
Editorial

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Biographical notes: Daphne Halkias, PhD, is a distinguished academic, cross-cultural researcher, consulting psychologist and executive coach. Publications carry her name in research on entrepreneurship, women's issues, family business, organisational behaviour, education and clinical psychology. She is currently a Senior Research Fellow at The Center for Young and Family Entrepreneurship (CYFE) at the University of Bergamo, Italy, Research Affiliate at the Institute for Social Sciences at Cornell University and Affiliate at Institute of Coaching at McLean Hospital of Harvard Medical School. Her forthcoming applied research books are in the areas of international management, immigrant entrepreneurship and sustainability, father-daughter succession in family businesses and cross-cultural e-negotiation. She is Editor of *International Journal of Social Entrepreneurship and Innovation*.

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Back in 1999, management guru Peter F. Drucker wrote that our society will develop into its "adulthood, when it becomes highly entrepreneurial, and one in which innovation and entrepreneurship are normal, steady, and continuous". What may come as a surprise to many would-be entrepreneurs is Drucker envisioned that this highly entrepreneurial society would not become successful because of brilliant management strategy or an

over-reliance on high-technology. Drucker prophetically wrote that the key to the success of the entrepreneurial society of the future would be social innovation. He told us that social innovation would be needed in the areas of redundant workers and abandoning outworn and obsolete social policies and institutions. What we would need to move forward to the betterment of society will lie in the changes entrepreneurs could bring about in tax and fiscal policies and government regulations. Most importantly, these entrepreneurs bent on bringing about social innovation would have to be individuals that will not be satisfied to reach a certain level of success and then stand still – they must undertake continuous learning and relearning.

Fast-forward to today. Innovation is not a new phenomenon. Arguably, it is as old as mankind itself. However, in spite of its obvious importance, innovation has not always got the scholarly attention it deserves. This is now rapidly changing, however. Research on the role of innovation, economic and social change has proliferated in recent years, with a tilt towards unifying the disciplines towards this common goal. No single discipline, such as the social sciences, deals with all aspects of innovation. To get a comprehensive overview of the role played by innovation in social and economic change, scholars from across academic disciplines must work together if we are to help bring to the real world the social innovation we all talk about and write about.

Because of its well-documented desirable consequences, policy-makers, financial stakeholders and social entrepreneurs are concerned with pinpointing the key to unlock and how to foster social innovation in all segments of society. Voluminous research in this area during the past 50 years has told us over and over what social innovation leads to and not so much about how and why it occurs. The questions asked about how knowledge and social innovation operate at the organisational level remains fragmentary.

Hopefully in the years to come, cross-disciplinary research into social entrepreneurship and innovation can further develop in conceptual and applied research directions. This glaring gap in the extant literature has in part been brought about because social innovation has been studied by researchers with different backgrounds working in isolation. This issue, like most complex social phenomena, can only be resolved by researchers coming together in cross-disciplinary dialogue. It appears that this kind of collaborative (not competitive) engagement among scholars is our own moral compass to guiding policy makers, governments, entrepreneurs, educators and citizens alike towards Drucker's entrepreneurial society of the future- where we become life-long learners of how to foster social innovation.

For this Issue, we followed our own words above and brought together an inter-disciplinary team of international scholars representing specialisations from Management to Social Entrepreneurship, from Economics to Education and from Product Design to Public Policy. Their research and insights will certainly be an added value to this young field of Social Entrepreneurship and Innovation and its wide-spectrum research agenda.

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