
Introduction

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1 Enacted entrepreneurship education

The enacted entrepreneurship perspective expresses how individual instigators of entrepreneurial processes socially construct their environment, thereby making a context that supports and enforces their entrepreneurial endeavours (Johannisson et al., 2002; Spilling, 2011). Considering education as much an identity-crafting as a cognitive-technical activity, it concerns the purposeful training of individuals to master a specific domain of their present or future life. Combining these understandings of entrepreneurship and education respectively gives us the opportunity to structure, communicate and share experiences on how to enhance entrepreneurial outcomes by organising educational projects in such a way that those concerned – students, teachers as well as contextual stakeholders – are provided with means that can help them to co-create their own development conditions. The aim of this special issue is to present different ways for taking on this challenge.

2 Entrepreneurship as enacted – implications for learning and education

Entrepreneurship education seeks to provide different categories of (university) students with the knowledge, skills and motivation for the practice of entrepreneurship in a variety of settings. What makes entrepreneurship education distinctive is its focus on the preparation of people for their identification and realisation of an opportunity which they are passionately attached to. While most members of the international research community accept such a view, some of us think that it is especially important to underline that the realisation of that ambition is an outcome of a tedious and hard work which rather calls for changed everyday practices than dramatic interventions on the market. The notion of ‘enactment’ signals that opportunities, whether searched or created, only can be realised if those involved are convinced that a close and sensitive interaction with the environment is needed in order to make such an endeavour successful. A way to emphasise this view is to state that a process perspective on the phenomenon, i.e., ‘entrepreneurship’ instead of entrepreneurship, is appropriate (Steyaert, 2007; Johannisson, 2011). As suggested by Wiklund et al. (2011), research in entrepreneurship/entrepreneurship is a field approached theoretically and empirically in terms of a phenomenon where emergencies of new value has a much wider meaning than only commercial activities, and may, e.g., involve entrepreneurship through social entrepreneurship (cf. Austin et al., 2006; Zahra et al., 2009; Sarasvathy and Venkatamaran, 2011). The contributions in this special issue reflects such an understanding, where the articles that make up this special issue illustrate different ways of deepening our understanding of how enacted entrepreneurship influences appropriate ways to organise, practice and evaluate learning and education in the field. Some generic ideas framing the different contributions can from this perspective be outlined.

First, since entrepreneurial processes link the (emerging) venture and its environment, education must consider the context of the venture in its theorising and practices. This is a challenging but also rewarding task since it opens up for dialogue with stakeholders outside the academic setting which potentially both supplements analytical academic knowledge with ‘actionable knowledge’ (Jarzabkowski and Wilson, 2006), and it also provides job opportunities for students who have not yet graduated. Second, students as well as staff must develop and mobilise their entrepreneurial selves in order to be able to

actively engage in the challenging events that form the entrepreneurial education. Learning for and in entrepreneurship, as much as practicing entrepreneuring, is an existential endeavour. Third, the academic context for individual programmes and courses in entrepreneurship, that is the university that hosts the educational activities, must also practice entrepreneuring, as stated above.

In our mind there are a number of reasons why it in contemporary times is especially important to practice an enactive approach in academic teaching in and for entrepreneurship. A first argument is that the scope of appropriate arenas for entrepreneurship has widened considerably. From an initial focus on business-related (for-profit) entrepreneurship we today witness a growing interest in social (not-for-profit) entrepreneurship. This means that all responsible citizens become potential subjects in entrepreneurial endeavours and may benefit from entrepreneurship education. This specific special issue of IJEV thus addresses some challenges and emerging modes of coping in business as well as in societal contexts. A second argument is that the potential for enacting new ventures, to practice entrepreneuring, has generally increased due to new information and communication technology, making both ideas and resources more accessible to a wider audience. A third argument is that in many national contexts, such as the Scandinavian ones, the universities are expected to take a more active part in (regional and national) developments that calls for innovation and entrepreneurship. In order to make such contributions effective it is important that university staff and students through appropriate training gain basic competencies in how to translate their academic insight into knowledge that can be used in communities of practice outside the realm of the university.

3 The papers and their contributions

Today, there seem to be a strong support for entrepreneurship being part of the education agenda on all levels in the education system. However, entrepreneurship has not been an unproblematic concept to introduce and apply in the education context and there have many times been strong tensions and conflicts when it has been introduced to teachers. Such issues are focused upon in ‘Entrepreneurship education in policy and practice’, Karin Berglund and Carina Holmgren’s contribution to this volume, as they study the intersection between policy and practice when implementing entrepreneurship in the educational system. Analysing policy documents and narratives from entrepreneurship education implementation projects during a time when entrepreneurship education started to be promoted in Sweden, three ‘thought figures’ or ‘contrarities’ catching these conflicts/tensions are identified:

- *biological vs. social* – the question whether we are born to be entrepreneurs or whether we learn to become entrepreneurs in social contexts
- *economic vs. humanistic* – is the main objective of education to foster the ‘engines’ of a market society or is it to foster democratic citizens
- *individual vs. collective* – whether entrepreneurial endeavours mainly are the outcomes of individualistic or collective efforts.

Based on these three questions, the authors discuss tensions and conflicts in the intersection between policy and practice and propose that it is not feasible to frame

entrepreneurship education as a closed concept and as a final solution to educational practices. The areas/thought figures made visible in this article may be addressed in discussions among teachers and reflected upon when translating experiences from one context to another.

Educating for entrepreneurship calls for not only cognitive but also conative and emotional skills which makes it an especially challenging project in the formal setting of a university where mainly the cognitive component in the learning process is focused. In their report on an ambitious teaching project – ‘Fostering the competence of science students in identifying business opportunities: a design research approach’ – *Jan Nab, Astrid M.W. Bulte* and *Albert Pilot* conclude that in a multi-strategy design, a teaching mode that expands on the students’ academic training by letting them encounter the (business) life outside the university, is more successful than strategies that focus on elaborating basic human capabilities (here creativity). Still, the course serving as an empirical case in this contribution – a half time unit running over ten weeks (7.5 ECTS) – only marginally altered the students’ openness for new ideas, and the collaboration with external stakeholders was too superficial to develop a changed practice. One reason why the intellectual/analytical strategy worked better than capability development may be that master students in science and business were targeted. Several of these students, as potential recruits for postgraduate studies, probably were already biased towards an academic career and therefore further conceptualisation was more appropriate to them. Based on this, it appears as important to include components in the practice of entrepreneuring, such as creating opportunities out of coincidences and learn from dialogue with agents outside the academic world much earlier in the students’ education, to avoid that they become fully socialised into the traditional academic approach to knowledge creation.

Addressing issues related to both the content and the enactment of entrepreneurship, *Leona Achtenhagen* and *Bengt Johannisson* in their article ‘The making of an intercultural learning context for entrepreneuring’ discuss some of the benefits and challenges a university and its teachers face when entrepreneurship programmes recruit students internationally. This is done both as a means to finance the university’s activities and as a reply to the call for a more globally oriented education. Such a recruitment strategy reveals two diametrically opposite forces in education: economies of scale which calls for homogenous student groups, and diversity that, if acknowledged, creates a very potent learning milieu for all involved, students as well as teachers. The authors share their reflections from coping with these forces while administering a master level course in entrepreneurship at Jönköping International Business School (JIBS). They propose that internationalisation in entrepreneurship education can open up a way to further advance the contributions of research, education and community dialogue to academic quality and subsequently to society. Their reflections have its starting point in a triadic relationship between research, education and the dialogue between academia and the (business) community, and concern mainly four topics:

- the academic background of the students
- the socio cultural origin of the students
- the pedagogy used in the programme
- ethical and practical matters.

The article addresses issues such as how to benefit from diversity with respect to prior knowledge of entrepreneurship, and the range of didactics that the students have been exposed to. Recommendations offered include invitations to self-organised learning processes and stimulating the students to claim ownership of their own learning processes. The article provides several insights that will assist other providers of educational programmes that try to attract an international audience.

As indicated, teaching and practicing entrepreneurship in a way that bridges theory and practise is much needed to foster entrepreneuring. Building on Saras Sarasvathy's conceptualisation of entrepreneurial decision-making as based on effectuation and causation, *Soili Mäkimurto-Koivumaa* and *Vesa Puhakka* in their contribution 'Effectuation and causation in entrepreneurship education' address the intriguing issue of how entrepreneurial education and training can be developed. Learning for and in entrepreneurship requires an emphasis on effectuation of possible futures and causation of relevant knowledge in the creation of entrepreneurial opportunities. Through emphasis on the role of effectuation, a creative process view of entrepreneurship education is advocated which builds on the cognitive and social-psychological schools of entrepreneurship and on cognitive, contextual and creation views on entrepreneurial opportunities. As a result, the authors suggest a model in which effectuation could be used systematically together with causation in entrepreneurship education. Effectuation in entrepreneurship education is proposed to open a new pedagogic view and a broader and more relevant context to increase student awareness of their ability to achieve a societal impact rather than (just) to accomplish the effective establishment of a new company. An important contribution by Mäkimurto-Koivumaa and Puhakka is hence that they highlight the need for more educational approaches guided by Sarasvathian 'effectuation principles' and the need for higher education institutions to free themselves from decision rationality based solely on the 'causation logic' (Sarasvathy, 2001) in order to be able to effectively serve the mission of acting as a seed-bed for societal entrepreneurship and innovation.

Widening the arena for entrepreneurship into considering its regional context and the quest for higher education institutions serving as entrepreneurial actors collaborating with industry and society is the theme for the two remaining contributions to this special issue. Adopting this approach, *Laura Curiel-Piña*, *José Luis González-Pernía*, *Andrés Jung*, *Miguel Angel López-Trujillo* and *Iñaki Peña-Legazkue* use the Basque region in Spain as an illustrative case in their contribution 'The relationship between firm start-up rates and the local development of an entrepreneurship education system'. The authors first describe the development of the entrepreneurship education system in the region and its localities. Then they identify the players who offer different entrepreneurship education programmes, and analyse the main features of such programmes. Based on this, they conclude that the supply of entrepreneurship education has increased substantially over the last few years and seems to continue to grow. More important, though, is that they assess the effectiveness of such programmes for enhancing entrepreneurial activity in the Basque region. Using data from the global entrepreneurship monitor (GEM) project, their findings show that only one out of ten students participating in entrepreneurship programmes starts a new business in the Basque region, which is marginally more than the outcome from those without entrepreneurship training. However, individuals who have participated in several entrepreneurship programmes during successive stages of their lifespan are more likely to start more substantial (larger) entrepreneurial ventures and to orchestrate more international and more innovation-driven start-ups. An important

implication of this contribution is also that since every region has its own characteristics for doing and operating businesses, programmes to promote entrepreneurial activity need to take regional characteristics into consideration in order to work effectively.

4 Further challenges for teaching enacted entrepreneurship

Through addressing vital challenges for developing education and training related to entrepreneurship in terms of scope, enactment and its role in society, this special issue contributes with both theoretically and practically rooted insights to foster more of entrepreneurial enactment in future higher education. Borrowing a metaphor coined by the Swedish professor Björn Bjerke, entrepreneurial higher education involves stimulating a learner's 'head, heart and feet', implying that the pedagogy and the didactics employed in entrepreneurship education should stimulate creativity, opportunity recognition/creation and analysis ('head'), entrepreneurial risk-taking and passion ('heart') as well as entrepreneurial enactment by offering space for action, team-building and innovation in practice ('feet'). To stimulate innovativeness, pro-activeness and risk-taking (Miller, 1983; Lumpkin and Dess, 1996) is however an assignment that involves several tensions which need to be managed or handled in one way or another, but where these tensions per se also constitute the foundation for a more effective, engaging and collaborative learning arena. Tensions in themselves however represent a normal starting-point and a seed-bed for entrepreneurial action as they signal entrepreneurial opportunities to be enacted and utilised for commercial or societal value creation. They therefore also represent a challenge for educators in the field of entrepreneurship.

The presented papers specifically highlight three central tensions in entrepreneurship education. The first one is the choice between putting focus on action or reflection. Students cannot as the expert entrepreneurs studied by Sarasvathy use their intuition based on experience to make choices without systematic analysis and reflection, and the challenge for educators is therefore to facilitate learning arenas which address both the action-based and the reflective domain. The second tension is between homogeneity and heterogeneity, where a high degree of standardisation and uniformity of the learning situation may be effective in a short perspective but devastating for creativity and innovation in a long run. The third tension the papers deal with is the construction versus adaptation issue, that is whether the education should aim at training the students to instigate change in society or mainly make the student better adapt to existing structures. Curiel-Piña et al. contributions relate especially to the first tension; should entrepreneurship research and education pinpoint training for entrepreneurial action or should it just aim for understanding what entrepreneurial action is about? High-lightening the second tension, Johannisson and Achtenhagen illustrate the challenges facing a university when it increases the student diversity. The Nab et al. paper informs about the challenges stemming from combining education about and for entrepreneurship. Berglund and Holmgren and Mäkimurto-Koivumaa and Puhakka broaden this discussion as they also offer insights into the tension of construction versus adaptation as a purpose in entrepreneurship education. To what extent and in what way should entrepreneurship education encourage the student/pupil to reconstruct the world?

Adopting the view that recognition, exploration and exploitation of tensions expressed as alternative opportunities represent a vital back-bone for entrepreneurship and entrepreneuring, we urge research in this field to be developed further. Additional

tensions in offering entrepreneurship programmes that may be put forward as inspiration for research to come include the friction between:

- the past or the future
- staying local and going global
- developing theory and living practice
- teaching and learning
- promoting individual gain while aligning to community coherence.

By recognising the tensions involved in entrepreneurial learning we may then be better able to utilise them as measures to create ‘stretch and leverage’ in entrepreneurial learning and move away from the ‘false dichotomy’ that seduce us into misleading either-or-decisions. In an entrepreneurial reality, enacted entrepreneurship de facto could mean that we work in a way that:

- capitalises on the past to create a solution for the future, where we make use of our extensive combined personal and institutional experiences to better enact new opportunities
- recognises that sensitiveness to local conditions may be a road to global insights as it creates an awareness of details in any context
- allows discursive academic knowledge and learning from doing in practice to cross-fertilise each other
- combines traditional teaching approaches based on causation with real-life learning approaches guided by effectuation
- develops individuals by making them aware of entrepreneuring as a collective phenomenon.

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