Enhancing entrepreneurship education research and practice: Challenging taken-for-granted assumptions and dominant perspectives

Journal of Management Inquiry Developmental Conference and Dialogue Call For Papers.

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Financial Times*: Do you have any advice to young would-be Entrepreneurs who want to emulate your success?*
Gerald Cavendish Grosvenor (Duke of Grosvenor, Chairman of Great Portland Estates, Owner of Grosvenor group): *Make sure they have an ancestor who was a very close friend of William the Conqueror*.

Background and objectives of the Dialogue

Entrepreneurship has been taught for over 50 years in business schools, engineering schools and universities worldwide (Katz, 2003; Solomon 2007; Vesper & Gartner, 1997), and is becoming a core pillar of several Business Schools around the world. Over the years, the teaching of entrepreneurship has developed into a branch of research, namely, entrepreneurship education (EE), the interest of which is to understand what, how and to whom entrepreneurship should be taught (e.g. Fiet, 2001; Honig, 2004; Neck & Green, 2011) and what results should be expected from these kinds of programmes (Peterman & Kennedy, 2003; Pittaway & Cope, 2007). Several contributions have focused on the nature of EE as a research field, questioning its maturity and legitimacy (Katz, 2003; Kuratko, 2005) or its standards (Katz, Hanke, Maidment, Weaver, & Alpi, 2016).

EE research is currently facing a particular challenge; not only it lacks academic legitimacy but it is also striving to achieve relevance in practice (Fayolle, Verzat, & Wapshott, 2016). Consequently, and as Fayolle (2013) states, EE needs more robust theoretical and philosophical foundations that draw on both entrepreneurship and education fields to support the development of effective courses and programmes, and to distinguish between those that are, and those that are not.

For instance, the literature in EE often describes the structure and content of entrepreneurship courses and programmes but fails to appropriately question their philosophical and methodological foundations, which might be important if we were to better understand the *essence* of entrepreneurship (Johannisson, 2016). Another important concern is the vagueness of EE goals (Hoppe, 2016), and, in some cases, its disconnect with larger social forces, such as inequality. Some studies, for example, affirm that EE is becoming increasingly complex as its contexts of application (with respect to the heterogeneity of both the locales where entrepreneurship is taught, but also the type of people who receive EE and the specificities of their backgrounds) are diverse and each of them might be highly peculiar (Lindh & Thorgren, 2016) with boundary conditions that may make generalizations problematic.

This concern concurs with the inherent difficulty of developing effective EE programmes along with the assessment of its results. The impact of EE is, indeed, a relevant issue for several studies in this field (Nabi, Liñán, Fayolle, Krueger, & Walmsley, 2017). Empirical observations reveal contrasting findings in that respect (Walter & Block, 2016), suggesting that multiple *truths* might coexist regarding the effects of EE on people and territories. This could kindle scholars' interest in different questions that shift the emphasis from 'whether' to 'when' or 'for whom' EE is effective or ineffective (e.g., Lyons & Zhang, 2018) so as to help determine to what extent entrepreneurship can be taught, what dimensions of it can and should be taught, and with what methodologies. Consequently, we wish to ask a broad question: how should the field develop to tackle these drawbacks and to increase its relevance and impact from a theoretical and practical perspective?

Here, **we invite scholars to highlight the taken-for-granted assumptions that beset the field of EE**, and to reflect on how to break away from them and move this field forward. The principal aim of this reflection is to offer new propositions and perspectives that challenge the previous ones, and bring more texture and nuance to the field of EE. In this vein, we would like to **open a debate around the major shortcomings of EE and open the space for new questions, new solutions and new research paths to be developed**. To this end, we call for papers that embrace a critical approach in discussing their perspectives. By following previous critical approaches in entrepreneurship (e.g., Fayolle, Landström, Gartner, & Berglund, 2016; Frank & Landström, 2016), we consider perspectives that offer alternative ways of knowing and understanding in the field of EE to be critical.

Without limiting the creative insights of those authors who wish to participate in this debate, we highlight three areas that bring together possible ideas to guide scholars to identify and address the assumptions that have been taken for granted in EE: Newness, Diversity and Ethics.[1]

New ideas have an important role in scientific progress (Kuhn, 1970); they might challenge previous positions and open paths for new questions. In this call for papers, Newness is intended as the fact of not having existed before and includes questions that reflect on what represents innovation for EE. The questions are intended to highlight issues that require a deeper consideration in this field. Examples of these questions are as follows:

- What is really 'New' in EE and why might this newness be of interest to EE? Is "new" systematically better?

- Is there something that we have forgotten to study?

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[1] The reported definitions are based on Oxford Dictionary (Oxford University Press).

We claim that Diversity, intended as a range of many people or things that are very different from each other, is a peculiarity of EE. The field stems from and merges together two different scientific domains, namely, education and entrepreneurship. EE is applied in very different contexts (universities vs professional associations); is oriented towards different targets (students, nascent entrepreneurs and entrepreneurs) and has different goals (Bae, Qian, Miao, & Fiet, 2014; Liñán, 2004). While this variety might be a source of richness for new ideas to arise, it might also prevent the process of defining EE objectives and impacts. In this call for papers, Diversity is meant to cover questions that try to address the complexity of EE, to recompose the fragmented puzzle and to make its multiple dimensions more understandable:

- What is the role, as well as impact, of theoretical and practical diversity in EE?

- How does diversity in geographical contexts, educational settings, institutions, people, audiences, teachers and programmes influence EE?

Ethics, intended as moral principles or rules of behaviour, becomes a central issue in EE. This is due to its centrality in policymakers' discourse that emphasises the quality of being entrepreneurial as a resource for the social and economic progress of society. The potential impact of these policies should call scholars to reflect on the influence of their research that is thought to enlighten the political agenda. In this call for papers, Ethics embraces all those questions that reflect on the implications and consequences of EE programmes in relation to their pedagogical approaches, evaluation methods, goals and so on. Possible questions are as follows:

- Do we think about moral principles and rules when we address the teaching of entrepreneurship? Under what conditions or circumstance EE leads to immoral or amoral behaviours?

- What does it mean to be ethical when students are taught or educated regarding entrepreneurship? How to educate Ethical Entrepreneurs? How does EE affect ethical intentions and behaviours among students?

- How do EE teachers and researchers deal with their assumptions that they have taken for granted?

Authors are requested to try to connect these three areas to present an original contribution to the field of EE. Both theoretical and empirical contributions are welcomed.

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Process

This call for papers is divided into two parts: an earlier one for a developmental conference, and a second one for the Dialogue itself.

Initially, we are inviting scholars to submit manuscripts that are finalized or relatively advanced. Each contribution will be evaluated through a double-blind review process but using a developmental lens: the objective of this initial review is to facilitate the Academic conversation around the theme, and help authors develop their manuscripts.

Accepted contributions and their authors will be invited to be presented and discussed at a mini-conference that will be held in February/March 2019 at the EMLYON Business School (Lyon-France). This conference is developmental in nature, and seeks to ensure that a robust, high-quality academic dialogue emerges among participants around a common conversation. Authors will be invited to present their manuscript and will receive feedback for development. After the conference, the best contributions (a maximum of six) will be invited for inclusion in the Dialogue Section of the Journal of Management Inquiry.

The papers presented for consideration in order to be included at the EMLYON Developmental Conference should adhere to the guidelines of the *Journal of Management Inquiry,* requiring that manuscripts to conform to the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (6th edition) (Guidelines for authors can be found here: https://uk.sagepub.com/en-gb/eur/journal/journal-management-inquiry#submission-guidelines). The papers invited for publication will follow the standard format of JMI´s "Dialogue" section.

Please find here additional information about the Journal of Management Inquiry: http://journals.sagepub.com/home/jmi; and a sample of the "Dialogue" section: http://journals.sagepub.com/toc/jmia/27/1#sage_toc_section_Dialog

Submission process
- Paper submission: 31 December 2018
- Round 1 review: 30 January 2019
- Mini-conference: February/March 2019
- Submission of the revised papers: 02 June 2019
- Selection of the papers: 30 September 2019
- Publication date: 2020

For any further information, please contact the editors at the email addresses provided above.

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