

Chapter 2

Entrepreneurial Thinking in the Educational System

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ABSTRACT

Education is the critical vein for human development, for society and economic growth. Because the context nowadays is vacillating, sometimes turbulent even, mankind needs empowerment through a belief system. We believe that an educated man is key to a sustainable economy, one that promotes values, lucidity and rationality. Education is modelled by and models society, through the way we think, act and react. The individual is the main actor on life's scene and he is responsible of the various shapes and forms of the socio-economic systems, of different contexts and behaviours in general. In this chapter, we aim to highlight the importance of entrepreneurship, management, creativity in managing an educational institution (system). We will analyse how an entrepreneurial system should look like, how creative thinking helps and how it will contribute to an "educated development".

INTRODUCTION

We live in an environment where it is critical to adapt as quickly as possible to all sorts of stimuli and it is this ability that may give us the competitive advantage we need to succeed. Nowadays situations are hard to handle in an isolated manner. We live in networks, in networks of networks and in networks that generate networks. As the wheels keep turning at a faster pace than ever, soft skills required to handle situations are becoming indispensable. This is the globalized society, a concept that interlinks all interested parties around the world, pushes the educational system forward, forces institutions to overcome more and more complex problems, leads towards general reconfigurations and is inherently linked to

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a constant adaptation to the variable geometry of the fast-paced shifting of the economical context. In order to function adequately, to create and be part of projects (internal, local, regional, national and international), the managerial system of the educational system should act in an entrepreneurial way. In “global knowledge societies and economies” (Aleandri & Refrigeri, 2013) the responsibility of all interested parties such as the manager (leader), other employees, students, companies, etc. is to think differently, effectively and creatively in any undertaken project.

Education and its management should be regarded as one would look at a company: it should thrive using its resources, optimizing its processes, satisfying clients and taking into consideration stakeholders’ thoughts, involving them into its activities, thus making them part of the organization. It is essential to get continuous feedback using all sorts of methods, because we consider this to be one of the top priorities when anything is subject to perfection. Education is not a business but it definitely should use entrepreneurial thinking so that it will boost its components, providing synergic effects. Universities cannot exist on their own, even though they can be self-sufficient from an economic standpoint; they are part of the worldwide educational network. They are responsible over the way they act, react and serve society and economy though its main result (outcomes): students.

Using creative thinking, educational institutions should promote student initiative in all its forms: spin-offs, personal projects, or any other form of materializing any type of fruitful opportunities. The university is now responsible not only for knowledge creation and transfer, but also for developing an entrepreneurial spirit and solid civic sense. Thus, it should be “concerned with the creation and exploitation of creative or intellectual capital” (Bujor & Avasilicai, 2016), pursuing greatness at its best. It is essential to state that in an entrepreneurial society, innovation can be found everywhere: things, procedures, thoughts. Humans constantly need to educate themselves, sometimes using sophisticated algorithms. While economy provides the means, the educational system stands for the framework support.

A knowledge-based society regards education as the base of sustainable development. Thus, investments in this area are considered to be a sine qua non condition for evolution. One should also take into consideration that “durability” in education usually resides in the echoes it has over one’s life throughout the years.

Entrepreneurship, in general, is more about facing and handling challenges, dealing with contexts whilst thinking in a creative manner. In a fluid economy, entrepreneurs must act quickly and use resources at their maximum potential. An entrepreneurial educational system should be the answer to providing the human resources economy critically needs.

A respectable university should make sure high-quality standards are met and never stop raising the bar. Education may also be synonymous to social responsibility if the students that graduate have embraced and absorbed in their DNA this kind of ethics. The manager of the system (depending on the institution, for instance the dean of an university) should regard the components of the system in an entrepreneurial manner so that everything would not only function, but work in such a way that efficacy becomes the engine of thoughts. This is how one creates an ecosystem that can represent the core of a society’s development in the future.

In such an entrepreneurial educational system, one main topic is how to evaluate organizational performance. The methods of evaluation are various and sometimes hard to grasp, especially when human capital is involved. Another important part is the motivational system and the rewards used in order to promote performance. Intellectual capital should be used within the entrepreneurial educational system so that it creates added value. The organization is responsible for providing the necessary means to achieve a high standard of individual, team and organizational performance.

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