Entrepreneur Intentions at Schools

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1. Introduction

Social entrepreneurial initiatives are often described as innovative for the public good. Schumpeter (1942) defines the entrepreneur as first and foremost an innovator. Leadbeater (1997) stated that social entrepreneurs would be one of the most important sources of innovation, actors who identify under-utilized resources and develop strategies for using them to satisfy unmet social needs, achieving a desired social impact. The following work addresses the practice of teaching entrepreneurship in universities and business schools and the link it may have with the theory of planned behavior. How entrepreneurial behaviors, attitudes and skills can be encouraged to develop a sense of social entrepreneurship and generate actions that impact society.

In countries all over the world, the educational system plays a significant role to inspire attitudes promoting creativity and innovation in society through long-term activities. Governments are already committed to create a labor market to foster entrepreneurship and innovation, through an environment that supports innovative practices. Considering the growing amounts of talent, money and attention that social entrepreneurship is attracting, we believe that it's an important field to be developed and there is much to be learned and understood.

This role is played, usually, by universities and colleges, which offers courses and activities, initiating and supporting entrepreneurship, inspiring, developing networks, combining theory and practice and cooperating with companies, business and organizations. Additional to this, the concept of social entrepreneurship in the last years has become established in business. As entrepreneurship in inclusive business model projects requires different assessments, return expectations, and project durations than in traditional models, the leading business schools already have a place in their curriculum to teach social entrepreneurship, focusing on how to deal with complex situations.

Spigel (2017) argue that entrepreneurial ecosystems are a mix of social, political, economic, and cultural elements that support the development and growth of startups and encourage entrepreneurs to take the risks of starting new ventures. Universities, available human capital, accessible markets and mentorship are one of the most important pillars of these ecosystems. Government policies and universities can support these cultures and networks by removing institutional barriers to entrepreneurs, training skilled workers and funding specific support programs.

The understanding of the concept and the importance of entrepreneurship is vital to its recognition, as schools are a part of the students' environment, training and incentivizing those who act in social enterprises to have the capacity to create greater value and make contributions to enterprises in which they are engaged. This area of research includes studies from multiple disciplines, since it is a trending topic that has a huge impact. After presenting an analysis of the literature of authors who applied studies in entrepreneurship schools, this article intends to stimulate reflections on the theme from these different perspectives.

2. Entrepreneurship

Schumpeter (1942) wrote that without entrepreneur actions, economic progress would become static and decay. These individuals identify a commercial opportunity (a material, product, service, or business) and implement it. Entrepreneurship consists in creating innovations rather than inventions and it occurs only during this phase of the process, arguing that nobody is an entrepreneur forever, but only while innovating. Entrepreneurship does not contribute only to the economy or other parts of social life, but the so called "creative destruction" challenges the established equilibrium. New ideas are brought into action, setting off a chain of reaction, motivating, introducing innovations, overcoming resistance and challenging the established and organized environments, encouraging other entrepreneurs to step in and construct new combinations. That is the moment when enterprises need to be able to develop and adjust, through entrepreneurial processes, adopting many models and roles to a greater or lesser extent. (Gawell, 2013)

The entrepreneurial activity varies across the countries and nations, especially because of theirs cultures, and different educations, technologies, laws, resources and economic development. It is usually associate with opportunity, but still, the entrepreneur is seen as innovators and early exploiter, with an exceptional ability to seek and identify opportunities, having the commitment to pursue them, and the competence to tolerate the inherent risks. Still, the macro (markets and government) and the micro environment (universities), are crucial for new enterprises and to the development and support of the intentions of students to become entrepreneurs and prompt them toward more ambitious startup plans. (FRANKE and LÜTHJE, 2004)

3. Social Entrepreneurship

Martin and Osber (2007) explain that both entrepreneurs and social entrepreneurs must be capable of influence others: investors, teammates, employees and customers. They are strongly motivated by the opportunity to identify and pursue their vision relentlessly. The value proposition is the principal distinction between them. For the entrepreneur, it is organized to serve markets that can afford the new product or service, being designed to create financial profit and vital to the progress of economies. The social entrepreneur's value proposition focuses on an underserved, neglected, or disadvantaged population that lacks to achieve the transformative benefit on its own. Their ventures can generate income and may be organized as either not for- profits or for-profits, vital to the progress of societies. What distinguishes them is the primacy of social benefit.

To create social value and pursue their goals, these actors recognize and exploit opportunities, tolerating risks and overcoming the limitations in available means, combining resources in innovative ways. Using business models and innovative approach, their ventures maximize revenue generation by delivering community service, using public, private and non-profit sector experience, creating hybrid organizations, new initiatives, products, services, and programs. They generate profit along with social impact, as a private reward to themselves (PEREDO and MCLEAN, 2006).

One definition of social entrepreneurs can be, as Bessant and Tidd (2007) present them, actors who do not measure their success in terms of performance and profitability,

but aim at the development of significant social value, seeking innovations and new business models that can bring wellbeing to unattended communities, who are resource deprived and socially excluded.

Dees (1998) describes social entrepreneurs as agents of change that create and sustain social value; recognize and pursue opportunities; dedicate to constant innovation, adaption and learning; act boldly without being limited by resources in possession; and are responsible for the ones being assisted and for the outcomes obtained. These attributes can be found in people with distinct talents, skill sets, dispositions, and backgrounds. They must have the same commitment and determination as a traditional entrepreneur, exploring new paths, but focusing on social causes, not on significant financial gains.

Social entrepreneurs have revenues from both market and non-market sources, as long as their customers perceive the authenticity of the social aspects of what they are offered. The transaction may be in the form of a donation or the acquisition of a good or service; the entrepreneur must construct a viable business model to develop positive impact and have a vision of the resources that can be used to achieve this impact (Newth and Woods, 2014).

4. Entrepreneurial intentions

According to Krueger and Carsrud (1993), entrepreneurship teachers, consultants and entrepreneurs themselves should benefit from a better understanding of how intentions are formed and how their beliefs, perceptions and motives influences the intention to start a new business. As professors comprehend the students' motivations, they may provide better training to them, teaching about the realities of entrepreneurship and increasing entrepreneurial self-efficacy. The authors explain that Shapero's model (1982) shows that perceived feasibility, perceived desirability and propensity to act are all significant antecedents of entrepreneurial intentions. Exogenous factors like a prior exposure to entrepreneurial activity influence people's perceptions of desirability and feasibility, which influence intentions toward entrepreneurial behaviors.

Shapero's model assumes that inertia guides human behavior until something interrupts it. The way to react depends on the relative "credibility" of an alternative behavior and the "propensity to act". The credibility is defined as how the reaction is desirable and feasible. Entrepreneurial events require the credibility and propensity to act to exist prior to the event. Shapero (1982) shows evidence of how perceptions are critical in this process and significant life events may increase the entrepreneurial activity. The perceived feasibility is the degree to which one feels personally capable of starting a business. (KRUEGER, REILLY and CARSRUD, 2000)

Ajzen (1991) explain that intentions, in general, depend on perceptions of personal attractiveness, social norms, and feasibility. The theory of planned behavior argues that attitudes impact intentions, which are antecedent to behaviors. Attitudes have a behavioral component, such as behavioral intentions and predispositions to act in a particular way. Intentions are assumed to capture the motivational factors that influence

a behavior; as indications of how much of an effort people are planning to perform a behavior. The stronger the intention, the more likely should be its performance.

The theory of planned behavior has three independent determinants of intention. The first is related to the attitudes toward behaviors, the evaluation the person has of the behavior. The second determinant is the subjective norm and refers to the perceived social pressure to perform (or not) the behavior. The third antecedent of intention is the perceived behavioral control, which refers to the perceived ease or difficulty of the behavior. (AJZEN, 1991)

5. Entrepreneurship in Schools

Smith and Woodworth (2012) wrote an article about their courses of social entrepreneurship. They describe that their main approaches were to make the students confident that they had the capability of make a difference in the life of others and to arise a desire to proactively help find solutions to critical social issues. To make this happen the professors helped the students to identify themselves with the social entrepreneurship communities, attending that they have the tools, abilities, and resources necessary to contribute. During the course they faced many challenges, as the fact that not all projects would be successful (as well as traditional entrepreneurial ventures) and the need to raise capital for the projects and initiatives. The authors emphasize that educators should teach students about the challenges, risks, and potential of failures of the projects, including examples of learning from failures into course material to help them to cope with their own disappointments that will inevitably happen in one form or another. They saw the "case method" as an effective mean of stimulating student involvement, and apply skills, knowledge, and concepts to solve problems.

Franke and Lüthje (2004) argue the importance of the academic context in shaping and encouraging the entrepreneurial intentions. This stimulation can occur exposing students to role models, frontier technologies and ground-breaking ideas. To foster the confidence, through education and training, there's a need to focus the learning in new venture creation than on the management of existing ones. The activities could include, role models, experimental learning and real-world experience with critical problems that the startups may face, consecrating support networks with sponsors and coaches. The more students value the this career path, the stronger their intentions are to become entrepreneurs themselves.

Harris and Gibson (2008) examined the entrepreneurs in business students, showing that their behaviors are often shaped by past experiences, so individuals who had direct exposure to entrepreneurial activities in the past, had stronger entrepreneurial skills. Still, this could be developed and refined within education programs. Even though a positive attitude toward risk and independence leads to stronger entrepreneurial intentions, an understanding of students' entrepreneurial attitudes can also be used to develop more relevant education programs, especially in entrepreneurship education.

Blenker et al. (2008) affirms that there's a need to develop the students' motivations, competences and skills regarding innovation and entrepreneurship. The well-known established educational system must make changes in learning techniques,

methods and processes that demand transformations of didactics and pedagogy, adjusting the purpose and the target group of the education. There's a large variation in teaching approaches and instructions about entrepreneurship as a research area and how to create a business plan may be not enough anymore to prepare the students to the real life challenges that they will face.

Many authors, like McMullan and Long (1987), indicate that the knowledge generated in universities is usually only applicable to big corporations. They explain that the instructional methodology of management is not well suited to all kind of business, specially to entrepreneurs, and that the curriculum for these students should have a different program from the one to management students. To provide an effective education, students should also have hands-on experience working with social ventures, proving to themselves that they are capable of creating value to real firms.

While researching about theme, the authors found that the local university as the most obvious place to house entrepreneurship education, with different ways to create and disseminate new knowledge. Support these programs will generate local ventures for new jobs and general economic well-being, but will require theoretical foundations, knowledgeable and motivated academic leadership, financial resources, and appropriate structural forms.

Vliamos, S. J. (2008) wrote that experimental learning is one of the solid trends in entrepreneurship education, that means activities such as competitions for the best business plan, opportunities to learn from real world small businesses, simulations, incubators and other approaches that many educators deem more effective than the conventional textbook approach. As one of the fundamental elements of entrepreneurial activity, the innovative thinking should focus on how to develop products and how to establish a business, as well as the skills related to methods for identifying and assessing business opportunities.

6.   Review

As observed in the literature presented, sustainable improvements in society may be via the two pillars addressed: social entrepreneurs and their education in business schools. By eliciting them, we will have the potential for global improvements in different areas of development, as a strength of business, a better understanding of innovations, incentives, and ways to develop them, introducing entrepreneurship education into the instruction of the new generation.

Entrepreneurship is already a strategy to foster job creation in many countries. It is necessary to help the students to see the career of entrepreneur as a viable option, preparing them with better skills to develop and succeed this type of business. The courses to be offered at universities can serve of different proposes: learning, generate ideas, planning, and mostly to impact and help students to see themselves as social entrepreneurs and innovators. Educational institutions may help to develop the human capital while fostering entrepreneurial mindsets in its students.

As Fayolle and Liñán (2014) pointed out there's a great potential for entrepreneurial intention research to contribute to a better understanding of the entrepreneurial decision-making process. This typpe of studies may support the design of more effective education initiatives and a better understanding of the role of context and institutions.

7.   Conclusions and Implications for Research and Practice

Increased societal and academic concern in social developments illustrates the broadening of global awareness on social issues and the need to develop responsible change strategies. The activities in social entrepreneurship reflect this recognition when approaching the entrepreneurs with social objectives and not merely commercial objectives. Thus, all those involved in society and in promoting social justice (policymakers, philanthropists, entrepreneurs, organizations) should create the right conditions to meet needs more effectively.

Courses that urge students to personally identify with social entrepreneurship and develop a corresponding sense of self-efficacy can help them to become social entrepreneurs themselves. Universities may help their students to recognize themselves as entrepreneurs, developing their confidence and ability to make positive social change.

The growing interest in entrepreneurs' beliefs and decision-making processes instigate which factors may contribute stimulate their activity. Intention-based models may help teachers, policy makers, and entrepreneurs themselves to better understand their motives and intentions, providing a better training and sizable opportunities for its development.

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