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Guiding Directions in Social Entrepreneurship and Innovation Education: Experts' Insights

ABSTRACT

RESEARCH OBJECTIVE: The aim of this paper is to provide insights into the views of SE and SI experts from different settings on university education in these two fields.

THE RESEARCH PROBLEM AND METHODS: SEE[1] has been gaining significant interest following development of the research field. However, literature is scarce in this area, and the empirical work on SEE is almost nonexistent. The research is based on the SE and SI ecosystem development projects run by two neighbouring cities in Poland. Using inductive approach, the author presents qualitative data from group discussions and semi-structured interviews among experts from different settings. Grounded theory methods are used to generate key categories representing direction for SEE and SIE development.

THE PROCESS OF ARGUMENTATION: Based on review of literature and analysis of gathered data, the author provides key guiding directions for SEE and SIE development. First, their main features emerging from literature are presented. Next, the research design and key findings are presented.

RESEARCH RESULTS: Research results indicate the need for encompassing approach when designing key directions for SE and SI education.

CONCLUSIONS, INNOVATIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS: The findings show that SEE should be extended beyond business school environment. Also, educational model should be constantly refined in response to stakeholders' needs, also academia should include community and other stakeholders, also from other fields and disciplines. The engaging approach in educational setting draws attention to university contexts, expose SEE to local problems and construct them accordingly. Also, SEE requires significant efforts in promoting SE phenomenon and the education itself, to gain legitimacy and engage dedicated individuals and organizations.

→ **KEYWORDS:**   SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP, SOCIAL INNOVATION, ENTREPRENEURSHIP EDUCATION, LEGITIMACY, SOCIAL ENTREPRENEUR

[1] In this paper, although the author refers to following acronyms: social entrepreneurship (SE), social entrepreneurship education (SEE), social innovation (SI), social innovation education (SIE).

STRESZCZENIE _____

Kierunki edukacji w zakresie przedsiębiorczości społecznej i innowacji społecznych: głos ekspertów

CEL NAUKOWY: Celem artykułu jest rozpoznanie poglądów ekspertów do spraw przedsiębiorczości społecznej (PS) oraz innowacji społecznych (IS) na temat edukacji uniwersyteckiej w w/w obszarach.

PROBLEM I METODY BADAWCZE: Edukacja w zakresie PS razem z tymże obszarem badawczym zyskuje rosnące zainteresowanie praktyków i świata akademickiego. Można tu zauważyć brak opracowań, szczególnie empirycznych. Niniejsze wyniki zaprezentowano na podstawie realizacji projektów w dwóch sąsiednich dużych miastach wojewódzkich w północnej Polsce. Projekty te dotyczyły rozwoju ekosystemu PS i IS. Wykorzystując indukcyjne podejście do analizy danych jakościowych, autorka analizuje transkrypcje i notatki z grup fokusowych, a także częściowo strukturyzowanych wywiadów, przeprowadzonych wśród ekspertów z różnych sektorów i środowisk. Metody analityczne teorii ugruntowanej pozwoliły na wygenerowanie głównych kategorii stanowiących wytyczne dla edukacji w rozwoju edukacji w zakresie PS oraz IS.

PROCES WYWODU: Na podstawie przeglądu literatury i analizy zebranych danych autorka wytycza główne kierunki i rekomendacje dla rozwoju edukacji w zakresie PS oraz IS. W pierwszej części zaprezentowane są podstawowe koncepcje wyłaniające się z literatury przedmiotu, w drugiej części przedstawione są metody badawcze i główne wyniki z przeprowadzonych badań.

WYNIKI ANALIZY NAUKOWEJ: Wyniki badań wskazują na potrzebę inkluzywnej i różnorodnościowej refleksji w projektowaniu edukacji w zakresie PS i IS.

WNIOSKI, INNOWACJE, REKOMENDACJE: Wyniki badań wyraźnie wskazują konieczność wyjścia edukacji w zakresie IS poza wydziały nauk ekonomicznych i zarządzania. Model edukacyjny w tym zakresie powinien być nieustannie modyfikowany, aby na bieżąco odpowiadać na potrzeby lokalnego środowiska i wsłuchiwać się w głos otoczenia. Włączanie różnych dyscyplin nauki oraz osób i organizacji z różnych sektorów wydaje się niezbędne. Uczelnia powinna uczestniczyć w lokalnej konstrukcji rozwiązań problemów swojego otoczenia. Edukacja w zakresie PS i IS wymaga również ciągłych wysiłków promocyjnych.

→ **SŁOWA KLUCZOWE:**   **PRZEDSIĘBIORCZOŚĆ SPOŁECZNA, INNOWACJA SPOŁECZNA, PRZEDSIĘBIORCZOŚĆ, EDUKACJA, LEGITYMIZACJA, PRZEDSIĘBIORCA SPOŁECZNY**

1. Introduction

SE and SI education is slowly gaining interests in academia, although some authors (Mirabella & Young, 2012) claim it has longer tradition set in the US non-profit management setting. In their view SE, along with social enterprise and CSR has been placed

under the frames of social purpose management education. Many of the educated 'social entrepreneurs' are likely to land in the non-profit organizations, therefore, there is no surprise that SEE has been evolved from the non-profit context. The overarching need for the news skills and competences among citizens is also put forward by EC (European Union, 2011; Urbaniec, 2016) where it is indicated that: "To exit the financial crisis and address the challenges of unemployment, poverty, inequality, globalisation and climate change, Europe needs to open the minds of its citizens." Thus, there is a strong need to apply this approach in SEE and SEI settings. There have been three streams in the management and entrepreneurship literature addressing education and learning as responding mechanisms to social challenges: responsible management and entrepreneurship (Kurczewska, 2016; Wach, 2013; Żur, 2014), CSR education (Popowska, 2016) and SE and SI education (Starnawska, 2018). SEE literature has been very limited in this area, and majority of the work is set in American context. Empirical studies on SE and SI education are focused on curricula content and required skills or competences (Mirabella & Young 2012; Steiner, Brock, Pittz, & Liguori, 2018). The literature is very limited here, based on anecdotal evidence provided by non-profit management, SE and SI researchers (Tracey & Phillips, 2012). In Poland, SE as a phenomenon has not gained sufficient legitimacy (Starnawska, 2016) neither in practice nor in research. So far, majority of SE education has focused on social economy, which can be explained by the social enterprise models characteristic for CEE countries. Although the research makes distinctions between SE and SI, considering the limited scope of the education in these areas, the author analyses the research problem without making clear distinctions between the two on: 'what', 'how', by 'whom' or 'where' these should be delivered. Taking these into consideration the paper aims to provide insights into the views of SE and SI experts from diverse settings and sectors on the important guidelines for development of the education and learning.

2. Social entrepreneurship and social innovation education

The overview of the existing, scarce literature and anecdotal evidence on SEE and SIE shows three main topics, reflecting the major focus of empirical research and theoretical discussion. One stream focuses in the skills, competences and attitudes required or developed in educational context, another provides distinct educational methods employed in this area, whereas the last stream discusses the setting of SE and SI education.

The key topics identified in the scarce literature on SEE and SIE show the recognition of multiple skills, competences and attitudes that need to or are developed in university setting. These vary from market and professional skills to soft skills, as well as sociological skills. It is also clear that students need to understand and speak the logics of the different sectors to enable them to build relationships and partnerships with actors and organizations. This is also reflected in the multi-disciplinarity of SEE and SIE, involving academics from different settings. Also, more engaging approaches including

service learning, practical approaches as important elements in educational model and teaching methods. Also there are normative suggestions and empirical findings in the limited and anecdotal literature, about the core focus of SEE and SIE. It seems that SI focus and engagement of variety of stakeholders is important, which also means that educational setting for SE and SI needs to go beyond business school context.

3. Research methods

The research has taken place during the running of the two projects on SE and SI eco-system development projects held independently in two main cities in one of the biggest regions in Poland. The data was gathered during discussions among groups of experts developing plan for such ecosystem development. The expert groups consisted of in-dividuals representing different organizations and sectors: commercial and social en-trepreneurs, NGO managers and leaders, educators and researchers from educational and research institutions, public administration officers, and (impact) investors, that have been invited to contribute to the 2 research projects with their experience and insights. The data was recorded in two ways: either the notes and field notes from the discussion groups were taken during the process of discussion or, participants were informed about the recording of the discussion group and as permission was granted, the recordings were transcribed by the researcher. The research being part of the first project on 'So-cial entrepreneurship ecosystem development' in city of A was held between September 2015 and February 2016.[2] Overall, focus groups were held based, and 9 semi-struc-tured interviews were run with social enterprise representatives. The next research task was run between September 2017 and February 2018, during three discussion groups, aimed at working out guidelines for SI development in city of B.[3] The guiding research question proposed by the author in both projects was 'How social entrepreneurship and social innovation ecosystem can be developed in the two respective cities.' The data in both project and observations made during the expert focus group discussions and semi-structured interviews, led to the development of categories acting as guiding pillars for such ecosystem development, which is SE and SI education and learning. Each of the discussions were based around the pillars of business, education, public administra-tion, non-governmental organizations, and broader support environment mechanism and tools for ecosystem development. The aim of the research presented in this paper was to provide insights into the views on SE and SI experts and other actors on the guidelines for education development in SE and SI field. The data presented in the paper refers to education and learning pillar in SE and SI education development.

[2] The author has not disclosed the names of the research projects in cities, therefore the ini-tial letters are used.

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The generated evidence of transcripts and field notes served as primary data has been analysed through employment of grounded theory analytical methods. At the beginning, first order coding was initiated and the codes have been grouped into second order codes and third order codes. The data was analysed with the application the Grounded Theory (GT) procedures (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). The data analysis have gone through constant comparison in two stages, in the first stage, the first, second and third order codes were generated, once each interview and focus group in Project 1 was transcribed. After that, once Project 2 was finished, another round of first, second round coding was employed with new data. The author aimed to streamline the codes in more general, encompassing categories, (Gioia, Corley, & Hamilton, 2012). Finally, the author overviewed and deleted, revised, added codes applicable to both Projects' transcripts and final categories were revised and generated and proposed the main category.

4. Findings

The inductive approach to the data, has allowed the author to generate second and third order codes through application of GT techniques. This finally led to proposition of key category 'comprehending' encompassing guidelines for SE and SI education. Only a selection of respondents' quotes is presented in the paper.

First presented 3rd order code 'diversifying' (see Table 1) reflects encompassing approach to design of SE and SI education. It is important to include educators with backgrounds in variety of disciplines which constitutes variety of subjects to be covered in educational programmes. In this vein, it is acknowledged, that apart from management skills, students need to acquire social skills and empathy development, related to emotional intelligence plays the key role. It is also clear that students can contribute differently to SI and SE, not all of them need to be social entrepreneurs, and therefore learning to "run relay race" and capitalizing on different skills and predispositions is a natural course of action. Likewise, students come from different backgrounds and this adds to the recognition of the nature of problems in local contexts. The diversity is also manifested in the need of exposing students to diverse logics (e.g. market, welfare) and to diverse settings. It also entails pluralistic approach to research and educational paradigms, through acknowledgement of more radical and critical stances. Diversifying serves as a valuable introductory code for understanding the 'comprehending' category.

Another 3rd order code 'constructing contextually' (see Table 3) shows how important it is to de- and re- construct locally, or contextually when the design of the SI and SE education is undertaken. This requires both, embeddedness in the local community and good understanding of the needs, but also, a flexible approach, without unreflective application of educational solutions imported from abroad.

Next, 'engaging' as 3rd order code (see Table 3) reflect the necessity and potential of mutual engagement of different actors and organizations in university context and within university. First, it seems necessary to recognize the students who have already

Table 1

*Second order codes and third order codes**

	2nd order codes
	diversity of educators
	pluralistic approach
	including social skills
	value nourishing
DIVERSIFYING (3rd order code)	running relay race different skills combined
	acknowledging diverse student backgrounds
	diverse settings
	different logics
	2nd order codes
CONSTRUCTING CONTEXTUALLY (3rd order code)	embedding locally
	addressing local problems
	2nd order codes
ENGAGING (3rd order code)	engaged students engaging students
	nourishing motivation caring for students' mind-sets execution promise
	engaged university
	2nd order codes
	engaging other actors and organizations
RELATIONSHIP BUILDING (3rd order code)	building trust and dialogue
	adapting to local actors/organizations needs
	2nd order codes
	student ambassadoring
	creating trend; changing the education system
BOOSTING (3rd order code)	replicating interest of business in SE to business schools
	publicity for attracting students
	making feel important

Source: own elaboration, *quotes from experts' discussion are available upon request, please contact the author.

been engaged in organizations and activities addressing societal challenges. This also, can be reflected in the recognition of their diverse backgrounds and experiences. The experts highlight the role of engaging students in the educational process, through ambassador programmes, to build communities of SE and SI support around their university. Also, because some may become emotionally attached to their work, their engagement can be stronger, and then, a careful caring for their actions and ideas should be pursued.

The following 3rd order code (see Table 1) is 'relationship building' which is strongly linked to engaging and constructing contextually approach. University itself, to provide SE and SI education needs to be a responsive actor recognizing local problems in relationship with other stakeholders (internal and external). A lot of this is possible through mutual trust and dialogue. Local actors and organizations can act as quest speakers, co-design educational programme, welcome students for internships.

The last 3rd order code generated as an outcome of GT analysis 'boosting' (see Table 1) represents the need to promote SE and SI education, also research, as the field has not significant legitimacy in research and practice. This can also induce further interest of candidates for SE and SI programmes and classes. Wise publicity and promotion leads to recognition of 'doing things that matter', making people feel important. The boosting can also work through engaging students in ambassador initiatives.

The constant comparison of generated codes has led to the proposal of main category such as 'comprehending' (see Table 2). This reflects both the on-going process SE and SI education involving continuous flexibility, relationship building, the need to promote and disseminate it on different levels among different actors and organizations. 'Comprehend' means to 'take in, include' and in parallel it also means to 'understand.'

Table 2
Third order codes and main category

3rd order codes	Main category
DIVERSIFYING	
CONSTRUCTING CONTEXTUALLY	
ENGAGING	COMPREHENDING
RELATIONSHIP BUILDING	
BOOSTING	

Source: own elaboration.

The generated third order codes guide a response to what Tracey and Phillips (2012) call for issues that need to be integrated in SE education such as managing own accountability, managing own identity and managing double bottom line. Social enterprise needs to be able to create and manage own identity, and accountability towards environment. Exposing students in education in the studied field needs to be comprehensive through

inclusion of skills, disciplines, actors and organization in making it responsive to contextual circumstances. It is not surprising, that the discussion on the development of SE and SI ecosystem has been intensive and provided valuable insights on how the local stakeholders to the university need to be engaged in education, and how the university itself needs to expose and engage in contextual problems, as part of the local ecosystem.

5. Conclusions

Findings of the paper manifest tautological nature of the potential recommendations for SEE and SIE. However, these emphasize the need for broader and deeper embeddedness of university in the local community. One of the limitations of the paper, is that it does not provide insights into the perspectives of university staff, performing different roles in educational process. Also, the paper does focus on the context of one agglomeration, and similar research could be replicated in other settings for validating and revising the categories emergent from the inductive approach. Last drawback of the paper is that it does not provide historical perspective on the trajectory of social enterprise, SE, SI, and other social issues related education in Poland. This could serve, as important value added for international readers, for gaining insights into educational system. Therefore, future research should include university staff perspective and further projects of replicative nature should be repeated in other settings. Additionally, the paper would definitely benefit if other insights, not only focused on educational aspects of SE and SI are presented, however, it was deliberate choice of the author to present the data referring to SE and SI education.

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