

THE IMPACT OF MENTORING ON ENTREPRENEURIAL SUCCESS IN THE GAZA STRIP – PALESTINE: A THEORETICAL REVIEW

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Abstract

Entrepreneurship is vital for economic development and relies on innovation and mentorship. The Gaza Strip faces unique challenges for entrepreneurs due to its socio-political environment, making mentoring crucial. This review explores how mentoring impacts entrepreneurial success in the region, highlighting its transformative effects. By synthesizing theoretical frameworks and empirical evidence, the study reveals the significance of mentoring in shaping the entrepreneurial ecosystem and empowering entrepreneurs. The research advocates for inclusive mentoring programs that address the specific needs of entrepreneurs, promoting a supportive entrepreneurial community. The findings contribute to understanding entrepreneurship in the Gaza Strip and guiding efforts to foster a thriving entrepreneurial culture that benefits society, especially from the m designing mentoring programs to guarantee achieving entrepreneurial success in the Gaza Strip - Palestine.

Keywords: Mentoring, Entrepreneurial Success, the Gaza Strip, Palestine

INTRODUCTION

Entrepreneurship is a vital driver of economic development and social progress, and it thrives on the cultivation of innovative ideas and the guidance of experienced mentors. In the Gaza Strip, Palestine, where the entrepreneurial landscape faces unique challenges amid a complex socio-political environment, the role of mentoring in fostering entrepreneurial success has become a subject of growing interest and scrutiny. This theoretical review aims to delve into the impact of mentoring on entrepreneurial success in the Gaza Strip – Palestine, examining the potentially transformative effects of mentoring relationships within this specific context.

Mentoring has been widely acknowledged as critical in nurturing entrepreneurial success across diverse regions and industries (Mentoring and Entrepreneurship, 2019).

Notably, the entrepreneurship landscape in the Gaza Strip is characterized by a complex interplay of socio-economic factors, including political instability and resource constraints (Abu-El-Haj & Issa, 2020). Consequently, mentoring relationships could play a pivotal role in empowering entrepreneurs to overcome these challenges and seize opportunities for growth and innovation (El-Maouchi et al., 2021).

Ahmad (2021) highlighted that mentoring can catalyze the development of entrepreneurial talent and foster creativity and adaptability. By providing aspiring entrepreneurs with valuable insights from experienced mentors, the potential for entrepreneurial success and long-term sustainability is significantly heightened.

Therefore, this theoretical review aims to contribute to the emerging body of literature on entrepreneurship in the Gaza Strip, emphasizing the importance of mentoring in shaping the entrepreneurial ecosystem. By synthesizing existing theoretical frameworks and empirical evidence, this study seeks to shed light on the mechanisms through which mentoring relationships impact entrepreneurial success in this unique setting, offering valuable insights to policymakers, educators, and entrepreneurial support organizations seeking to foster a thriving entrepreneurial culture in Gaza Strip - Palestine.

METHODOLOGY

This article aims to explore the potential effects of mentoring relationships on entrepreneurial endeavors within the distinct socio-economic context of the Gaza Strip. As a theoretical review, this study relies on existing literature and scholarly works from reputable academic databases, ensuring the selection of relevant and credible sources. The data collection process involves searching databases such as Google Scholar, PubMed, JSTOR, and EBSCOhost using keywords and search terms specific to entrepreneurship, mentoring, the Gaza Strip, Palestine, mentoring impact, and entrepreneurial success. Articles, books, and reports that address the topic of mentoring and its influence on entrepreneurial outcomes in the Gaza Strip or related regions are considered, following strict inclusion criteria. The review adopts a systematic and iterative approach to analyze the gathered literature, identifying key themes, findings, and theoretical frameworks that shed light on the role of mentoring in fostering entrepreneurial success. Thematic analysis categorizes and synthesizes recurring themes across the reviewed literature. The article's findings will contribute to the body of knowledge on entrepreneurship in the Gaza Strip, offering insights to policymakers on the way to achieving economic development.

ENTREPRENEURIAL SUCCESS

Entrepreneurial success, a multifaceted and dynamic concept, is at the core of the entrepreneurship field, reflecting the goal of entrepreneurs worldwide. It encompasses various dimensions of achievement, including business growth, profitability, innovation, market share, and societal impact (Audretsch, 2014; Shane & Venkataraman, 2000). Entrepreneurial success can be perceived differently based on individual and contextual factors, highlighting the subjectivity of measuring success in the entrepreneurial context (Bosma et al., 2018). While financial performance is often considered a primary indicator of success, entrepreneurs also value personal satisfaction, the ability to create value, and the realization of their vision and goals as significant determinants of success (Cassar, 2014; Cardon & Patel, 2015). The achievement of entrepreneurial success would be affected by multiple components, including individual traits, entrepreneurial capabilities, opportunity recognition, resource availability, external environment, and access to support networks (Davidsson & Wiklund, 2001; Shane & Venkataraman, 2000). Moreover, contextual factors, such as the local economic and socio-cultural environment, play a critical role in shaping entrepreneurial success and outcomes (Reynolds et al., 2005; Urbano & Alvarez, 2014). Given that entrepreneurship is still essential for fostering economic growth and generating employment, understanding the determinants and drivers of entrepreneurial success remains a vital area of research, guiding policymakers and

entrepreneurial support organizations in creating conducive environments for aspiring entrepreneurs to thrive and contribute to society's well-being.

ENTREPRENEURIAL SUCCESS IN THE GAZA STRIP – PALESTINE

Entrepreneurial success in the Gaza Strip, Palestine, represents a complex and evolving phenomenon influenced by various internal and external factors. The unique socio-economic and political context of the region poses both challenges and opportunities for aspiring entrepreneurs. The achievement of entrepreneurial success is multifaceted and encompasses different dimensions, including business growth, financial sustainability, innovation, job creation, and societal impact (Abu-El-Haj & Issa, 2020; El-Maouchi et al., 2021). The entrepreneurial ecosystem in the Gaza Strip is characterized by limited access to resources, a challenging regulatory environment, and geopolitical constraints (Abu-El-Haj & Issa, 2020). Moreover, access to finance, markets, and technology remains a significant obstacle for entrepreneurs in the region (El-Maouchi et al., 2021). To enhance entrepreneurial success in the Gaza Strip, policymakers and entrepreneurial support organizations should recognize the significance of mentoring programs and design tailored initiatives that address the specific needs and constraints of the local entrepreneurial ecosystem, thus creating an environment conducive to entrepreneurial growth and societal development.

MENTORING

Mentoring, a vital aspect of personal and professional development, plays a critical role in growing capabilities and facilitating knowledge transfer in various domains (Ahmad, 2021). Defined as a partnership between a professional mentor and an inexperienced participant that serves as support and guidance, mentoring involves providing valuable insights, feedback, and support to facilitate the mentee's learning and growth (Ragins & Kram, 2007). According to numerous studies (Eby et al., 2008; Fagenson-Eland, Marks, and Amendola, 1997; Tong & Kram, 2012), mentoring significantly contributes to career success and satisfaction across a variety of industries, including business, academia, healthcare, and sports. Within the entrepreneurial context, mentoring has emerged as a crucial factor in shaping the success and resilience of aspiring entrepreneurs. Mentors serve as role models, offering real-world knowledge, guidance, and problem-solving skills that complement formal education and enhance the mentee's entrepreneurial self-efficacy (Johnson & Smith, 2018; El-Maouchi et al., 2021). Moreover, mentoring relationships often provide access to valuable networks and resources that are instrumental in navigating the challenges of starting and growing a business (Ahmad, 2021; El-Maouchi et al., 2021). As a powerful tool for talent development, mentoring not only benefits the mentees but also provides mentors with opportunities for personal growth, skill refinement, and the satisfaction of contributing to the development of future entrepreneurs and leaders (Eby et al., 2008). To optimize the influence of mentoring in the entrepreneurial realm, it is essential to recognize the significance of mentoring programs and create an environment conducive to fostering meaningful mentoring relationships that empower aspiring entrepreneurs to achieve their full potential.

MENTORING IN THE GAZA STRIP – PALESTINE

Given the region's challenging environment, characterized by political tensions, limited access to resources, and economic constraints, mentoring emerges as a powerful tool for supporting entrepreneurial endeavors. In the Gaza Strip, mentoring relationships offer aspiring entrepreneurs by skills to navigate the complexities of starting and growing a business (Abu-El-Haj & Issa, 2020; El-Maouchi et al., 2021). Critical entrepreneurial skills are developed with the help of mentors, such as business planning, marketing, and financial management (Jarrar et al., 2022; Al-Mabruk & Al-Jabari, 2019; Dabbour et al., 2021). Through their practical knowledge and real-world experience, mentors equip entrepreneurs with the necessary tools to identify opportunities and make informed decisions in the challenging business landscape of the Gaza Strip. Mentors, typically experienced business professionals or successful entrepreneurs themselves, act as role models and provide real-world knowledge and expertise that complement formal education and enhance the entrepreneurial self-efficacy of their mentees (Johnson & Smith, 2018; El-Maouchi et al., 2021). Moreover, mentoring relationships often facilitate access to valuable networks, resources, and opportunities, which are crucial for overcoming the resource constraints faced by entrepreneurs in the Gaza Strip (Ahmad, 2021; El-Maouchi et al., 2021). Mentoring programs can be instrumental in connecting aspiring entrepreneurs with potential investors, customers, and partners, thus contributing to their business growth and sustainability (El-Maouchi et al., 2021). Additionally, mentoring fosters a supportive and developing entrepreneurial community, where the upcoming entrepreneurs and leaders benefit from the guidance of seasoned mentors (Ahmad, 2021). Policymakers and entrepreneurial support organizations should recognize the significance of mentoring in the Gaza Strip's entrepreneurial ecosystem and design comprehensive mentoring programs that address the specific challenges and opportunities faced by entrepreneurs in the region. By fostering meaningful mentoring relationships and promoting a culture of knowledge exchange and collaboration, mentoring can play a vital role in empowering entrepreneurs in the Gaza Strip to overcome obstacles, realize their business visions, and contribute to their communities economic and social development.

RESEARCH STUDIES

Drawing on a wide range of research that explores the various facets of the mentoring-entrepreneurship relationship, this article synthesizes the conclusions and arguments of numerous academics emphasizing the transformative impact of mentoring on entrepreneurial success in the Gaza Strip.

Mentoring serves as a critical driver for facilitating the growth of aspiring entrepreneurs, offering guidance, emotional support, and valuable networking opportunities (Al-Zu'bi et al., 2019; El-Maouchi et al., 2021; Kattara et al., 2021). Additionally, the role of mentors in developing essential entrepreneurial skills, fostering entrepreneurial self-efficacy, and providing access to resources and funding are discussed. Despite the positive impact of mentoring, scholars also highlighted the need to consider cultural and contextual factors to design effective and inclusive mentoring programs tailored to the unique challenges faced by Palestinian entrepreneurs (El-Maouchi et al., 2021; Nazzal & Abushariah, 2018).

Previous authors have extensively examined the impact of mentoring on entrepreneurial success, providing valuable insights into this crucial relationship. Additionally, research by Johnson and Smith (2018) emphasized that mentoring plays a vital role in enhancing entrepreneurial self-efficacy, as mentors help entrepreneurs develop a strong belief in their abilities to succeed in the business realm. This newfound self-confidence empowers entrepreneurs to take calculated risks and diligently pursue innovative ideas. Furthermore, mentoring is associated with the development of essential skills for entrepreneurial ventures, including business strategy, marketing, and financial management (Johnson & Smith, 2018). Mentors provide practical insights and real-world experience, equipping entrepreneurs with the tools necessary to thrive in competitive markets. The significance of mentoring in expanding social capital and creating valuable networks is highlighted by El-Maouchi, Saad, and Yassin (2021), who emphasized that mentors facilitate access to industry professionals, potential partners, and investors. These networks can open doors to resources, funding, and strategic partnerships, ultimately contributing to the success of entrepreneurial ventures. While the positive impact of mentoring on entrepreneurial success is well-established, it is essential to address potential challenges, such as the scarcity of mentors and the need for more inclusive mentoring programs (El-Maouchi et al., 2021; Abu-El-Haj & Issa, 2020).

On another side, the influence of mentoring on entrepreneurial success in emerging countries previously has been reviewed. Mentoring is associated with the development of essential entrepreneurial skills, as mentors impart practical knowledge and real-world experience (Jalalkamali & Fallahpour, 2019; Pillai, 2019). This equips entrepreneurs with the necessary tools to seize opportunities and thrive in competitive markets (Kandemir & Yilmaz, 2019). The positive impact of mentoring on entrepreneurial self-efficacy is emphasized by Nadeem and Abbas (2018), who argued that mentors help entrepreneurs build belief in their abilities, fostering a proactive and determined approach to pursuing innovative ventures. Moreover, mentors' networks and connections are instrumental in providing access to resources, funding, and strategic partnerships (Memon et al., 2021; Patel & Vadera, 2020). This access enhances the prospects of entrepreneurial success in resource-constrained environments (Raza et al., 2018). While mentoring holds great promise for fostering entrepreneurial success, it is crucial to take into account how cultural and contextual factors may play an active part (Adhikari et al., 2019; Ullah et al., 2020). Ensuring inclusive mentoring programs that cater to diverse entrepreneurs' needs and challenges is critical for maximizing the impact of mentoring in emerging countries. In conclusion, previous authors' arguments converge on the transformative potential of mentoring in driving entrepreneurial success in emerging countries, with mentoring relationships offering invaluable guidance, skills development, networks, and motivation to aspiring entrepreneurs.

In Arab countries, mentoring has provided aspiring entrepreneurs with critical abilities that empower them to overcome obstacles and navigate uncertainties with enhanced confidence (Al-Dhaafri & Weir, 2018; Al-Tit, 2018; Amara et al., 2021). Such skill-building equips entrepreneurs with the necessary tools to seize opportunities and thrive in competitive markets (Al-Zu'bi et al., 2019; Eltigani et al., 2019). Moreover, the positive impact of mentoring on entrepreneurial self-efficacy has been emphasized, as mentors help entrepreneurs build belief in their abilities and foster a proactive and determined approach to pursuing innovative ventures (Al-Dhaafri & Weir, 2018; Al-

Dajani & Marlow, 2019). Additionally, the significance of mentors' networks and connections in providing access to resources, funding, and strategic partnerships has been well-documented (Al-Tit, 2018; Al-Sada & Al-Mohannadi, 2021). These networks are instrumental in overcoming the challenges of resource constraints and facilitating entrepreneurial success in Arab countries (Al-Zu'bi et al., 2019; Amara et al., 2021). Furthermore, Al-Sada and Al-Mohannadi (2021) examined how entrepreneur mentoring affected the development of SMEs in the State of Qatar, revealing its role in boosting entrepreneurs' self-confidence and belief in their capabilities. However, mentoring holds great promise for fostering entrepreneurial success in Arab nations, scholars underscore the importance of considering cultural and critical components to ensure effective mentoring programs that cater to the unique needs and challenges of entrepreneurs (Eltigani et al., 2019; Al-Sada & Al-Mohannadi, 2021).

For the Gaza Strip – Palestine, the mentorship-entrepreneurship relationship has been studied from various perspectives without omission of the special socio-economic context of the Gaza Strip. Abu-El-Haj and Issa (2020) highlighted that the Gaza Strip's entrepreneurial landscape is rife with challenges due to ongoing political tensions and resource constraints, making mentoring a critical factor in navigating these complexities. Moreover, Nazzal and Abushariah (2018) discussed the role of entrepreneurial mentoring in Palestinian SMEs' development, emphasizing the significance of mentoring for fostering growth and empowerment among entrepreneurs. Moreover, Abu-El-Haj and Issa (2020) shed light on entrepreneurship amidst adversity in the Gaza Strip and underscored the essential role of mentoring in providing support to aspiring entrepreneurs in this challenging environment. Furthermore, Al-Hersh (2021) investigated the impact of mentoring on Palestinian youth's entrepreneurial intention, demonstrating its influence on shaping entrepreneurial aspirations and ambitions. Additionally, Johnson and Smith (2018) went on to say that mentoring is essential for promoting entrepreneurial self-efficacy because it helps people believe they can thrive in the entrepreneurial field. Moreover, mentoring contributes to the enhancement of entrepreneurial skill sets, as mentors offer practical insights into business strategies, marketing techniques, and financial management (Johnson & Smith, 2018). Also, Ahmad (2021) underscored that access to experienced mentors provides invaluable networking opportunities, enabling entrepreneurs to establish connections with industry professionals, potential customers, and investors, thus expanding their social capital. However, it is crucial to acknowledge that the scarcity of mentors and formal mentoring programs in the Gaza Strip presents challenges in accessing mentoring opportunities (Abu-El-Haj & Issa, 2020). Furthermore, El-Maouchi et al. (2021) highlighted that cultural and gender dynamics can influence the mentoring process, warranting attention to ensure an inclusive and effective mentoring experience. Moreover, Jarrar et al. (2022) investigated how micro-mentoring affected Palestinian small business attitudes toward entrepreneurship, revealing its positive influence on fostering entrepreneurial behavior and innovative thinking. Al-Mabruk and Al-Jabari (2019) studied the role of mentorship in cultivating entrepreneurial intention among university students in Palestine, highlighting its impact on skill-building and entrepreneurial motivation. Although it is essential to acknowledge the cultural and contextual factors that influence the effectiveness of mentorship programs in the Gaza Strip, El-Maouchi et al. (2021) discussed the need to consider these factors to ensure the successful implementation of mentorship programs which cater to the unique needs and challenges of Palestinian entrepreneurs. Nazzal and Abushariah (2018) also emphasized the importance of

aligning mentorship initiatives with the region's cultural values and social norms to create meaningful and impactful mentor-mentee relationships. Furthermore, El-Maouchi et al. (2021) examined the transformative potential of mentorship in unlocking entrepreneurial potential in the Gaza Strip, emphasizing how mentors' connections contribute to enhancing access to essential resources for entrepreneurial success. Similarly, Al-Sada and Al-Mohannadi (2021) corroborated this finding, emphasizing the significance of mentors' networks in providing entrepreneurs with valuable resources and business opportunities.

It is concluded that previous authors concurred that mentoring plays a fundamental role in shaping entrepreneurial success in the Gaza Strip, providing entrepreneurs with the capabilities to face problems and challenges in a special region with unique cases of policy and economy.

CONCLUSION

This theoretical review on the impact of mentoring on entrepreneurial success in the Gaza Strip highlights the transformative potential of mentoring in fostering thriving entrepreneurial ecosystems. Mentoring has a vital part in figuring out the success of innovative business entities in this dynamic and tough environment, from supporting growth and empowering entrepreneurs to developing crucial skills and promoting self-efficacy. However, the design of mentoring programs must consider the unique socio-economic and political context cultural in the Gaza Strip to maximize their impact and ensure inclusivity. This academic discussion provides valuable insights to policymakers, educators, and entrepreneurs seeking to strengthen the entrepreneurial landscape in the Gaza Strip. It contributes to the literature on entrepreneurship in emerging economies generally and motivates more effective mentoring programs that positively impact entrepreneurial success.

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