

Making enterprise education more relevant through mission creep

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Abstract

This chapter identifies a key future development opportunity for enterprise education through a critical analysis of the definitional foundations of entrepreneurship. Two previously neglected societal purposes of entrepreneurship are shown capable of making enterprise education more applicable and relevant to educational institutions and educational policymakers. When enterprise educators view their mission as being about developing their students' competencies – both entrepreneurial and others – through opportunities to create value for others, it represents an altruistic and moral turn in entrepreneurship. This marks a departure from the usual economic policy aligned mission of generating job growth and improved employability. It instead makes enterprise education align well with key educational policy priorities such as student learning, study motivation, perceived relevancy of schooling and the inculcation of democratic and communitarian values in students. Implications include a need to move policy efforts around enterprise education from ministries of trade and business to ministries of education, and a need to shift the debate from what educators can do for budding entrepreneurs to what entrepreneurial graduates can do for society.

Keywords: Enterprise education, Educational policy, Value creation, Venture creation,

1 Introduction

Entrepreneurship is being increasingly embraced by the European community. Celebrating the entrepreneur has become a recurrent theme in popular culture (Nicholson and Anderson, 2005), spurring significant policy pressure on both national and European levels towards a more entrepreneurial culture in society (Mahieu, 2006, Gibb, 1993). High hopes are entrusted with entrepreneurs to contribute to increased prosperity through economic growth and job creation (Wong et al., 2005, OECD, 2015). This surge in popularity has been accompanied by unrealistic but nevertheless strong romantic mythicizing of the entrepreneur as a lone heroic legendary figure, often a western middle-class man, motivated by self-oriented profits or liberty (Ogbor, 2000, Drakopoulou Dodd and Anderson, 2007). Such a hero myth combined with explicit policy pressure towards entrepreneurship can be problematic, since it has been shown to trigger increased gender, race and class inequality through means of activating neoliberal mechanisms in society (Lackéus, 2017b). A well-known side effect of the neoliberal endeavor to encourage citizens to become more self-sufficient and enterprising is that the already strong individuals in society become even stronger and the weak blame themselves for their misfortunes, leading to structural inequality (Giroux, 2005, Gill, 2014, Lemke, 2001).

The problems associated to the hero myth of entrepreneurship have not refrained policymakers from attempting to infuse entrepreneurship into education. Two different approaches have been used. The first is a narrow approach termed *entrepreneurship education*. It is based on a business start-up logic, aiming to develop competencies needed to start a new venture. The second is a more broadly applicable approach termed *enterprise education*. It is based on an opportunity identification logic, aiming to develop competencies such as creativity, sense of initiative, uncertainty tolerance and perseverance (QAA, 2018). The encounter between entrepreneurship or enterprise educators and traditional teachers more broadly has, however, remained a largely unsuccessful endeavor so far. The integration of entrepreneurship and enterprise across subjects has to date been very marginal on all levels of education (Eurydice, 2016, Pittaway and Edwards, 2012). Judging from the empirical situation 'on the ground', it seems as if the two current conceptualizations of educational entrepreneurship do not appeal much to most teachers and managers in the educational system. A small group of teachers, primarily on higher education level, are rather enthusiastic. Most readers of this chapter will probably be part of this group. Entrepreneurship and enterprise educators have indeed found themselves a little corner in the academic corridors of many universities and colleges, from where they can run their separate programs, courses and modules. They have nevertheless remained a marginalized group reminiscent of the ugly duckling in H.C. Andersen's famous tale. The vision of enterprise education for all has so far proven elusive. This calls for self-critique and creative discussions among both scholars and practitioners. Is there a way to turn the ugly duckling of entrepreneurship and enterprise education into a respected and beautiful swan?

A recent attempt to critically assess the situation has shown empirically that the two established ways to infuse entrepreneurship into education are both problematic (Lack us, 2017a). Entrepreneurship education is problematic for many teachers due to its connotations with selfishness, commercialism and capitalism. Enterprise education suffers from definitional vagueness, fuzziness and weak effects on students. The resulting situation is a dilemma where many teachers are caught between two inappropriate alternatives. This could explain why infusing entrepreneurship into education has remained a challenging and marginal endeavor in practice. Given the focus of this book, the aim of the current chapter is to focus particularly on the problems associated with enterprise education, and to identify a viable way forward. What is clear is that the broad enterprise education approach is the preferred candidate among the two for attempts to infuse entrepreneurship more broadly into all levels of education and in all subjects. But for this to succeed, empirical assessment studies indicate that enterprise education first needs some mending. Therefore, the question asked in this chapter is: How can enterprise education be amended so that it works for more teachers and produces stronger effects on students and pupils of all ages?

This chapter starts with a deepened problematization of enterprise education, based on an analysis of some widely acknowledged definitions of entrepreneurship. Two emerging definitions of entrepreneurship then provide a way out of the current dilemma for enterprise education. In the last section of the chapter, empirical examples of the proposed path forward are reviewed, illustrating how they not only can widen the relevancy and applicability of enterprise education, but also can represent a departure from economic policy to instead cater for interests within the educational policy sphere.

2 The definitional dilution syndrome of enterprise education

Enterprise education can be viewed as a peeled off version of entrepreneurship education, aimed to better suit the requirements of an educational system highly skeptical of commercialism and capitalism. But in the effort to widen the relevance of entrepreneurship for teachers, some key components of entrepreneurship may have been lost. It will here be shown how enterprise education can be viewed as a definitionally diluted concept. A brief definitional analysis of entrepreneurship will therefore be conducted, providing an analytic

foundation for inferences around which aspects of entrepreneurship that have been peeled off, and what is now left after the transformation of entrepreneurship education into enterprise education.

While there have been numerous attempts to define entrepreneurship throughout history, some definitional perspectives are more widespread than others. This chapter does not aim to provide an exhaustive historical overview of different definitions of entrepreneurship. That has already been done many times (Carlsson et al., 2013, Morris, 1998, Landström, 2007). Instead, a framework based on careful reading of earlier definition summaries is presented in Table 1. Six common definitions are briefly summarized together with their approximate temporal emergence, their focus and some pioneering scholars. The six definitions chosen for inclusion here are also classified in terms of whether they are about entrepreneurial effects, entrepreneurial behaviors or societal purposes.

Table 1. The definitional dilution syndrome of enterprise education. In the 1990s, enterprise education experienced a time of definitional dilution that still today hampers development. The table shows how adding societal purposes of developing students' entrepreneurial competencies (2000s) and responsabilizing students towards society (2010s) has contributed to escaping the diluted state of enterprise education.

	A diluted time					
	Entrepreneurship education			Enterprise education		
	Entrepreneurial effects		Entrepreneurial behaviors	Societal purposes		
Definition of entrepreneurship	The growing innovation	The wealthy entrepreneur	Organization creation	Opportunity identification / creation	Developed competencies	New value creation for others
Time (approx.)	1930s	1960s	1980s	1990s	2000s	2010s
Definitional focus	Novel	Successful	Daring	Interesting	Developmental	Useful
Pioneering scholars	Schumpeter	McClelland	Gartner	Stevenson, Shane	Cope, Rae	Bruyat, Fayolle

Table 1 illustrates how enterprise education, emerging in the 1990s, can be conceptualized as a result of peeling off three of the four then dominant definitional perspectives on entrepreneurship. The peeling off can be viewed as a three-step process, see further in Figure 1. The first step can be seen as going from economic entrepreneurship to social entrepreneurship, leaving behind the perspective of wealth creation for the individual entrepreneur. The second step can be seen as going from social entrepreneurship to corporate entrepreneurship, leaving behind the perspective of organization creation. The third and final step can be seen as going from corporate entrepreneurship to enterprise education, leaving behind the perspective of growing an innovation that disrupts existing markets or other societal structures. What is then left as defining enterprise education is opportunity identification / creation, which has been a key focus of enterprise education since the 1990s and to a large extent up until the present day. This is visible in the 2012 definition of enterprise education issued by the UK Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA, 2012, p.8-9), defining enterprise education as teaching that lets students "come up with original ideas in response to identified needs and shortfalls, (...) enabling students to be more opportunity-focused".

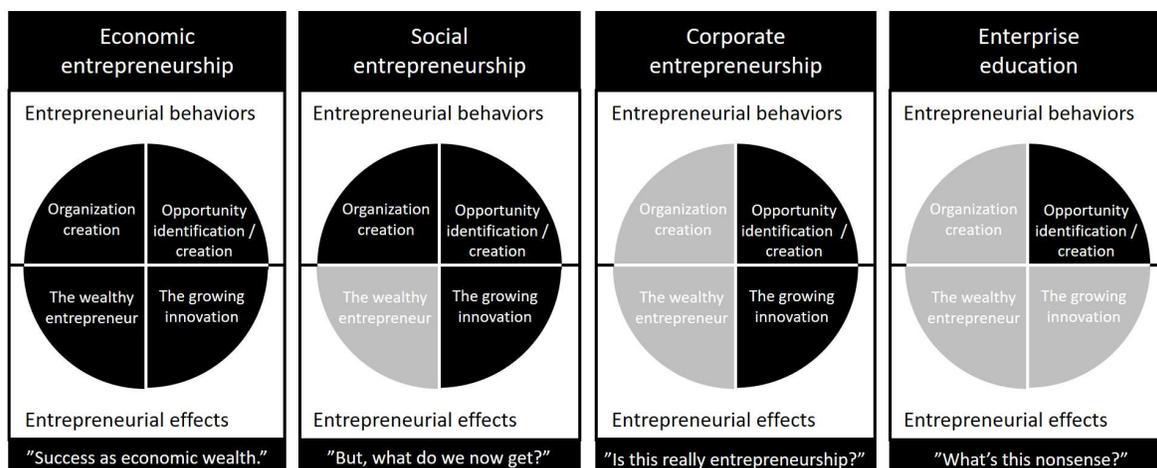


Figure 1. A precarious situation for enterprise education in the 1990s due to definitional dilution. Confusion mounting as more and more of the definitional core of entrepreneurship was peeled off.

The emphasis in enterprise education on creativity, opportunity and idea generation makes it largely similar to what is often labeled 'progressive education'; a centuries long tradition in education prescribing to let students learn by working in projects, solving authentic problems in teamwork characterized by social, active and self-directed learning (Labaree, 2012, Dewey, 1938, Tynjälä, 1999, Jonassen and Land, 2000). Key proponents include Comenius (1657), Rousseau (1762/2003), Dewey (1938), Kilpatrick (1918), Montessori (1912), Jonassen (1999) and Kohn (2000). The most influential of them has been John Dewey (1938). Progressive education is today often labeled constructivist education, based on the view that students need to socially construct their own personal subjective knowledge base through experience (Löbler, 2006). Constructivist recommendations for teachers are indeed very similar to those given in progressive education (Cuban, 2007).

Based on an observation that entrepreneurs learn in a social, active and self-directed manner, a number of scholars have linked enterprise education to progressive education (Fletcher, 2007, Pepin, 2012, Mueller, 2012, Löbler, 2006, Kyrö, 2005). Critics have then claimed that enterprise education is a mere relabeling of progressive education, thus lacking a precise definition of what is unique with enterprise education (Hägg, 2016, Leffler, 2009). Even if attempts have been made to pinpoint some key differences between progressive education approaches such as problem-based learning, project-based learning and service-learning on the one hand, and enterprise education on the other hand (e.g. Lackéus et al., 2016), the issue around what is distinctly 'entrepreneurial' about enterprise education remains (Lackéus, 2018).

Something that could save enterprise education from dilution into irrelevance would be studies showing its superiority in terms of impact of some desirable kind. Such studies are however virtually non-existent. Almost all impact studies focus on venture creation in some way, i.e. on entrepreneurship education rather than on enterprise education. It is also difficult to study the impact of something that is not defined in a precise enough way as to permit reliable assessment of its impact (Pring, 2010). Jones and Iredale (2010, p.15) claim that "a robust means of establishing the impact of enterprise education has yet to be determined" due to its definitional ambiguity.

It was not until the 2000s that a new definitional perspective on entrepreneurship emerged that had the potential to take enterprise education out of its definitionally diluted state to some extent. With the exception of some early singular contributions in the 1990s (Bird, 1995, Young and Sexton, 1997), foundational work centered around UK scholars Jason Cope and David Rae in the early 2000s, under the umbrella term of 'entrepreneurial learning'. Alone and together with colleagues they explored how entrepreneurs learn from

starting and developing their ventures (Cope, 2003, 2005, Rae, 2000, Rae and Carswell, 2001, Rae, 2005, Cope and Watts, 2000). This constituted a key foundation for many of the subsequent attempts to advance enterprise education by defining entrepreneurship as a set of developed competencies (Bird, 2002, Gibb, 2002, Man, 2006, Kyrö, 2008, Blenker et al., 2011, Lackéus, 2014). These endeavors were later picked up by policymakers, resulting in the construction of an official European framework for entrepreneurial competencies (Bacigalupo et al., 2016). This gave educators access to a new kind of definitional support in their enterprise education efforts. The 2018 edition of UK's Quality Assurance Agency (QAA, 2018) guidance document for enterprise educators acknowledges this, and includes a description of the new European entrepreneurial competencies framework. With help from this framework, educators could at least communicate to students and other teachers what the purpose of enterprise education was from a learning and personal development perspective. The issue of how to develop these evasive entrepreneurial competencies was, however, still a mystery to many teachers. Letting students sit in a classroom and conduct creativity assignments based on authentic content did not seem to develop their entrepreneurial competencies much (Lackéus, 2017a). Something more was needed to substantiate enterprise education. This is an issue to which we will now turn in the next section.

3 A necessary return to the societal roots of entrepreneurship

The definitional dilution that enterprise education exhibits raises a fundamental question. What is, actually, the ultimate purpose of enterprise education? Infusing entrepreneurship into education started around the 1990s as an economic policy imperative, based on the key role that entrepreneurs and new ventures were seen to play for the growing economy and thus for society at large. But when entrepreneurship as a concept was peeled to its most basic form, out of sheer necessity to be accepted in education, and subsequently tentatively infused broadly across all levels of education and in all subjects, are we not rather engaging in educational policy? The first major step towards such a mission creep arguably was taken when enterprise education embraced an entrepreneurial competencies discourse, resulting in an increasingly strong graduate employability agenda (Rae, 2007). Enterprise education was now motivated through its alleged beneficial effects on graduates' ability to get a job, in turn motivated by the need for citizens as well as nations in a globalized world to be more entrepreneurial in order to stay competitive (Hannon, 2006). Making sure that educational institutions inculcate those competencies that society needs is arguably as much of an educational policy issue as an economic policy issue.

The observed emerging mission creep of enterprise education illustrates how difficult it is to disentangle means from ends in society. This was a key remark made by pragmatist philosopher John Dewey in many of his works (see primarily Dewey, 1925, 1939). According to Dewey (1938), any given ends-in-view can only be a provisional hypothesis, requiring empirical action to test and subsequently verify what value a certain set of means ultimately could bring. Viewing enterprise education as a means to reach some ultimate societal goal thus requires careful empirical trial-and-error, coupled with a systematic study of perceived and actual benefits for teachers, students and other key educational stakeholders. This is a constantly on-going endeavor that enterprise educators and associated scholars are engaged in, whether they know it or not. This chapter thus represents an attempt to document the current state of the continuously on-going reciprocal determination of means and ends in enterprise education.

In order to facilitate disentanglement of means versus ends in relation to enterprise education, Table 1 contains three different categories of definitions; entrepreneurial effects, entrepreneurial behaviors and societal purposes. While wealthy entrepreneurs indeed can be characterized as having done both novel and successful things, and while they indeed have been pursuing their interests in daring ways by starting a new venture, it is arguably rather the new kinds of value that they create for society that represents the main usefulness of entrepreneurship from a societal perspective. As an example, it was not because Steve Jobs

became a wealthy person through his entrepreneurial endeavors, that his deeds were deemed societally valuable. And while some people in the United States have indeed benefitted as employees and investors from the creation and existence of the Apple Corporation, organization creation is also not the key contribution of Steve Jobs. It is rather all the useful and innovative artifacts they produced and marketed globally, such as mobile phones, tablets and other groundbreaking products and services, that was the main benefit for society of Steve Jobs' lifetime achievement.

The main reason why society embraces entrepreneurship is then perhaps not so much related to the observable secondary effects and behaviours, such as the material, administrative and legal artifacts created (i.e. new organizations and innovations). Much more important for society is the entrepreneur's value creation capability towards citizens of the world. This points to the key importance of the rightmost definitional perspective in Table 1; new value creation for others, rather than for the entrepreneurs themselves. Making enterprise education embrace a perspective of new value creation for others can thus entail an altruistic and inherently moral turn in entrepreneurship, where the infusion of enterprise education broadly into educational institutions represents a pivotal moment we can describe as "private practices of entrepreneurship enter[ing] the public domain" (Anderson and Smith, 2007, p.493) of education in this case. A focus on learning-through-creating-value-for-others has also shown capable of developing other competencies than those deemed entrepreneurial (Lackéus, 2017a). It leads to both deeper learning of subject specific curricular knowledge and skills among students, through an increased engagement among students in education in general. This represents a contribution that enterprise education can make to improve the core of education.

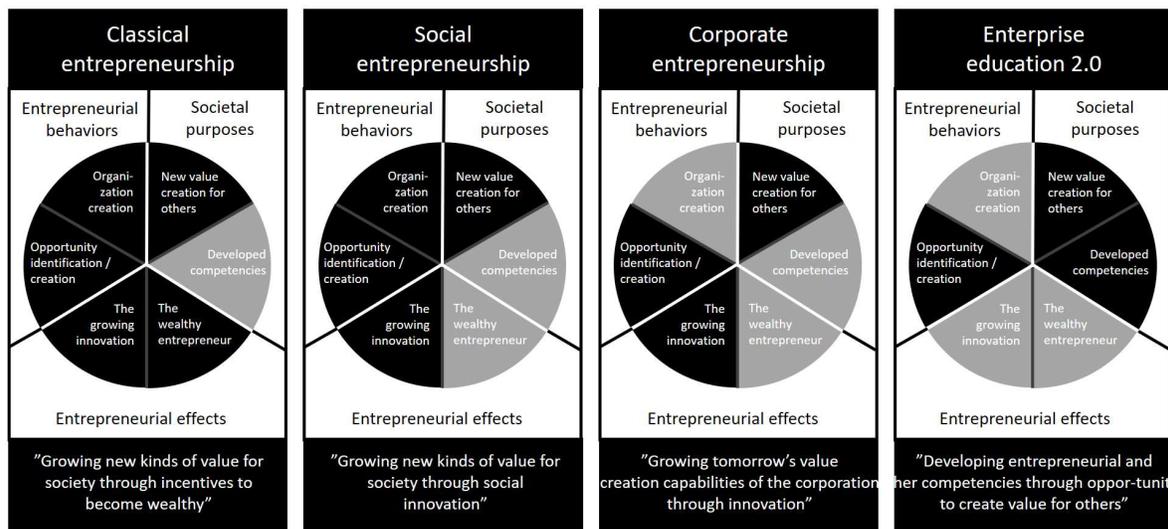


Figure 2. Reconnecting enterprise education to the overarching societal purposes of entrepreneurship and education.
Adding societal purposes to the definitional basis of enterprise education creates a more stable foundation.

To summarize the implications of this definitional exposé, we can see that embracing societal benefits of entrepreneurship in relation to education and to society at large represents an opportunity to free enterprise education from its definitionally diluted state in the 1990s, see Figure 2. Adding two different definitions of entrepreneurship representing societal purposes gives enterprise education three definitional foundations instead of one, stabilizing the concept as such. Enterprise education now is defined as being about developing entrepreneurial as well as other more traditional competencies through giving students opportunities to create value for others.

4 A new set of ways and reasons to infuse entrepreneurship into education

The expanded definitional foundation for enterprise education articulated here can be viewed as a major step forward for enterprise education, thus here termed 'enterprise education 2.0', see Table 2. This is then contrasted to 'enterprise education 1.0' representing a more established conceptualization emanating from the 1990s. A recent meta-study summarizing six comprehensive empirical impact assessment studies of the three different types of entrepreneurial education shown in Table 2 has revealed some interesting differences between them (Lackeus, 2017a). The six studies showed that 'enterprise education 2.0' is the only type among the three that delivers strong effects in three key areas; developed entrepreneurial competencies among students, increased student engagement and deep student learning of subject matter knowledge and skills. Many of the six empirical studies contained value creation-based enterprise education examples where students worked harder than they had ever done before in their entire life. These were transformative and deeply emotional experiences that changed their perspectives on many aspects in life, and that they would remember for their lifetime. Revising the definitional foundation of enterprise education was also found to remove much of the conceptual fuzziness associated with 'enterprise education 1.0'.

Table 2. A journey towards increasing relevance for entrepreneurial education through mission creep. Three developmental stages for entrepreneurial education, where each step makes entrepreneurial education more relevant for an increasing number of educators through gradual mission creep.

Entrepreneurial education: "a 'catch all' term that encompasses both Enterprise and Entrepreneurship"¹

	<i>Entrepreneurship education:</i> Entrepreneurial education about and through organization creation	<i>Enterprise education 1.0:</i> Entrepreneurial education through progressive education	<i>Enterprise education 2.0:</i> Entrepreneurial education through value creation for others
Logic	Organization creation	Mindset development	Value creation for others
Purpose	Grow the economy	Increase graduate employability	Make students learn better
Practice	Students learn about and to some extent also through organization creation	Students learn by working in groups to create ideas and artifacts around authentic problems	Students learn by applying their knowledge to create something of value to others
History	1970s: First generation of entrepreneurial education	1990s: Second generation of entrepreneurial education	2010s: Third generation of entrepreneurial education
Rationale	More people need to start ventures in order for the economy to grow	A perceived need for a broader application of entrepreneurial competences in the wider economy	A perceived need for connecting enterprise education better to educational purposes
Semantics	Entrepreneurship Entrepreneur	Entrepreneurship? Entrepreneurial? Enterprise?	Entrepreneurial
Applicability	Very narrow	Very Broad	Broad
Effects	At times wide ranging effects on student engagement, on learning of the entrepreneurship subject and on entrepreneurial intentions	Poor empirical data to suggest wide ranging effects except for in isolated cases	Emerging data suggesting wide ranging effects on student engagement and on learning of all kinds of subject matter
Roots	Entrepreneurship viewed as organization creation ²	Progressive education ³ Arts & design education ⁴	Entrepreneurship viewed as new value creation ⁵
Policy basis	Economic policy	Economic policy and Education policy	Education policy

¹ QAA 2018, p.9. ² Gartner, 1989. ³ Gibb, 1993. ⁴ Penaluna & Penaluna, 2009. ⁵ Bruyat, 1993.

'Enterprise education 2.0' thus represents a return of the strong effects on students' entrepreneurial competencies that entrepreneurship education traditionally has produced, but that were lost when peeling off three of four dominant definitional perspectives on entrepreneurship in order to form 'enterprise education 1.0'. The strong effects are however produced in a quite different way. 'Enterprise education 2.0' does not at all rely on economic value for triggering engagement, but instead reaches the strong effects through the power of people's passion for making a real-life difference to others and to society at large. The difference is largely similar to that of self-oriented egoism versus others-oriented altruism. Entrepreneurship education leans primarily towards commercial motives around wealth creation for oneself, whereas 'enterprise education 2.0' leans primarily to prosocial motives around meaningful creativity with others and a sense of belonging (Lackéus, 2016a). This opens up for a beneficial mission creep for enterprise education, where the differences in how effects are produced allow for a different view on why enterprise education should even be promoted through policy initiatives. This mission creep is also strengthened by the strong effects on the core mission of education that neither of the two previous types could produce; increased student engagement in general schooling and a robust development of subject matter knowledge and skills. Instead of aiming to grow the economy (entrepreneurship education) or increasing graduate employability ('enterprise education 1.0'), 'enterprise education 2.0' has been shown to deliver on a core purpose of making students learn better in virtually all kinds of education and on all age levels of education. While this does not preclude long-term effects on the economy or on student employability, it represents a quite different *raison d'être* for enterprise education.

In line with the Deweyian (1925, 1939) means-ends philosophy of conducting empirical explorative studies to test and subsequently verify what value a certain set of means ultimately could bring, the potentially emancipatory move from enterprise education 1.0 to 2.0 was empirically discovered through six empirical studies where around 1000 students of all ages learned by creating value for others (Lackéus, 2017a). Value creation-based enterprise education then emerged as a possible escape from the dilemma of entrepreneurship and enterprise education being caught between marginalization and irrelevance. It was shown how teachers no longer needed to choose between effective but marginal practices and widely applicable but fuzzy and ineffective practices. 'Enterprise education 2.0' thus opens up a new solution space.

It was a need to peel off all instances of capitalism and amend the resulting fuzziness that brought forward the new way of connecting enterprise education more broadly to other teaching practices articulated here. This was deemed necessary in a six-year action research program conducted mostly in primary and lower secondary schools (for an extensive methodological background discussion, see Lackéus, 2016b, p.35-46). This research program resulted in a recommendation to move the responsibility for enterprise education from ministries of trade and commerce to ministries of education. Student engagement as well as entrepreneurial and other more traditional competencies are certainly education policy related, but also the inculcation of communitarian values of asking students to consider others. Responsibilizing young people and giving them an opportunity to find their role in society is an issue deeply immersed into the core purpose of education, representing an opportunity that educational policy-makers can now embrace.

5 Conclusion

Can we now conclude that enterprise educators seem to have been doing the wrong things for the wrong reasons for decades? Emerging evidence and theoretical definition-based analysis indeed points towards this. But the good news is that the same empirical studies are also showing that mending enterprise education by progressing from enterprise education 1.0 to 2.0 is a rather straightforward process. Many empirical examples of enterprise education analyzed in scholarly works cited here could relatively easily have been transformed into a more effective educational practice simply by adding a possibility for students to interact outside their group, class or school and try to apply their knowledge and skills to create value for others. What the students

already do in class could quite easily have been connected to an external audience or recipient of some potential value. From a Deweyan (1925, 1939) means-ends perspective of hypothesis testing and trial-and-error, experimenting extensively with a definitionally peeled off kind of enterprise education was probably the only way this opportunity for enterprise educators could have been identified and verified. Taking action in practice was the only way to discover a more appropriate balance between means and ends in enterprise education. While emerging empirical evidence for 'enterprise education 2.0' is indeed promising, it remains to be seen if an emphasis on students creating value for others can turn the ugly duckling of entrepreneurship and enterprise education into a respected and beautiful swan. If so, it will probably be through an increased perceived relevance more broadly, through stronger student engagement in their education and through the resulting robust effects on student learning of not only entrepreneurial competencies but also of subject matter knowledge and skills.

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