University Entrepreneurship as a Mechanism for Enhancing Economic Diversification: A Theoretical Analysis of the Role of Higher Education

ريادة الأعمال الجامعية كآلية لتعزيز التنويع الاقتصادي: تحليل نظري لدور التعليم العالي

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Abstract: This study aims to analyze the role of university entrepreneurship as a modern mechanism for supporting economic diversification, by highlighting the contribution of higher education institutions to embedding a culture of innovation and initiative. The study addresses the theoretical foundations of economic diversification and entrepreneurship, with a focus on the role of the university in transforming knowledge and scientific research into entrepreneurial projects with added value. It also sheds light on the mechanisms for activating university entrepreneurship and its role in linking the university to the economic environment and enhancing the knowledge-based economy. The study concludes that university entrepreneurship represents a strategic lever for expanding the productive base and reducing dependence on traditional sectors, despite the organizational and financial challenges it faces. The study adopted the descriptive-analytical approach to achieve its objectives

Keywords: University entrepreneurship, higher education, economic diversification, knowledge economy

ملخص: تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى تحليل دور ريادة الأعمال الجامعية كآلية حديثة لدعم التنويع الاقتصادي، من خلال إبراز إسهام مؤسسات التعليم العالي في ترسيخ ثقافة الابتكار والمبادرة. وتتناول الدراسة الأسس النظرية للتنويع الاقتصادي وريادة الأعمال، مع التركيز على دور الجامعة في تحويل المعرفة والبحث العلمي إلى مشاريع ريادية ذات قيمة مضافة. كما تسلط الضوء على آليات تفعيل ريادة الأعمال الجامعية، ودورها في ربط الجامعة بالمحيط الاقتصادي وتعزيز الاقتصاد القائم على المعرفة. وقد خلصت الدراسة إلى أن ريادة الأعمال الجامعية تمثل رافدا استراتيجيا لتوسيع القاعدة الإنتاجية وتقليص التبعية للقطاعات التقليدية، رغم ما تواجهه من تحديات تنظيمية وتمويلية. واعتمدت الدراسة على المنهج الوصفي التحليلي لتحقيق أهدافها.

كلمات مفتاحية: ريادة الأعمال الجامعية، التعليم العالي، التنويع الاقتصادي، ، اقتصاد المعرفة.

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1. INTRODUCTION

The global economy is undergoing profound transformations imposed by rapid technological changes, increasing international competition, and the declining ability of rent-based economies to ensure sustainable growth. In this context, economic diversification has become an indispensable strategic option, especially for countries that rely heavily on a single sector to generate national income. Investment in human capital, particularly through higher education, is considered one of the most important modern pillars for achieving this transformation.

University entrepreneurship has emerged as one of the effective approaches to enhancing economic diversification, given the growing role played by universities in producing knowledge, stimulating innovation, and transforming scientific research into economic projects with added value. The university is no longer merely a traditional educational institution; rather, it has become an economic actor contributing to the creation of start-ups, supporting the knowledge-based economy, and linking university training to market needs. In this context, studying the role of university entrepreneurship in supporting economic diversification is of great importance, due to its ability to create new economic activities, expand the productive base, and reduce dependence on traditional sectors, which is consistent with modern trends in economic development policies.

Research Problem:

Based on the foregoing, the research problem of the study is centered on the following question: To what extent does university entrepreneurship contribute to enhancing economic diversification, and what is the role of higher education in activating this path?

This main problem gives rise to several sub-questions:

_ What is meant by economic diversification, and what are its basic pillars?

_ What is the concept of university entrepreneurship, and what are its dimensions?

_ How do higher education institutions contribute to embedding a culture of university entrepreneurship?

_ What is the role of university entrepreneurship in supporting economic diversification and linking the university to the economic environment?

Research Hypotheses:

Based on the proposed research problem, the study is built on the following hypotheses:

_University entrepreneurship contributes effectively to supporting economic diversification through the creation of innovative projects and new economic activities.

_ Higher education plays a pivotal role in embedding a culture of university entrepreneurship through curricula, incubators, and entrepreneurship development centers.

_ Linking the university to the economic environment contributes to enhancing the impact of university entrepreneurship on economic diversification.

Significance of the Study:

The importance of this study derives from several aspects:

_ **Scientific importance:** It contributes to enriching the academic literature related to university entrepreneurship and economic diversification, especially from a theoretical and analytical perspective.

_ **Practical importance:** It highlights the role of the university as an economic actor capable of contributing to the diversification of the national economy.

_ **Developmental importance:** It sheds light on university entrepreneurship as a modern mechanism for supporting sustainable economic development and reducing dependence on rent-based sectors.

Objectives of the Study:

This study aims to:

_ Clarify the theoretical concepts of economic diversification and university entrepreneurship.

_ Highlight the role of higher education in embedding a culture of university entrepreneurship.

_ Analyze the contribution of university entrepreneurship to supporting economic diversification.

_ Shed light on the main challenges facing university entrepreneurship and the prospects for enhancing it.

Methodology of the Study:

To achieve the objectives of the study and answer its research problem, the descriptive-analytical method was adopted, through analyzing the theoretical literature related to university entrepreneurship and economic diversification. The analytical approach was also employed to clarify the nature of the relationship between higher education and university entrepreneurship and its role in supporting economic diversification.

Structure of the Study:

The research problem will be addressed through the following axes:

First: Fundamentals of economic diversification

Second: The conceptual framework of university entrepreneurship and the role of higher education

Third: The contribution of university entrepreneurship to achieving economic diversification.

2. Fundamentals of Economic Diversification

2.1 Concept of Economic Diversification:

The International Monetary Fund defines economic diversification as the shift from reliance on traditional sectors, such as agriculture and extractive sectors (oil and mining), toward a broader range of high-quality sectors and services. Diversification is closely linked to the process of structural transformation, that is, the dynamic reallocation of resources from less productive sectors to more productive ones, including knowledge-based industries (Giovanni, and others, 2024, p. 6).

Economic diversification is also defined as the process of increasing the types and scope of economic activities in both the production and distribution of goods and services, as well as creating new opportunities in economic activities; that is, expanding the production base in order to increase output, provide employment opportunities, and thus reduce the economy's dependence on a single economic activity in achieving growth in gross domestic product. Diversifying the sources of GDP growth through expanding the range of economic activities is what developing countries seek. The concept of economic diversification is associated with economic growth, as increasing the degree of diversification across sectors and economic activities raises a country's aggregate output (Abdelkhaleq, 2025, p. 295).

Accordingly, economic diversification refers to expanding the productive base of the economy by developing multiple economic activities and sectors, with the aim of reducing dependence on a single source of income, enhancing the ability to withstand economic fluctuations and shocks, and achieving economic growth based on innovation and increased value added.

Diversifying domestic production, exports, and imports enhances resilience to external shocks. Diversification can also stimulate faster economic growth, particularly in countries at early stages of development, or so-called developing economies, in relation to the production of non-renewable resources and their subsequent economic performance the Dutch disease and the "resource curse."

The term "Dutch disease" first appeared in the 1970s following the decline of the manufacturing sector in the Netherlands after the discovery of large natural gas fields. It refers to an economic phenomenon in which a country's currency appreciates significantly in response to a sudden boom in one sector of its economy, leading to a decline in exports from other sectors. Although the country may appear to be performing well from an international perspective, it is in fact falling behind. Thus, "Dutch disease" is defined as the appreciation of a country's currency in response to a sudden boom in a particular economic sector, resulting in the deterioration of the performance of other sectors.

It is worth noting that the "Dutch disease" represents an example of the "resource curse," whereby the performance of a country's economy declines despite possessing abundant natural resources. Diversifying industries can help a country break the "resource curse." Since this condition often arises as a result of a sudden oil discovery, the term falls within a broader category known as the "oil curse" or the "resource curse," where a country's economy falters despite having valuable and abundant natural resources.

Both concepts provide lessons on why countries seek to diversify their economies, and why investors in emerging markets need to pay attention to such diversification efforts, in addition to fluctuations in the prices of the commodities exported by those countries. The phenomena of the "Dutch disease" and the "resource curse" can cause severe harm to any country's economy, as they affect local employment, domestic policy, national security, and the interests of international investors. One of the main solutions lies in a diversified economy based on multiple pillars that go beyond reliance on a single natural resource. Countries that have succeeded in avoiding the "resource curse" have directed part of their unexpected revenues from key commodities to support other sectors of their economies (Whittaker, 2025, p. 2).

1-2. Main Elements of Diversification:

Although there is no magic formula for diversification, trade and adaptation can help countries establish its elements, the most important of which are:

- An appropriate incentive framework through reforms of the business and investment environment, and the review of trade policies to remove bias against exports and ensure effective competition in product markets and in key basic services such as transport, energy, and telecommunications.
- Investments and reforms that reduce trade costs, as lower trade costs and achieving more diversified economies increase employment opportunities.
- Effective policies to support adaptation and the reallocation of resources to new activities from declining sectors, as well as from the informal sector and new entrants to the labor market. The focus should be on supporting workers and identifying and

overcoming mobility constraints, including gender-related constraints, rather than focusing on jobs.

- Government interventions targeting specific market, policy, and institutional failures. Trade and accounting teams can assist governments in identifying market failures and designing interventions to address such problems (Draft, 2017, p. 3).

1-3. Importance of Economic Diversification:

Economic diversification is of great importance, as it:

- Reduces growth volatility, which encourages private investment across different economic sectors.
- Is essential for job creation, especially in light of the growing numbers of entrants to the labor market, making continued reliance on the public sector unsustainable.
- Opens up many opportunities in manufacturing and high value-added services for exporting new products instead of exporting the same products in more intensive forms. Conversely, export diversification requires reaping the benefits of prudent integration into the global economy that takes into account the country's strategy and aims to promote long-term growth (Merzouki & Kachroud, 2018, p. 268).

3. The Conceptual Framework of University Entrepreneurship and the Role of Higher Education

3.1 Concept of Entrepreneurship:

The literature indicates that the concept of entrepreneurship was used at the beginning of the eighteenth century by the Irish banker Richard Cantillon to distinguish between landowners who worked on their own account and employees. This concept later became the theoretical foundation for defining the field of entrepreneurship. By the early 1980s, entrepreneurship had emerged as a promising field of study. The main challenge facing the field in the early 1990s was the development of its own models and theories, drawing on sciences and foundations borrowed from other social sciences. In the modern era, particularly in the twentieth century, the concept of entrepreneurship acquired new characteristics linked to the multiplicity of productive projects associated with industrial and technological development, and it was no longer limited to risk-taking and innovation. The entrepreneur is characterized by a spirit of management and leadership and focuses on entrepreneurship in the industrial sector, which represents a combination of manufacturing and marketing products without predicting the extent of their acceptance by others. This implies that risk remains inherent in entrepreneurial behavior. At present, entrepreneurship is considered one of the best strategies for economic development to promote economic and social growth and to maintain competitiveness in the face of increasing globalization trends. Entrepreneurship thus implies uniqueness and reliance on differentiation, diversification, adaptation, and new methods (Al-Masajdi, 2020, p. 139).

2-2. University Entrepreneurship:

The contemporary university today is no longer limited to education; rather, its role has expanded to contribute to gross domestic product and to lay the foundations for building a future knowledge society. Over the past decade, global higher education has witnessed a fundamental transformation in university administrative systems and organizational culture to keep pace with globalization and international standing among educational institutions.

Partial withdrawal from full reliance on government support and local service has become widespread, in favor of knowledge investment and international marketing. This new concept, which began to take scientific shape at the beginning of the new millennium, calls for one of the main roles of the entrepreneurial university to be contributing to economic development through launching productive innovative projects.

The entrepreneurial university is the university that can innovate, collaborate, seize opportunities, and successfully respond to challenges. Entrepreneurial universities are able to survive in a highly competitive market if they have clear plans to demonstrate excellence in teaching, scientific research, and entrepreneurship. They also seek to become self-sustaining institutions that play an important role and provide and support various measures to promote entrepreneurial activities through close cooperation and networking with public and private sector institutions, by investing in their social capital to facilitate the creation and commercialization of knowledge and technology.

The entrepreneurial university is defined as the university that focuses on the economic impact of societal contributions, the development of entrepreneurship in education, and the commercialization of research. Entrepreneurial education, in turn, is defined as a set of activities aimed at nurturing entrepreneurial mindsets and skills, and it covers a wide range of aspects such as idea generation, growth, and innovation. Entrepreneurial education should therefore develop students' values, beliefs, and attitudes so that they view entrepreneurship as an attractive career option. It can be described as a set of formal education patterns based on teaching and training participants in various development programs, including awareness programs on the importance of entrepreneurship, followed by the establishment and development of small business ventures. These educational approaches contribute to equipping participants with a package of entrepreneurial skills and motivating them toward further learning, creativity, and self-confidence.

Thus, entrepreneurial education aims to develop innovation and initiative in individuals through participation in building knowledge by acquiring, generating, and processing information, enabling individuals to excel in their environment and present valuable business proposals for themselves and their society, and to seek to benefit from new opportunities.

The main objective of entrepreneurial education at the university is to prepare a generation of entrepreneurs and innovators in the field of business who deliver creativity in the form of a product, service, process, or new business input, a new project, an invention, or a discovery. The objectives of entrepreneurial education in universities have been defined as follows:

1. Increasing students' awareness of self-employment.
2. Building positive attitudes among students toward entrepreneurship, strengthening the entrepreneurial spirit and tendency, and stimulating students' motivation to develop a better vision of future careers.
3. Developing students' personal traits and skills that help them build a foundation for entrepreneurial thinking and behavior.
4. Enhancing social and economic development in society through the processes of modernization and renewal carried out by entrepreneurs in all fields in which they will work in the future.
5. Enhancing relationship-building skills and positive communication within an educational environment for future professions. (Ni'mah, 2023, p. 2)

2-2-1. The entrepreneurial university: Teaching entrepreneurship and related academic programs increased in the mid and early 1980s, when the number of universities offering entrepreneurship studies rose to more than 250 universities worldwide. This field of study became promising and developed into a recognized academic field thanks to significant advances in scientific knowledge. The entrepreneurial university is characterized by its organizational adaptation to a changing environment and the renewal of its responsibilities and members (students, faculty, administrators, and programs). The university operates with an entrepreneurial mindset and aims to develop an entrepreneurial culture that contributes to economic development through the creation of innovative projects, in addition to its educational function by seeking funding for scientific research and patents. One of the most important requirements of the entrepreneurial university is entrepreneurship education, which includes a series of activities aimed at enabling students to understand, perceive, and develop their knowledge, skills, and values. This enables them to acquire the skill of analyzing problems creatively, identifying and defining problems, and analyzing them to find appropriate solutions. This type of education requires several conditions, including establishing genuine partnerships between governmental organizations, private organizations, and private sector support entities.

The difference between the traditional concept of the university and the entrepreneurial university can be distinguished as shown in the following table:

Table 1: The difference between the traditional university and the entrepreneurial university.

Traditional University	**Entrepreneurial University**
Focuses on research and teaching	Focuses on profit and commerce
Managed by the state or a non-profit organization	Owned by a company or a commercial entity
Provides education through accredited programs and traditional curricula	Provides education through flexible and updated programs
The primary goal is achieving higher education and scientific research	The primary goal is achieving profit and financial gains
May be traditional and conservative in teaching methods	Innovative and uses modern and flexible teaching methods
Awards academic degrees and educational certificates	Offers accredited or non-accredited programs and professional certificates
Benefits from advantages and financial resources from the government or non-profit institutions	Relies on profit generation and funding through tuition fees, donations, and partnerships with the private sector
Tuition costs may be higher due to its commercial nature and additional administrative costs	Tuition costs may be higher due to its commercial nature and additional administrative costs.

2-3. The role of higher education in consolidating the culture of university entrepreneurship: One of the most prominent roles played by universities is the pursuit of economic development, the cultivation of an entrepreneurial culture, and the support of

students through educational and training programs on entrepreneurship and self-employment management. Many universities around the world have moved toward designing educational programs and courses in entrepreneurship, in addition to designing educational programs to grant master's and doctoral degrees in entrepreneurship. Many governmental and private institutions have also turned to preparing training programs and specialized studies in entrepreneurship. These universities bear the responsibility of developing students' entrepreneurial culture by providing qualified human resources for self-employment, willing to take risks, training them to transform their innovative ideas and proposals into important projects, equipping them with skills for preparing and implementing projects, and providing all consultations, support, and guidance to these students. Supporting entrepreneurial education in universities may give individuals the confidence to start their own business ventures, and acquiring students' entrepreneurial tendency comes through education and training. There are two forms of entrepreneurial education at the university, namely:

_ **The first form:** the role of entrepreneurial education, through which universities can evaluate by teaching students the knowledge and skills necessary to embark on a new project.

_ **The second form:** the commercial role, through which universities can provide students with specific support to start their own companies by strengthening the concept of development and entrepreneurship among them, through providing awareness, motivation, and incubating creative ideas to transform them into entrepreneurial projects.

Some of the main aspects that the university should adopt to increase its role in spreading the culture of entrepreneurship among students have been summarized as follows:

_ Transforming the role of the university from focusing on employment to focusing on job creation, by reconsidering academic programs and curricula and working to introduce programs and courses related to entrepreneurship to graduate students capable of creating job opportunities.

_ Establishing partnerships and relationships with all sectors related to the university, whether governmental institutions, the local community, or graduates, and opening channels of continuous communication among them.

_ Cooperating with distinguished global universities in the field of entrepreneurship to transfer advanced technology and knowledge.

_ Applying education based on creativity and innovation, moving away from memorization and rote learning, encouraging students to be producers of knowledge rather than merely recipients, giving them the opportunity to express their opinions and ideas, encouraging creativity, and supporting their ideas and proposals.

_Providing leadership that believes in the importance of entrepreneurship and has the desire to provide material and financial resources for entrepreneurs. (Madkhal, 2021, p. 195)**3. Applications of university entrepreneurship in supporting economic diversification**

3-1. Mechanisms for activating university entrepreneurship within higher education institutions:

First: Integrating entrepreneurship into university programs and curricula: Integrating entrepreneurship into university programs and curricula is one of the fundamental mechanisms adopted by higher education institutions to support economic diversification. These programs contribute to preparing students who possess innovation and initiative skills capable of creating new projects in diverse economic sectors outside traditional frameworks. This approach contributes to directing higher education outputs

toward creating real added value, thereby enhancing the transition from an economy dependent on a single sector to a diversified, knowledge-based economy. Updating pedagogical curricula and adopting modern teaching methods such as learning by practice and case studies also contribute to enhancing students' ability to transform innovative ideas into economic projects, which supports the emergence of new productive activities and contributes to expanding the economic base in the medium and long term. (ETZKOWITZ, 2013, p. 489)

Second: University business incubators and accelerators as a mechanism to support entrepreneurial projects: University incubators and business accelerators play a pivotal role in supporting emerging entrepreneurial projects within the university environment by providing an appropriate environment to incubate innovative ideas and transform them into active economic enterprises. These structures contribute to diversifying the productive base by supporting projects in the fields of technology, services, and creative industries, which reduces dependence on traditional sectors.

These incubators also work to strengthen the linkage between the university and the market by facilitating partnerships with economic institutions and accompanying students through the various stages of project establishment, which increases the chances of success and sustainability of entrepreneurial projects and enhances the role of the university in supporting economic diversification. (Zhou, 2017, p. 67)

Third: The role of entrepreneurship development centers and student clubs in disseminating entrepreneurial culture: Entrepreneurship development centers and student clubs contribute to spreading the culture of entrepreneurship within the university by organizing training and awareness activities aimed at encouraging students to establish their own projects. These initiatives help build economic awareness among students of the importance of diversifying productive activities and creating new opportunities outside the public sector (Kirby, 2004, pp. 512–513). The importance of these structures is also evident in preparing a generation of graduates capable of initiative and innovation and contributing to the creation of small and medium-sized enterprises that constitute an important pillar for economic diversification, especially in economies seeking to reduce dependence on traditional sources of income (UNESCO, 2017, p. 22).

3-2. The role of university entrepreneurship in linking the university to the economic environment and enhancing economic diversification:

First: Partnership between the university and the economic sector as an entry point to enhance economic diversification: University entrepreneurship contributes to strengthening partnerships between the university and the economic sector by transforming the university into a key actor in economic development rather than merely an educational institution. These partnerships enable the transfer of scientific research results and academic knowledge to productive and service institutions, leading to the creation of new economic activities that contribute to diversifying the economic base and reducing reliance on traditional sectors. Partnership with economic institutions is also an effective means of enabling students to understand market needs and directing university entrepreneurial projects toward areas of added value, which enhances the chances of success and sustainability of these projects and contributes to supporting economic diversification at both local and national levels (Guerrero, 2012, p. 492).

Second: Knowledge and technology transfer from the university to the market and its role in economic diversification: Knowledge and technology transfer represents one of the most important outcomes of university entrepreneurship, as universities contribute to transforming scientific innovations into marketable products and services. This role leads to the emergence of new economic sectors based on technology and innovation, supporting the transition toward a diversified, knowledge-based economy. Technology transfer also contributes to enhancing the competitiveness of start-ups and creating new investment opportunities, especially in the fields of the digital economy and creative industries, making university entrepreneurship a strategic tool for achieving sustainable economic diversification (OECD, 2007, p. 34).

Third: Supporting start-ups and linking them to the economic environment: Entrepreneurship plays an important role in supporting start-ups and linking them to the economic environment by providing an appropriate setting for materializing entrepreneurial ideas and connecting them to financing and marketing networks. These enterprises constitute a fundamental pillar of economic diversification due to their flexibility and ability to operate in new economic fields. They also contribute to creating local economic dynamism, enhancing individual initiative, and reducing dependence on public employment, thereby strengthening the contribution of university entrepreneurship to achieving economic diversification and building a more balanced and sustainable economy (Kirby, 2004, pp. 512–513).

3-3. Practical challenges and prospects for enhancing university entrepreneurship to support economic diversification:

First: Practical challenges facing university entrepreneurship in supporting economic diversification: University entrepreneurship faces a set of practical challenges that limit its ability to contribute effectively to supporting economic diversification, most notably weak funding directed to university entrepreneurial projects and the limited availability of specialized supporting structures within some higher education institutions. Many universities also suffer from a shortage of qualified personnel to supervise entrepreneurial projects, which negatively affects the transformation of innovative ideas into sustainable economic projects. In addition, weak initiative and innovation culture among some students and faculty members constitutes an impediment to the development of university entrepreneurship, as public employment still represents the preferred career option for a wide segment of graduates, limiting the spread of entrepreneurial projects capable of diversifying economic activities (OECD, 2007, p. 22).

Second: Regulatory and legislative challenges and their impact on economic diversification: The regulatory and legislative environment constitutes one of the main challenges facing university entrepreneurship, as administrative procedural complexities and weak legal incentives slow the pace of establishing university spin-off start-ups. This reality negatively affects the ability of university entrepreneurship to play its role in creating new economic sectors and supporting economic diversification (Audretsch, 2007, p. 41). Moreover, the lack of coordination between universities, governmental bodies, and the private sector limits the effectiveness of policies supporting university entrepreneurship, which calls for adopting integrative approaches that ensure the alignment of legislative frameworks with the requirements of a knowledge- and innovation-based economy (Etzkowitz, 2008, p. 19).

Third: Prospects for enhancing university entrepreneurship and its role in supporting economic diversification: Despite existing challenges, promising prospects emerge for

strengthening university entrepreneurship as a strategic mechanism to support economic diversification by expanding funding programs directed at student projects, developing university incubators and business accelerators, and linking them to priority economic sectors. Updating educational curricula and integrating entrepreneurial skills across disciplines also contribute to preparing competencies capable of creating new and diversified economic activities (Guerrero & Urbano, 2012, p. 495). In addition, strengthening partnerships between the university and the public and private sectors is considered one of the fundamental mechanisms for activating the role of university entrepreneurship in supporting economic diversification by facilitating knowledge and technology transfer and increasing the marketability of university innovations (Etzkowitz & Zhou, 2017, p. 67).

4. CONCLUSION

This study highlights the growing importance of university entrepreneurship as a modern and effective mechanism for supporting economic diversification amid global economic transformations and the declining capacity of rent-based economies to achieve sustainable development. The study shows that higher education is no longer limited to knowledge transmission but has become a key actor in producing and economically utilizing knowledge through encouraging innovation, supporting entrepreneurial initiatives, and linking the university to its economic environment.

The study also demonstrates that university entrepreneurship represents one of the strategic pathways that enable the expansion of the productive base and the creation of new economic activities based on knowledge and scientific research, thereby reducing dependence on traditional sectors and strengthening an innovation-based economy.

Key findings of the study: The study reached a set of findings, most notably:

Economic diversification is an indispensable strategic option for achieving sustainable economic development, especially in economies that rely on a single sector for income generation. University entrepreneurship contributes to supporting economic diversification by transforming higher education outputs and scientific research into entrepreneurial projects and start-ups with added value.

Higher education plays a pivotal role in consolidating the culture of university entrepreneurship through its integration into curricula, the establishment of incubators and business accelerators, and the activation of entrepreneurship development centers and student clubs. Conversely, university entrepreneurship contributes to linking the university to the economic environment by strengthening partnerships with the public and private sectors and transferring knowledge and technology to the market, thereby supporting the emergence of new economic sectors. University entrepreneurship also faces several practical and regulatory challenges, including weak funding, limited supporting structures, and complex administrative procedures, which necessitates the adoption of supportive and integrated policies to enhance its role in economic diversification.

In light of these findings, it becomes clear that strengthening university entrepreneurship represents a real bet for supporting economic diversification and building a more flexible and sustainable national economy. The success of this pathway remains contingent upon the degree of integration between educational and economic policies and the strengthening

of partnerships between the university and its economic environment, enabling the activation of the developmental role of higher education in the long term.

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