

## VARIOUS PERSPECTIVES ON ENTREPRENEURSHIP EDUCATION: EMERGING TRENDS IN ENTREPRENEURSHIP SUPPORT

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### INTRODUCTION

The attention paid to entrepreneurship has increased during last decades. National representatives and institutions, non-governmental organizations, representatives from private sector, even the general public recognized the potential and possibilities of entrepreneurship activities and their positive influence not only on economy, but also on social and environmental factors. Entrepreneurship is linked with a triggering event and it is understood as a process of recognizing opportunities and their shaping and reshaping. Of course such a process assumes also determining and acquiring resources which are together with the entrepreneur and the opportunity recognition the crucial components for a potential successful new venture. Entrepreneurship is however not predictable and in today's open economies full of innovations and information technology it implies a need for emerging of cooperation and support by higher education institutions, especially universities. Understanding the fact that teaching entrepreneurship is important can play a significant role for development of a supportive structure for nascent entrepreneurs and ventures. When a school or a university understands its importance in this process a lot of innovation and implementation to improve the education and generally the curriculum can be done. Implementing entrepreneurship as a part of curricula and lectures has become main stream among several universities across many countries. Sharing knowledge and methods of entrepreneurship teaching and learning approaches enables students to become more entrepreneurial and it is considered as one of the very effective ways in finding of students' entrepreneurial mindset.

### 1. BRIEFLY ABOUT ENTREPRENEURSHIP

As mentioned above the entrepreneurship and its development are extremely significant for every society. The concept of entrepreneurship became a phenomenon. There is no doubt that entrepreneurship in general has gained its status as a legitimate scholarly research subject (Vesper, 1988). There is no single definition of this phenomenon because it cannot be properly defined (Anderson and Starnawska, 2008), (Long, 1983), (Audretsch et al., 2007). Tons of definitions and descriptions could be found in the literature when in a result some definitions and entrepreneurship concepts are just fragmentary. However, several definitions should be mentioned to illustrate a conceptual picture of entrepreneurship. As it is widely known the first usage of the concept of entrepreneurship or more precisely an entrepreneur is related to Richard Cantillon (1755). Besides other things defined Cantillon mentions an entrepreneur as a self-employed person. The Cantillon's definition has been developed and adjusted for example by Joseph Schumpeter, Gartner or Frank Knight. In early beginning of the 20th century economist Schumpeter (1934) described entrepreneurship as an essential ingredient for a creative destruction. Gartner (1990) for example asked, if entrepreneurship is not just a buzzword, or if it does have any particular characteristics that can be identified and studied. Knight (1967) spoke about courage to bear the uncertainty of entrepreneurship and about entrepreneurs' managerial functions. Furthermore, many other researchers have defined entrepreneurship in terms of which the entrepreneur is and what does he (she) do (Shane, Venkataraman, 2000). Kiesner (2010) says that entrepreneurship and entrepreneurs is a path out of the world's economic troubles and chaos. Entrepreneurship is also often perceived as a "heart" of sustainable, organic growth for the

most developed as well as for the transitioning and developing economies (Carayannis and Maximilian von Zedtwitz, 2005).

From the perspective of some international bodies, the European Commission defines entrepreneurship in terms of using creativity and innovation and mentions that entrepreneurship competencies are important for everyone, as they lead people to a better understanding of the things they do (European Commission, 2009). The Global Entrepreneurship Monitor, represented by Amorós and Bosma (2014) perceive entrepreneurship as a highly-developed system influenced by business environment conditions and the activities of various entities such as entrepreneurs themselves, policy makers, public and non-public institution representatives, and society. OECD (2014), among other relative studies, defines entrepreneurship as a source of innovation and growth thanks to several indicators of performance.

## 2. ENTREPRENEURSHIP EDUCATION

There is an old entrepreneurship myth asking “whether the entrepreneurs are born or they can develop” In other words, many scholars have been asked if entrepreneurship is a natural gift. This is a controversial academic question on this matter. One side believes that entrepreneurs are born into this world with a special drive and emphasis for success that most of other people lack. Other believe that entrepreneurs can be “made” through education, experience and training. For example Schumpeter considers entrepreneurship not a profession but a function. In other words, entrepreneurs have a butterfly-like existence (Uzunidis et al., 2014). At the current time perhaps the majority of scholars and universities believe that entrepreneurship can and should be taught. There are several reasons for it, not only related to its impact on the economy competitiveness, but also due to the fact that it is proved that highly educated entrepreneurs experience higher growth levels and survival rates (Ellis et al., 2004).

Parker (2009) argues that education plays an essential role between the determinants influencing access to entrepreneurship. The entrepreneurship education is understood as an instrument which should help the development of creative and innovative behavior in individuals. Importance and interest in teaching entrepreneurship has risen significantly at the same time as appreciation of the relevance of entrepreneurship in society is growing (Brand et al., 2007), (Kuratko, 2005), (Henry et a., 2005). The GEM Report A Global Perspective on Entrepreneurship Education and Training (2010, p.8) defines entrepreneurship education as “*building of knowledge and skills either about or for the purpose of entrepreneurship generally, as a part of recognized education programmes at primary, secondary or tertiary level of educational institutions*”.

Universities are now in the position of becoming one of the most important drivers of economic growth thanks to their ability to foster innovation, attract new businesses and provide a continuous flow of information and moreover, to form young and capable individuals (Tausl Prochazkova et al., 2013). They are considered as platforms for development of entrepreneurial behavior and activities (Kolvereid, 1996; Zainuddin and Ismail, 2011). Today’s students are responding to the reality of economic and social life and universities can serve largely to educate and train people for their entrepreneurial career (Tausl Prochazkova, 2014). Nazaré (2012) mentions that universities are no longer ivory towers and that they have undergone changes and should help society to provide a constant process of change.

Kuratko (2005) mentioned that entrepreneurship education activities at universities should pay attention to three main areas: entrepreneurship education, entrepreneurship research and cooperation with entrepreneurs. In order to provide the correct understanding what the entrepreneurship is about and how to prepare students for it in a close interaction with entrepreneurs and relative entrepreneurship research together with entrepreneurship education should be combined. As this paper deals only with

entrepreneurship education the topic following text focuses only on this part of entrepreneurship “popularization” in the two of its following sections:

- The entrepreneurship education analysis,
- The entrepreneurship education methods.

## 2.1 Entrepreneurship education analysis

There are many studies conducted at universities in determining the stage of development of entrepreneurship education which can be taken as an example, see Lüthje and Franke (2003) or Turker and Selcuk (2009). Also, several national or international policies are dealing with the topic of entrepreneurship education (European Commission, 2013), (GEM, 2014), (Potter – OECD, 2008), (Ministry of Education, 2015). However, several times it was proved that this kind of education is not provided on a conceptual basis. For example, The Final Report of European Commission Expert Group did not bring any positive results about the entrepreneurship education in the Czech Republic. In this report it is featured: “There is no generally accepted system of entrepreneurship teaching in the Czech Republic. Education of entrepreneurship is running at some universities, more or less on the basis of various individual approaches.” (European Commission 2008).

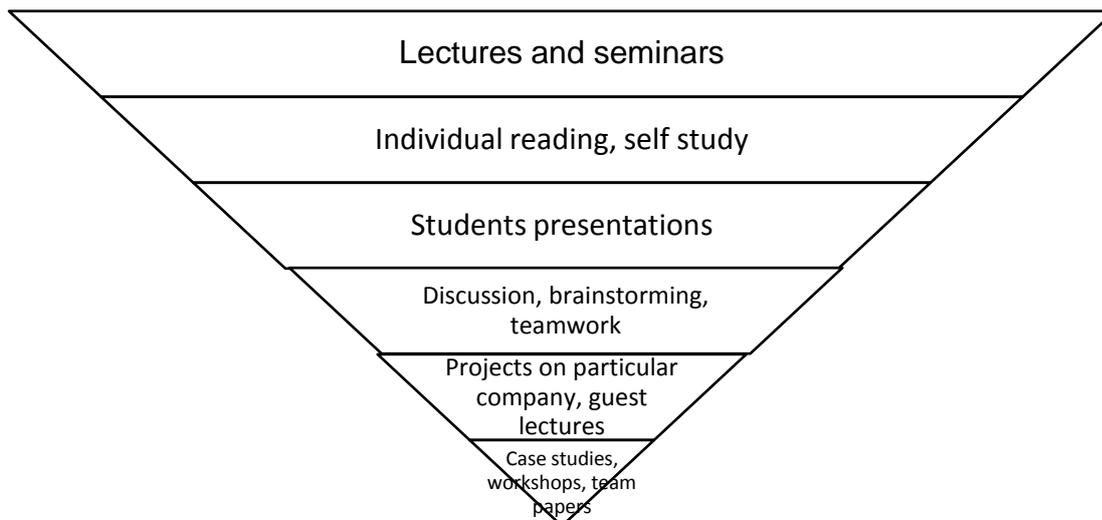
As an answer to this statement an analysis of entrepreneurship education at selected universities was performed in the framework of the project *V4 Scientific Centers for the Enhancement of Financial Literacy and Entrepreneurship Education*. Together, in four countries (the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary, and Poland) a syllabus analysis was performed which tried to answer the questions *if entrepreneurship education is a part of the faculty programmes with a focus on economics*. Only a limited number of faculties with a focus on economics were selected. For example, in the Czech Republic, 10 faculties were selected and examined. An analysis of syllabus was

carried out among selected institutions in all study programmes including all study specializations when only English study programmes were not included. We may present in this paper some interesting outcomes of the comprehensive analysis. The full analysis is available as the outcome of above mentioned V4 project and further outcomes of the project’s partners will be published. From the 10 chosen faculties, there are 22 study specializations out of 114 (with 12 specializations at a bachelor’s level of study programmes and 10 at a master’s level of study programmes) that use the term of entrepreneurship or business economics in their titles. The resulting profile of students studying each specialization is very useful information. The Information about this character is provided by the individual faculties in the description of their specialization. The results confirm low orientation on entrepreneurship career and they are as it follows:

- A specialist in economic positions (lower or middle management) - employee - 50.0%.
- Other - 46.21%.
- An economic analyst - 2.27%.
- An entrepreneur - 1.52%.

When studying deeper the 22 study specializations we realized that the share of all ECTS credits given by the taught subjects (together 19,980 ECTS) on entrepreneurship subject is only 0.8%. This is really a very low number. We took also a closer look on subjects which are dealing mainly with entrepreneurship issues. There are together 23 various subjects focusing mainly on entrepreneurship topics from the 10 selected faculties. By entrepreneurship subjects is not only important the topic, but also the way it is taught. The research found out a primary theoretical level of entrepreneurship education with dominance of classic lectures and seminars. Figure 1 shows the dominance of used teaching methods.

Fig. 1: Dominance of used teaching methods



Source: own according to V4 Scientific Centers for the Enhancement of Financial Literacy and Entrepreneurship Education project outcome, 2015

The data from the Figure 1 can be compared to some previous researches made by the project's partners (Tausl Prochazkova et al., 2013). The research results show how students evaluate the effectiveness of such teaching methods. Not surprisingly, the most efficient ones were considered the methods of case studies, workshops and guest lectures. Such an example pointed out a significant discrepancy between the fact how the entrepreneurship is mainly taught and how it should be taught from the students' point of view. This problem mentioned also Moroz and Hindle (2012) or Jack and Anderson (1999) who discuss the growing disconnection between the scientific theory and theorizing and the study of the real entrepreneurship.

## 2.2 Entrepreneurship education approaches – the best practices

Traditional educational methods focused mainly on theory and the didactic approach is not considered very important in the entrepreneurship education (Davies and Gibb, 1991). According to Gibb (2007) lectures, case studies and projects, sometimes entrepreneurs' presentations dominate most of the entrepreneurship education. On the other hand, results of different researches show that there are types of entrepreneurship education that

increase motivation for starting a new business and these are mostly various practical programmes that seem to be particularly useful because they offer real-life experience (Peterman and Kennedy, 2003; Petridou and Saree, 2011). Sidhu et. al (2014) discuss two mainstream methods of teaching and learning entrepreneurship:

- Inductive learning – Using this method the teacher shows to the students various examples how a concept is used. Students should reflect on it and recognize the way how the concept works and they demonstrate their understanding. This method is mostly recommended to use in subjects of management, leadership, team-building considered as essential qualities of an entrepreneur and it is considered as the most suitable method for teaching entrepreneurship.
- Deductive learning – Using this method the teacher introduces the concept to the students and then the students should complete their tasks to practice this concept. This method is mostly recommended to use in subjects and cases where facts and basic knowledge are of the highest importance.

The previous chapter showed the results of the V4 project research. The results confirm that the currently used approaches and teaching

methods of entrepreneurship are not the most suitable ones. Therefore, the following text mentions some information about two international partners of the Faculty of Economics, the University of West Bohemia

(UWB) who are in close and fruitful interaction with the Faculty. Both partners are more experienced in the field of entrepreneurship education and could be used as an inspiration of the best practice approaches.

Tab. 1: Entrepreneurship education examples of the best practices

Description	Marquette University, USA	HAMK University of Applied Science, Finland
Own major/study programme	At the Marquette University the entrepreneurial major was introduced in 2004.	Partially bachelor and full master degree programme
Teaching methods - basic	Lectures, individual or group projects, best practices, discussion	Lectures, individual or group projects, best practices, discussion
Teaching methods - innovative	Case studies, interactive lecture – using video sources, guest lectures, workshop, design-based thinking, games and simulations, team work	Case studies, interactive lecture – using video sources, guest lectures, workshop, design-based thinking, games and simulations, team work
Special events	In cooperation with the Kohler Center for Entrepreneurship: Special workshops – for example with social entrepreneurs After lessons follow the speaker series – important business speakers (available also online) ImpactNext - Marquette's Business Plan Competition	Pitching competition Intensive learning experience (experiment) – Amazing Business Train Intensive weekly entrepreneurial programme focused on international cooperation - Freezing Week
Existence of entrepreneurship centre/business incubator	Kohler Centre for Entrepreneurship	Business Services – contact point Innopark HAMK

Source: own source, 2015

In comparison to the partner, the Faculty of Economics, the UWB, several aspects of these two universities should be mentioned:

- At present, there is no entrepreneurship major at the Faculty of Economics, the UWB.
- Since a really limited number of subjects are focused on teaching entrepreneurship, the entrepreneurship education is really patchy at the Faculty. If the entrepreneurship education is provided, the mainstream is based on lectures. A very

little space is available for more creative teaching methods.

- Regarding special events, perhaps the most continuous event is the workshop called "Winter Schools." The workshop focuses on chosen aspects of entrepreneurship and running under the framework of the project Unipranet focusing on connection praxis with universities. Nevertheless, at present there were several guest lectures performed on various entrepreneurship topics.
- However, the entrepreneurship research is quite developed and still in process of

developing at the Faculty of Economics. In connection to the mentioned V4 project the Center for Entrepreneurship was officially established at the Faculty and it should be a contact point for developing entrepreneurial activities and research at the Faculty. The Center is currently at its early birth stage, but several activities in the innovative ways are already conducted. Hence, the prospects of future development in the field of entrepreneurship education promise a significant boom.

### 3. CONCLUSION

It is possible to find many examples of good practices especially in foreign countries, in which there is a clear emphasis on cohesion of education with the entrepreneurial sector, cooperation between schools and enterprises and obtaining not only theoretical but practical experience within entrepreneurship (Entrepreneurship Development through Entrepreneurship Education with Special Emphasis on the Role of Business Incubators: Evidence from the Czech Republic). This paper outlines the basic outcome of the V4 project focused on the entrepreneurship education and mentions the certain knowledge and examples of the best practices. The aim of this paper and project V4 Scientific Centers for the Enhancement of Financial Literacy and Entrepreneurship Education is to contribute to the debate about the on-going transitioning process of universities regarding their entrepreneurial orientation. The universities need to change the process of learning to enable their students to develop their entrepreneurial capabilities. Theorizing is not the key factor; success dwells in continuous innovation and connection to the real world situation. The simplest way how to continue this successful way is to share knowledge from the more experienced partners. Afterwards, young people can be empowered for change and present them as one of the absolutely equally life carrier the entrepreneurial one. The awareness about entrepreneurship education has been flourishing for several years. Some institutions adapted to this situation quite fast, some of them are still at the beginning or in the

middle of their transition. Since the transition represents a complicated process regarding sharing knowledge and learning from more experienced partners and institutions, also enthusiastic and supporting environment and people represent the core of such a successful process.

*The paper was created with the support of the project "V4 Scientific Centers for the Enhancement of Financial Literacy and Entrepreneurship Education", International Visegrad Fund, Standard Grant No. 21410134.*

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### **Abstract:**

The importance of entrepreneurship has boomed in several last decades. Currently, the new age of entrepreneurship is discussed a lot. The new age is primarily connected to innovation and technological trends. There are no doubts that entrepreneurship and its support has got into the focus of public policies. One of the very efficient ways of supporting spreading of entrepreneurship is considered development of entrepreneurship education. Therefore, higher education institutions play a very important role in the support and entrepreneurship development. Entrepreneurship education represents a strong mainstream which has the ability to raise nascent entrepreneurs, foster innovation and arrange a continuous flow of information and knowledge. Universities are perceived as agents of a valuable source of skilled people who can be led to an entrepreneurial career. From universities it is expected to use innovative approaches in their teaching methods and curriculum in general. However, most of them recognize this process of change very slowly. To better understand the current position of the entrepreneurship education and call for a change several experience and knowledge from the most successful universities can be used. The paper presents particular outcomes of entrepreneurship research the V4 project *V4 Scientific Centers for the Enhancement of Financial Literacy and Entrepreneurship Education* and examples of entrepreneurship teaching methods used by two close international partners of the Faculty of Economics of the University of West Bohemia. The examples of entrepreneurship teaching methods are considered to be good model examples and can be used as inspiration for creating of own method of entrepreneurship education.

**Keywords:** entrepreneurship; entrepreneurship education; method; approach

**JEL Classification:** I23, O31, M21