

Internationalization at home: the case of Business Week Entrepreneurship

Teresa Costa

Luísa Carvalho

Polytechnic Institute of Setúbal, Portugal

Abstract

Globalization and changes in market labour demand for higher education institutions concerning new commitments in the process of students training. The internationalization and entrepreneurship are strategic factors that promote the differentiation of students skills profile at the end of each cycle of education.

This study analyzed the contribution of International Project Business Week Entrepreneurship Setubal to the internationalization of the campus, also considering the purchase of a set of skills essential to a manager in the twenty-first century. This study uses a case study methodology supported in two sources of data collection - questionnaire surveys applied to all students and interviews applied to Portuguese students. The results allowed to confirm the propositions and assess the relevance of this kind of projects and teaching methodologies for the development of important skills to nowadays managers.

Key-words

Methodologies, Internationalization, Multicultural, Entrepreneurship

1 Education for entrepreneurship: state of art

The entrepreneurship education becomes more important in educational programs in several countries. Recently the following question “Entrepreneurs are born or made?” have been discussed by professors, politicians and others stakeholders.

According with some perspectives entrepreneurs can be born. These perspectives recognize that entrepreneurs born with a set of intrinsic characteristics that promote an entrepreneurial attitude. However there are other perceptions that considerer the role of training and other extrinsic stimulus relevant for develop an individual entrepreneur. In fact, during 1980s and 1990s we have seen an unprecedented grow in demand for

entrepreneurship education which has been matches by a corresponding grow in the number of courses offered by academic institutions and enterprises agencies (Sexton and Smilor, 1997). The importance of entrepreneurship was recognized and consequently the rising of the number of teaching entrepreneurship courses (Jack and Anderson, 1999).

At the same time increase the number of schools of different levels of education and other extra-curricular programs appeal for entrepreneurship education. Entrepreneurship education only recently got some attention from scientific community, and is far from maturity, despite a large number of initiatives, experiences, curricular courses and programmes developed in last decades across the world (Charney and Libecap, 2000; Li and Matlay, 2005; Solomon, 2005).

Some studies appoint several perceptions of role of Higher Education Institutions (HEI) to promote entrepreneurship. Entrepreneurship education has evolved in waves (Volkman et al, 2009). If in the beginning it was associated with management courses, gradually got his space, to produce more quickly a greater diversity of ideas for how to exploit a business opportunity, and the ability to project a more extensive sequence of actions for entering business (Vesper and McMullan, 1998).

Concerning pedagogical issues, several methodologies such as lectures were gradually replaced by application of active methodologies (Bell, 2008; Fayolle and Gailly, 2006; Heinonen and Poikkijoki 2006; Peterman and Kennedy, 2003), such as problem base learning, project development, entrepreneur for a day, business drinks, simulations and other similar, allowing students to develop their potential by assuming more responsibilities in learning process.

Other kind of activities that require a more community's (e.g. entrepreneurs, entrepreneur agencies, incubators) involvement becomes crucial. Bring entrepreneurs to the classroom to talk about their experiences, contact with local entrepreneurs, company visits, involve local business organizations in curricula's design, offer workshops and seminars, invite business angels and risk capitalists.

The successful of this strategy depends on teachers competences in the area as well as in their research work in the field of entrepreneurship (EC, 2003) allowing the development of an adequate curricula (Volkman et al, 2009).

2 Globalization, and internationalization in higher education

Globalization and internationalization can be defined in a vast number of ways, however despite they are distinct concepts they are linked "Globalization is the context of economic and academic trends that are part of the reality of the 21st century. Internationalization includes the policies and practices undertaken by academic systems

and institutions – and even individuals – to cope with the global academic environment” (Altbach and Knight, 2007). Witt (2002) consider internationalization of higher education as the process of integrating an international/intercultural dimension into the teaching, research, and service functions of the institution. Knight and Witt (1997) describe globalization as the flow of technology, economy, knowledge, people, values and ideas that across borders. This phenomenon affects the countries in different ways, depending on its history, traditions, culture and priorities. The same authors refers that internationalization of higher education is one of the possible answers to the impact of globalization.

So, we may conclude that the increasingly international focus of higher education is connected to the present globalization and regionalization of our societies and markets. As a result, the importance of quality assessment of internationalization strategies has grown, international academic consortia and networks have emerged, and english has been firmly established as the language of communication in higher education.

The motivations for internationalization include commercial advantage, knowledge and language acquisition, enhancing the curriculum with international content, and many others aspects (Altbach and Knight, 2007). Specific initiatives such as branch campuses, cross-border collaborative arrangements, programs for international students, establishing english-medium programs and degrees, are some of the possibilities for educational internationalization.

The case study described in the next section is one of this possibilities that try to promote this kind of education experience through the creation of multicultural groups, including students from several nationalities (Belgium, Czech Republic, Ireland, Finland, Latvia, Netherlands, Poland, Portugal and Spain,). The activities were expressed and resolved within various cultural groups (Lee, 1995).

3 Empirical study

In this section it is our intention to characterize the methodological approach and tools used in this research, present the main goal and specific goals, as well as the propositions of the study.

This empirical research applies the case study methodology. According with Bell (1997), this methodology allows the researcher to focus in one case or specific situation and identify the interactive processes involved. Yin (1994) considers that the case study method is most appropriate for the investigation that search questions such as “how” and “why” about a contemporary phenomena about which the researcher has little or no control.

The literature review drive to the formulation of the following propositions:

- P1: The development of skills contributes to increase entrepreneurial competencies.
- P2: The apprenticeship in multicultural environment enable the development of entrepreneurial competencies.
- P3: The international project (Business Week) contributes positively to the student's propensity to internationalization.

Concerning data collection this study uses several sources of evidence. The main sources are; (1) direct interview to stakeholders involved; (2) documental analysis; (3) inquiry through questionnaire.

3.1 Case study applied to international business week

The international project Business Week is the result of the efforts of the international network Businet. This network organizes an annual meeting, once a year, with the objective to promote contacts between partners and enlarge the network with new partners from different business schools.

The School of Business and Administration of Polytechnic Institute is an organizer member of the Business Week since 2007. Business Week congregate students and professors from different european schools, during one week and occurs in several europeans countries. This event includes a set of pedagogical and social activities. Its main objective is to promote a multicultural experience and develop entrepreneurial skills.

Each country as a subject, that is permanent in each year that means that subject don't chance annually. In Portugal the subject is entrepreneurship and during the Business Week students simulate part of entrepreneurial process in international context.

3.2 Characterization of population

Concerning the international dimension of the Project., table 1 shows participants per country, for students and professors

Table 1 – Students and professors that participate in 3th edition Business Week – Entrepreneurship - Setúbal

Business Week per country	Students	Professors
Leuven - Belgium	5	1
Rotherham -Netherlands	6	2
Saxion - Netherlands	5	1
Riga -Latvia	3	2
Jihlava – Czech Republic	3	1
Budjwice - Czech Republic	2	1
Erasmus Students		
Poland	6	
Ireland	3	

3.3 Analysis of results

The results of the study are obtain from quantitative and qualitative analyse. The first analyse allows to test the first hypothesis. The second one test the second and third hypotheses.

3.4 Quantitative analyze

The qualitative analyze is supported in an inquiry made at the end of Business Week – Setúbal. The inquiry intends to evaluate the acquisition of several skills and evaluate the contribution of activities developed in the game to achieve: self-confidence, critical spirit, team work skills and creativity in a multicultural environment. These inquiry use a *Lickert* scale from 1 to 5 (1 – without importance; 2 – low importance; 3 – medium importance; 4- high importance; 5 – very high importance).

Table 2, reveals the inquiries results and allow to test proposition 1 (*P1: The development of skills contributes to increase entrepreneurial competencies*, through the results gave by students to the several items: Creativity; critical spirit, peer assessment; team work and confidence rate.

Table 2- Analyze results from inquiry appliance

	1	2	3	4	5
Creativity	0,00%	2,78%	30,56%	27,78%	38,89%
Critical spirit	2,78%	5,56%	36,11%	25,00%	33,33%
Peer assessment	0,00%	8,33%	19,44%	27,78%	44,44%
Team work	0,00%	2,78%	19,44%	27,78%	50,00%
Confidence rate	2,78%	0,00%	30,56%	36,11%	33,33%

The result analyze permit to conclude that the most answers are situated between 4 and 5, confirming the self-perceptions of the students are extremely positive concerning the acquisition of the competencies evaluated.

3.5 Qualitative analyze

According with Yin (1994) the case study methodology allows a higher efficacy in collecting qualitative information. This study applies semi-structured interviews to Portuguese students. The interview guide is presented on Table 3.

Table 3- Interview guide

General Aim	Specific aim	Questions
Evaluate apprenticeship in multicultural environment.	To understand the contributes of the apprenticeship in a multicultural environment to the acquirer of new skills.	Your participation in BW enabled the development of new entrepreneurial skills? List the skills acquired.
Evaluate the contribution of this internationalization project concerning the increase of the students propensity to participate in international programs.	Understand how the participation in a project to internationalize the campus can facilitate following student experiences in projects of international mobility.	How many times have you participate in international programs? Have you participate in any international event (conference, meeting, other?) If it is your first international experience, please evaluate your the participation in participations in others international projects.

The case study analyze demonstrate that the students consider their participation in BW as an opportunity to develop a set of skills relevant for business studies in a multicultural environment, which are considered difficult to obtain in formal curricula. Students also believe that this experience represents an opportunity to working in multicultural teams and to contacts with the reality of other countries. They also consider a possibility for overcoming some language barriers and sometimes unfounded fears to overcome a challenge to work in a different language.

“Business Week, entrepreneurship is an excellent idea because it gave us the opportunity to meet people from different countries, working in teams and know different points of view. I will recommend participation in the Business Week to other colleagues. “

“Initially I was afraid to participate in Business Week because I thought that my english level was not so good. At the end of the week I was happy to overcome this anxiety and I think it was worth it! “

“Business Week was an amazing experience and I could better understand what is entrepreneurship. I found this a very interesting experience with different nationalities and cultures.”

“I discovered that I am more entrepreneur than I thought. I managed to meet the challenges that were placed during the Business Week and I want to repeat the experience.”

The second goal allows evaluating the contribution of participation in the Business Week for the propensity to internationalization. Most students surveyed reveal that they had never participated in a mobility program, except for two students (one student performed Erasmus mobility, and other participated in a meeting that brought together students from different countries to Portugal as part of an activity carried out in education secondary).

The majority of interviewees report that participation in the Business Week has increased availability and reduced fears in the face of future participation in mobility projects abroad.

3.6 Propositions validation

Proposition	Validation	Analyse
P1: The development of skills contributes to increase entrepreneurial competencies	Accept	Table 2 demonstrate that students self-percept their participation in the business week with positive values. And indicate the contribution of their participation to the development of entrepreneurial skills.
P2: The apprenticeship in multicultural environment enable the development of entrepreneurial competencies.	Accept	The case study analysis allows the assessment of the contribution from Business Week to the development of new skills, particularly entrepreneurial. It was clear the contribution of participation to reduce multicultural anxiety and to increase self confidence.
P3: The international project (Business Week) contributes positively to the student's propensity to internationalization.	Accept	The analysis confirms Business Week contribution for motivate Portuguese students in others (deep and long) international experiences. For most students this experience was the first contact with learning in a multicultural environment, revealing an essential factor in the overthrow of anxiety and psychological multicultural barriers.

4 Concluding remarks

Globalization and changes in labor markets represents new challenges to training in higher education. The business environment requires new skills that are sometimes difficult to acquire inside formal curriculums.

The global world where knowledge and information don't recognize borders requires professionals with new profiles accustomed to contact with multicultural environments. Additionally, the capability to understand and accept cultural diversity becomes more and more required. The valorization of students training requires further participation in extra scholar activities and on international projects.

In this sense, the Business Week Entrepreneurship Setúbal is a double opportunity for the students of Business and Administration School from Polytechnic Institute of Setúbal. The participation in an international project enables learning in a multicultural environment; moreover, develop entrepreneurial skills considered strategic for entering the labor market.

The analysis of the case study propositions confirm the importance of this project to development entrepreneurial skills in a multicultural environment and their effect in increasing the students propensity for participate in international mobility projects.

This study and the experience accumulated by the organization of three editions of

Business Week Entrepreneurship Setúbal lead us to think about the challenge of future involvement of the various schools that comprise the Polytechnic Institute of Setúbal in this project, assuming a greater extent in the process of internationalization of the Campus.

Bibliography

- Altbach, G. A. & Knight, J. (2007). The internationalization of higher education: motivations and realities, *Journal of Studies in International Education*, 11, (3-4) 290-305.
- Bell, J. (1997). *Como realizar um projecto de investigação*. Lisboa: Gradiva.
- Bell-Rose, S. & Payzant, T. (2008). The case for entrepreneurship education. *Education Week*, August.
- Charney, Al. & Libecap, G. (2000). *The impact of entrepreneurship education: an evaluation of the Berger entrepreneurship program at the University of Arizona 1995-1999*. Phoenix: The Kauffman Centre for Entrepreneurial Leadership
- Solomon, G. et al. The State of Entrepreneurship Education in the United States: A nationwide survey and analysis. *International Journal of Entrepreneurship Education*, 2002, 1, 65-86.
- European Commission (2003). Green paper on entrepreneurship in Europe. Available at http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/entrepreneurship/green_paper/.
- European Commission (2008). Best procedure project: “entrepreneurship in higher education, especially in non-business studies” Final Report Of The Expert Group, Brussels.
- Fayolle, A. & Gailly, B. (2006). Efectos de la formación y el contexto social sobre las intenciones empresariales de los estudiantes. *Estudios de Economía Aplicada*, 2, 509-523.
- Heinonen, J. & Poikkijok, S. (2006). An entrepreneurial-directed approach to entrepreneurship education: mission impossible? *Journal of Management Development*, 25, (1), 80-94.
- Jack, S. & Anderson, A. (1999). Entrepreneurship education within enterprise culture – producing reflective practitioners. In *Entrepreneurship education*, edited by P. G. Greene & M. P. Rice, in *The international of entrepreneurship*, 9, (pp. 185-200). Cheltenham, UK: Edward Elgar Publishing.
- Knight, J. & Wit, H. (1997). *Internationalization of higher education in Asia Pacific Countries*, European. Amsterdam: Association of International Education.
- Lee, C. C. (1995). A school counselling and cultural diversity: a framework for effective

- practice. In C. C. Lee (Ed.), *Counselling for diversity: a guide for school counsellors and related professionals*, (pp. 3-17). Boston: Allyn and Bacon.
- Li, J. & Matlay, H. (2005). Graduate employment and small businesses in China. *Industry & Higher Education*, 19 (1), 45-54.
- Peterman, N. & Kennedy, J. (2003). Enterprise education: influencing students' perceptions of entrepreneurship. *Entrepreneurship, Theory and Practice*, 28 (1), 129-44.
- Sexton, D. L. & Smilor, R. S. (1997). *Entrepreneurship 2000*. Chicago, IL: Upstart Publishing Company.
- Solomon, G. (2005). *2004-2005 National survey of entrepreneurship education in the United States. Paper presented at OECD conference fostering entrepreneurship*. Trento, Italy.
- Vesper, K. H. & McMullan, W. E. (1988). Entrepreneurship: today courses, tomorrow degrees? *Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice*, 13 (1), 7-13.
- Volkman, C., Wilson, K., Mariotti, S., Rabuzzi, D., Vyakarnam, S. & Sepulveda, A. (2009). Educating the next wave of entrepreneurs unlocking entrepreneurial capabilities to meet the global challenges of the 21st Century – a report of the global education initiative, *World Economic Forum, Switzerland, April 2009*.
- Witt, H. (2002). *Internationalization of higher education in the United States of America and Europe - a historical, comparative and conceptual analysis*, Greenwood Studies in Higher Education.
- Yin, R. (1994). *Case study research. Design and methods*. London: Sage Publications.

Correspondence

Teresa Costa

Escola Superior de Ciências Empresariais, Instituto Politécnico de Setúbal

Campus do IPS, Estefanilha

2914-503 Setúbal, Portugal

tcosta@esce.ips.pt