivation

1. Introduction

With the continuous evolution of market structures and industrial technologies, employers are no longer concerned solely with academic performance; instead, students' independent thinking, practical skills, and entrepreneurial awareness have become key evaluation criteria. Consequently, innovation and entrepreneurship education have become a critical component of talent cultivation in higher education. However, long-standing training approaches adopted by many institutions exhibit evident shortcomings, including weak alignment among instructional modules, unclear cultivation directions, and one-dimensional assessment methods. Over time, these issues hinder the development of students' innovative potential and result in a mismatch between cultivated talents and actual market demands. The Outcome-Based Education (OBE) model emphasizes final learning outcomes, places students at the center of the educational process, and continuously adjusts instructional content based on feedback, thereby offering new perspectives for reforming innovation and entrepreneurship education. Constructing a talent development framework based on the progressive logic of idea incubation, competition engagement, practical training, and entrepreneurship can not only address existing deficiencies in teaching but also enhance students' comprehensive competencies, enabling innovation and entrepreneurship education in universities to move beyond superficial implementation toward a focus on substantive outcomes and effectiveness.

2. Advantages of Integrating OBE into the Progressive Innovation and Entrepreneurship Education Model in Higher Education

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The core feature of the OBE philosophy lies in taking students' ultimate learning outcomes as the starting point for all educational activities, upholding the centrality of learners, and advocating dynamic optimization throughout the entire educational process. This approach aligns naturally with the progressive innovation and entrepreneurship cultivation logic of "Golden Ideas – Competitions – Practical Training – Entrepreneurship," and can empower the transformation and upgrading of innovation and entrepreneurship education in higher education institutions across multiple dimensions, including educational philosophy, operational models, and management mechanisms. Traditionally, innovation and entrepreneurship teaching in most universities has followed predetermined procedures, with classrooms dominated by one-way knowledge transmission. Instructors have tended to focus more on whether teaching tasks are completed, while paying limited attention to what students have actually learned, whether their competencies have improved, or whether their proposed innovation projects can be successfully implemented in the market (Zu, 2026).

With the introduction of the OBE philosophy, the entire cultivation logic is fundamentally reoriented. Based on students' developmental stages and the comprehensive competencies they are expected to achieve, each stage of teaching content, training approaches, and resource allocation can be designed through backward planning. From the initial stage of idea generation to refining project frameworks through various competitions, followed by hands-on development in practical training environments, and ultimately advancing toward market-oriented entrepreneurial operation, the entire developmental process is structured in a progressive and interconnected manner.

Given the significant differences among students in terms of knowledge foundations, interests, and learning capacities, the OBE philosophy fully acknowledges such individual variations. It allows for flexible adjustment of instructional methods, allocation of teaching resources, and updating of assessment criteria across different stages, including idea incubation, competition preparation, project-based training, and entrepreneurial operation, thereby creating tailored developmental environments for students at different levels (Qin & Ying, 2026). In addition, the continuous improvement principle emphasized by OBE supports the establishment of a closed-loop management system of "cultivation – evaluation – feedback – optimization." In practice, administrators and instructors can promptly identify detailed issues within idea development, competition organization, training operations, and entrepreneurial support, and make timely adjustments to operational rules and service provisions, thereby continuously enhancing the overall quality of innovation and entrepreneurship education.

3. Existing Challenges in Innovation and Entrepreneurship Education in Higher Education Institutions

3.1 Lagging development of the "golden ideas" innovation course cultivation system

Creativity serves as the starting point of innovation and entrepreneurship; however, the current development of innovation-oriented courses in most universities remains unsatisfactory. In many institutions, such courses are offered merely as general electives, with a strong emphasis on theoretical instruction. The cases employed are often outdated and poorly aligned with contemporary industry trends, making it difficult to stimulate students' innovative thinking. Moreover, course design lacks differentiation, as a uniform curriculum is applied to students with diverse backgrounds and interests, while practical components such as idea exploration and solution design remain limited. Instructional approaches are predominantly lecture-based, with insufficient use of interactive formats such as brainstorming and idea workshops. Extracurricular activities are also scarce, and initiatives such as innovation salons and topic exchange sessions are not institutionalized, resulting in a disconnect between classroom learning and extracurricular practice. Consequently, although many students generate novel ideas, the absence of platforms for refinement and exchange undermines the intended function of innovation courses in fostering creativity and critical thinking (Huang et al., 2026).

3.2 Inefficient operational mechanisms for innovation and entrepreneurship competitions

Disciplinary competitions constitute an important platform for refining projects and developing competencies; however, their operational mechanisms in many universities exhibit significant deficiencies. In most cases, preparation is insufficient, with guidance provided only during the registration phase. A systematic cultivation framework is lacking throughout the entire process, including project

selection, team formation, proposal refinement, and final pitching, leaving students to rely largely on self-exploration. High-quality faculty guidance and training resources are disproportionately allocated to a small number of elite teams, while the majority of students receive limited professional support, leading to declining participation motivation. Furthermore, competitions are poorly integrated with regular teaching and practical training, and many projects are developed solely for competition purposes, with little follow-up after completion. Award-winning and high-potential projects often lack effective transformation pathways. In some institutions, excessive emphasis is placed on competition rankings, while insufficient attention is given to students' competency development during the preparation process, thereby deviating from the original intention of promoting learning and innovation through competition (Liu et al., 2026).

3.3 Limited transformation efficiency of innovation-oriented practical training and incubation platforms

Practical training and incubation platforms serve as critical intermediaries connecting creative ideas with tangible projects; however, their current capacity for project transformation remains inadequate. In some institutions, training bases and makerspaces suffer from slow equipment upgrades, with hardware conditions unable to meet the development needs of emerging industries. In addition, restrictive access policies impose constraints on students' project development and prototype testing. University–industry collaboration is often limited to superficial forms such as site visits and short-term internships, with enterprises showing limited willingness to engage deeply in project incubation. As a result, industry technologies and market experience are rarely integrated into student projects. Furthermore, many platforms lack resident technical staff and industry mentors, leaving students without timely support in areas such as prototyping, technical debugging, and simulated operations. The absence of project classification and differentiated management further leads to a lack of targeted incubation services, preventing many high-quality ideas and competition projects from being effectively implemented.

3.4 Insufficient support services for student entrepreneurship practice

At the entrepreneurship stage, the availability of support services directly influences project survival and development; however, current support systems within and around universities remain underdeveloped. Most on-campus incubation centers provide only basic workspace, with significant gaps in professional services such as business registration, financial and tax planning, investment and financing, and market promotion, resulting in the absence of a one-stop support model (Huang et al., 2026). The composition of entrepreneurship mentors is also problematic: while faculty members possess strong theoretical foundations, they often lack practical entrepreneurial experience, and the number of external industry mentors is limited, with infrequent engagement, making it difficult to provide sustained and in-depth guidance. Moreover, universities generally lack mechanisms for tracking graduate entrepreneurship, and institutional support typically ends once students leave campus, leaving early-stage ventures without continued assistance in subsequent operations and risk management. In addition, insufficient collaboration between universities, industrial parks, and investment institutions restricts students' access to market resources, thereby reducing the survival rate of entrepreneurial projects.

4. Construction Strategies for the Progressive Innovation and Entrepreneurship Talent Cultivation Model of "Golden Ideas – Competitions – Practical Training – Entrepreneurship" under the OBE Philosophy

4.1 Empowering creativity through "golden ideas"

In alignment with the OBE requirement for clearly defined stage-based learning outcomes, the primary objective of the idea cultivation stage is to fully stimulate students' innovative thinking and guide them to generate original ideas with practical applicability and strong feasibility. Given the substantial differences in knowledge structures and cognitive levels across students of different grades and disciplines, universities should move beyond the limitations of a single elective course model and establish a tiered curriculum system integrating general education courses, discipline-specific courses, and interest-based workshops (Chen et al.,2026). General courses on innovative thinking and creativity methodologies should be offered to lower-year students to systematically build foundational knowledge and methods. Simultaneously, discipline-specific creativity courses should be developed to guide students in identifying innovation entry points based on their professional backgrounds. Traditional lecture-dominated instruction should be replaced with interactive approaches such as

brainstorming, scenario simulation, real-case discussions, and mini innovation challenges. Faculty members should continuously update teaching cases and discussion topics in line with industry developments to ensure relevance to current market trends. Universities should institutionalize offline activities such as idea salons and idea solicitation events, while also establishing online communication platforms to facilitate continuous interaction among students and faculty. Dedicated creativity mentoring teams should be formed to evaluate student ideas across multiple dimensions, including originality, practicality, and implementation potential, providing one-on-one guidance for high-quality ideas, establishing project records, and ensuring a smooth transition into subsequent competition stages, thereby forming a complete cultivation chain from idea generation to project incubation.

4.2 Refining project prototypes through disciplinary competitions

Guided by stage-based outcomes under the OBE framework, the primary task of the competition stage is to transform fragmented ideas into well-structured and standardized innovation and entrepreneurship project proposals. Universities should establish a hierarchical and systematic competition cultivation mechanism, categorizing training pathways according to different levels of competition and designing differentiated guidance strategies based on evaluation criteria and competency requirements (Wang & Ma, 2026). Throughout the preparation process, interdisciplinary mentoring teams composed of faculty members, previous award-winning students, and industry practitioners should provide comprehensive guidance on project design, proposal writing, team coordination, pitching, and defense. The integration of competitions and teaching should be strengthened by embedding competition-related elements — such as project structuring, logical development, and practical application—into regular coursework, enabling mutual reinforcement between classroom learning and competition preparation. Evaluation criteria should be reformed to move beyond an overreliance on awards, and a systematic post-competition project management mechanism should be established, including project registration, classification, and follow-up tracking. Non-awarded but high-potential projects should receive continuous support for further development, while outstanding projects should be directly connected to institutional practical training and incubation platforms, ensuring seamless transformation of competition outcomes and enabling competitions to function as core platforms for capability development and project refinement.

4.3 Facilitating outcome iteration through scenario-based practical training

In accordance with the ultimate outcome requirements of the OBE philosophy, the core objective of the practical training stage is to transform conceptual project proposals into tangible products or services that can be demonstrated and tested, while promoting continuous iteration through training and incubation platforms. Universities should first upgrade the hardware infrastructure of training bases and makerspaces in line with industry standards, including research, experimentation, and testing facilities, while flexibly adjusting access policies to support students' hands-on activities such as product development, prototyping, and functional testing. University–industry collaboration should be deepened by involving enterprise professionals in mentoring roles and integrating technical standards and market-oriented thinking into the entire development process. Projects should be categorized according to industry sectors and development stages, with tailored provision of space, equipment, and mentoring services. Practical activities such as market research, competitor analysis, and simulated operations should be organized through these platforms to encourage students to refine their products and services based on market feedback, thereby enhancing project maturity and market adaptability and laying a solid foundation for subsequent entrepreneurial activities (Wang, 2026).

4.4 Advancing market-oriented entrepreneurship through practical implementation

Aligned with the ultimate objectives of OBE, the entrepreneurship stage focuses on achieving sustainable and market-oriented operation of projects, supported by a comprehensive service ecosystem. University incubation centers should upgrade their services to establish one-stop support systems integrating business registration, financial and tax planning, legal consultation, investment and financing matchmaking, and branding support. The structure of entrepreneurship mentoring teams should be optimized by increasing the proportion of experienced external mentors, such as entrepreneurs and senior industry professionals, and implementing one-on-one mentorship models for sustained guidance. Long-term tracking mechanisms for graduate entrepreneurship should be established, enabling universities to continue providing support

through online consultation, regular follow-ups, and thematic exchanges even after students leave campus. Universities should also strengthen collaboration with industrial parks, investment institutions, and market channels to create diversified resource integration platforms, facilitating access to customers and funding. Throughout the cultivation process, students should be guided to develop a long-term operational mindset, accumulate practical experience, and enhance managerial capabilities, ultimately transforming innovative ideas into market-viable ventures and realizing the full value of innovation and entrepreneurship.

5. Optimization Strategies for Innovation and Entrepreneurship Education in Higher Education under the OBE Framework

5.1 Establishing an integrated institutional talent cultivation system

Under the guidance of the OBE philosophy, universities should integrate the four core stages — idea incubation, competitions, scenario-based practical training, and entrepreneurship—to construct a full-chain, integrated innovation and entrepreneurship talent cultivation system. First, institutional goals for innovation and entrepreneurship education should be unified, embedding outcome orientation and continuous improvement into the routine operations of all faculties and administrative units. Organizational barriers should be removed by establishing coordinated mechanisms among academic affairs offices, student affairs divisions, training centers, and faculties, enabling the sharing of personnel, facilities, courses, and project resources. Faculty development systems should be further strengthened: on the one hand, instructors should be encouraged to engage in industry practice and participate in specialized innovation and entrepreneurship training programs to enhance their practical mentoring capabilities; on the other hand, external experts — including entrepreneurs, technical specialists, and experienced practitioners — should be continuously recruited as part-time mentors to reinforce the advisory system. In addition, comprehensive evaluation and incentive mechanisms should be introduced to move beyond single-dimensional assessment, incorporating indicators such as idea quality, project progress, practical implementation outcomes, and entrepreneurial performance. Outstanding instructors and actively engaged students should be duly recognized and rewarded. Through coordinated allocation of curricular, competition, training, and entrepreneurial resources, seamless integration across all stages can be achieved, forming a closed-loop institutional cultivation system (Gu & Li, 2026).

5.2 Building a regional integrated support ecosystem

Given the inherent limitations in resources and capacities of individual institutions, it is difficult for a single university to sustain the long-term operation of a progressive innovation and entrepreneurship education model. Therefore, it is essential to leverage regional resources by engaging multiple stakeholders — including government agencies, enterprises, industrial parks, and financial institutions — to establish a comprehensive support ecosystem. At the regional level, training bases, incubation centers, and competition resources across universities should be systematically integrated to promote inter-institutional resource sharing and avoid duplication, thereby enabling students from different institutions to access high-quality practice platforms. Collaboration with enterprises and industrial parks should be expanded to encourage deeper engagement in talent cultivation, including the co-construction of joint incubation bases and targeted project development initiatives. Regional innovation and entrepreneurship exchange platforms should be established to organize activities such as project pitching, experience sharing, and industry salons, facilitating knowledge exchange and collaboration among institutions and project teams. In addition, investment institutions and service organizations within the region should be integrated to form a comprehensive entrepreneurial service network, providing support in financing, market expansion, and risk management. By leveraging collective regional resources, universities can overcome individual constraints, create a supportive external environment, and ensure the effective implementation of the progressive talent cultivation model.

6. Conclusion

This study integrates the OBE philosophy with the progressive cultivation pathway of “Golden Ideas – Competitions – Practical Training – Entrepreneurship” to systematically examine the key challenges in current innovation and entrepreneurship education in higher education, including issues related to curriculum design, competition mechanisms, practical training platforms, and entrepreneurial support services. Guided by the

core principles of outcome orientation, student-centeredness, and continuous improvement, a stage-based talent cultivation model is proposed, along with optimization strategies at both institutional and regional levels. The comprehensive integration of the OBE philosophy into innovation and entrepreneurship education effectively addresses the fragmentation, ambiguous objectives, and limited practical impact of traditional models, enabling the four cultivation stages — idea incubation, competition-based refinement, practical transformation, and market-oriented entrepreneurship — to operate as an interconnected system. This establishes a coherent and closed-loop talent cultivation framework. Nevertheless, the optimization of innovation and entrepreneurship education remains an ongoing process. In future practice, universities should continue to adapt cultivation content and support mechanisms in response to evolving conditions, further refine the progressive model, and steadily enhance the quality of talent cultivation.

Conflict of Interest

The authors declare that they have no conflicts of interest in this work.

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