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CONTEMPORARY ISSUES IN ENTREPRENEURSHIP RESEARCH VOLUME 19

EXTRACURRICULAR ENTERPRISE AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP ACTIVITY: A GLOBAL AND HOLISTIC PERSPECTIVE

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PREFACE

At any level of education, extracurricular activities have often been seen as a bolt-on to what is happening within the classroom. Ad hoc, lacking theoretical grounding, a value added extra, extracurricular activities have been viewed as a poor relation of the core curriculum. However, in higher education (HE), this view is increasingly outdated as industry and society calls for, and students respond to, the need for experiences beyond their degree. HE students wanting to showcase a collection of skills, behaviours and competencies recognise that evidence of these can be achieved outside of the classroom in the realms of the extracurricular. Consequently, the scope of extracurricular activities is growing and morphing with changing demand and the socio-economic climate.

Extracurricular activities are a key element of any university's entrepreneurial ecosystem with numerous studies emphasising the need for a holistic approach whereby extracurricular and in-curricular activities compliment and connect each other (Harima, Gießelmann, Göttsch, & Schlichting, 2021; Preedy & Jones, 2015, 2017). Yet, in practice, this synergy has not been easy to achieve. Early studies examining extracurricular enterprise activities, such as Rae, Martin, Antcliff, and Hannon (2012), noted the diversity of extracurricular enterprise and entrepreneurship activities available to students but also recognised its precarity as external funding came to an end, or management switched hands and/or changed tack. However, now universities are increasingly assured of the value of enterprise and entrepreneurship education both in and out of the curriculum, they are beginning to provide and support a sustainable extracurricular offer (Preedy, Jones, Maas, & Duckett, 2020).

In response to the increasing interest and demand for extracurricular activities, and to support their growth and sustainability of provision we have created this book to serve all those who are engaged or have an interest in enterprise and entrepreneurship extracurricular education. To that end, we have considered a range of perspectives. Contributions are made from across the world, giving a global context that considers the diversity in enterprise and entrepreneurship extracurricular activities appeal and role, resourcing and challenges, alongside innovative and impactful practice in design and delivery. Additionally, and in keeping with Enterprise Educators UK's presentation of the enterprise and entrepreneurship educator, we write for the Academic, Practitioner, and Influencer identities, with each chapter containing academic discussion, suggestions for improving teaching and learning/practitioner practice, and recommendations for policy.

The result is a book which contributes important insights, evaluations and evidence of the role and value of extracurricular enterprise and entrepreneurship activities. However, it also recognises that there is still further work to be done to understand and capture the ongoing and evolving value and impact of these

activities. Subsequently through this book we hope to shine a light on an underrepresented area of enterprise and entrepreneurship education to encourage discussion and development of practice and policy but also to fuel the appreciation, understanding and impact of this topic.

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CHAPTER 1

ENTREPRENEURSHIP CLUBS AND SOCIETIES: LEARNING BENEFITS IN PRACTICE

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ABSTRACT

This chapter provides an overview of entrepreneurship clubs. It charts the development of these organisations, as a form of extracurricular activity. It introduces different forms of entrepreneurship clubs, such as Junior Achievement (JA) and Enactus, and explains how they grew from 1919 to the present. It also illustrates the differences between self-organised clubs, organised programs using clubs as a learning method, structured societies and nationally organised cooperative societies. The second part introduces research on student clubs in entrepreneurship education. It explores the benefits of clubs. It shows that clubs assist student learning, enable the acquisition of practical skills and improve college attendance, employment opportunities and career attainment. We argue that entrepreneurship clubs have improved student learning outcomes in entrepreneurship and simulated entrepreneurial learning, while impacting student self-efficacy and intentionality as well as improving employability and social learning. The final part of the chapter provides advice and tips for educators advising student-run entrepreneurship clubs. Ultimately, the chapter

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explains how student clubs have developed, why they are important for student learning and how advisors can support them.

Keywords: Clubs; societies; extracurriculars; entrepreneurship; experiential learning; entrepreneurial learning

INTRODUCTION

Imagine walking into a bar and seeing a group of young people huddled together, debating and drinking. You can hear them talking about the latest technologies and potential ventures they could create. It turns out the group is meeting as part of an organised club. The next day, you visit the local coffee house where another club is meeting. They are supping coffee and arguing about how best to help their community through a social venture. Clubs and societies have a long history and have contributed to the development of democracies and institutions while becoming increasingly focused on niche topics and interests, including entrepreneurship, as demonstrated in the previous example. Pittaway, Rodriguez-Falcon, Aiyegbayo, and King (2011, p. 39) defined such entrepreneurship clubs as,

> informal, non-accredited student-led societies or clubs whose main goal is to attract students who are interested in learning about enterprise and developing enterprising skills to either start their own businesses or to become more enterprising people.

These informal, loose arrangements of like-minded people have led to impactful change in society. Today, the extracurricular entrepreneurship club has become particularly vibrant and grown across countries, offering a way for young people to lead entrepreneurial change.

The authors aim to chart the growth and development of extracurricular entrepreneurship clubs and will provide a historical overview of the development of these extracurricular activities. They introduce the key types of clubs in entrepreneurship education. Their goal is to explain the educational drive underlying the founding of these activities. The authors will explain what benefits accrue to students from engagement in clubs and draw on prior research on the subject. They introduce what is known about their value, describe the benefits for students and explain why students engage with them. They expand on the knowledge of extracurricular activity in entrepreneurship education by examining the value of entrepreneurship clubs. Finally, they consider best practices for advising entrepreneurship extracurricular activities.

METHODOLOGY

The authors throughout have drawn on previous literature in discussing the history of extracurricular entrepreneurship education in the USA and the UK. These are the two areas of focus because of their rich history in the subject matter and their importance in the early founding of entrepreneurship and other special

interest clubs, societies and organisations. As the chapter advances towards offering advice and best practices, the authors draw on experience and observational data to provide advice to educators and give useful, actionable guidance.

EXTRACURRICULAR ENTREPRENEURSHIP EDUCATION – THE HISTORY OF DIFFERENT TYPES

During the 17th and 18th centuries, clubs and societies became an important aspect in the fabric of civil society in Britain and its overseas territories (Clark, 2000). These 'self-organising groups' spread across a wide range of interests, including sports, education, politics, religion, music and philanthropy, providing the foundation for many institutions that grew out of largely informal associations (e.g. chambers of commerce, freemasons, trade associations, etc.). Clark (2000) links this rapid increase in volunteerism to urbanisation, the rising availability of social time and the opening of religious independence and secularism. The first student clubs were founded at Oxford and Cambridge universities (1729). Many luminaries of the period belonged to clubs; for example, Adam Smith was a member of Edinburgh's Literary Club and John Adams was a member of Boston's Hunting Club. Many clubs had learning and educational aims or were focused on aspects of venturing and are the forbearers of today's entrepreneurship clubs. These clubs were both social and professional and often met in pubs and coffeehouses. As they grew, many became institutionalised and took on their own spaces (Clark, 2000).

The first extracurricular entrepreneurship education can be linked to the founding of JA in the USA in 1919. It was offered to high school students as an after-school club engaging students in the establishment of ventures. The British version of JA, Young Enterprise (YE), was founded in 1962, while the European version (JADE – European Confederation of Junior Enterprises) started in 1967 focused on university students. JADE, in contrast to JA and YE, involved the establishment of non-profit organisations, engaged students in consulting projects and provided them with experience running a company (Almeida, Daniel, & Figueiredo, 2021). In all three cases, the organisations were created by external stakeholders who wished to provide young people with 'business skills', and were not 'self-organising', as is implied in the definition of a club or society.

Entrepreneurship clubs, therefore, precede the development of modern entrepreneurship education. Today's forms of entrepreneurship clubs have expanded with the growth of formal education in entrepreneurship. The first in this wave was Students in Free Enterprise (SIFE), now Enactus, founded in 1975 by the National Leadership Institute. Its original aim was to get students more interested in free enterprise. As it grew, it gained significant corporate sponsorship and morphed to focus on social enterprise and community volunteering, taking an entrepreneurial approach to solving local problems. Enactus students formed university chapters, engaged in social enterprise projects and competed in regional and national competitions.

In 1983, the Association of Collegiate Entrepreneurs (later Collegiate Entrepreneurs' Organisation or CEO) was started as a conference supporting student entrepreneurs in the Midwest US. Gerry Hills, a Professor at the University of Illinois Chicago, facilitated the first meeting along with John Hughes and Jean Thorne of the Coleman Foundation. CEO was designed to support individual student entrepreneurs and university-based clubs. Though data are scarce, self-organised entrepreneurship clubs probably existed in US universities prior to the establishment of CEO. Like its modern Finnish counterparts, the CEO was established with significant social considerations, providing a space for students to interact and meet, alongside its professional aims to promote entrepreneurship clubs.

As the 1990s and 2000s saw growth and expansion of entrepreneurship education, US style clubs expanded internationally. Students at UK universities began self-organised entrepreneurship clubs. They formed the Association of Student Entrepreneurs (ASE), gained UK government funding, and became the National Association of College and University Entrepreneurs (NACUE) (Preedy & Jones, 2017). In 1995, Enactus grew internationally, entering the UK in 2002. Other countries, notably Finland, joined the trend and have seen growth in their student-led entrepreneurship societies (Parkkari & Kohtakangas, 2018; Siivonen, Peura, Hytti, Kasanen, & Komulainen, 2020). Other forms of individual entrepreneurship clubs have proliferated. In addition to the types mentioned, there are also entrepreneurship fraternities (e.g. Epsilon Nu Tau and Sigma Eta Pi), maker societies, design, consulting, social entrepreneurship, seed-capital finance clubs, etc. These are usually self-organised by students but are sometimes sponsored by entrepreneurship centres.

This history illustrates that there are several forms of organisational approach at work within extracurricular entrepreneurship education. A useful distinction can be made between clubs, which are self-governing, and societies that are more institutionalised with clearer rules and procedures, although both sit alongside national organisations designed to coordinate activities and share best practices (Brew, 1943). A similar distinction is made in entrepreneurship where several forms are identified (Pittaway et al., 2011; Pittaway, Gazzard, Shore, & Williamson, 2015).

Since the 1980s, entrepreneurship clubs and societies have grown in importance within entrepreneurship education and this momentum continues to gather pace. Entrepreneurship clubs have a long history, which predates the beginning of modern forms of entrepreneurship education. Students, advisors and others consider them to be important for student learning and the empirical research on the subject has gained momentum (Rubin, Bommer, & Baldwin, 2002). Next, the authors consider why these learning opportunities are attractive to young people and what benefits they bring.

LEARNING BENEFITS OF ENTREPRENEURSHIP CLUBS AND SOCIETIES

Early educational researchers were concerned that extracurricular entrepreneurship education might subvert formal educational activities, and this concern

continues (Terenzini, Pascarella, & Blimling, 1999). Research has, however, increasingly demonstrated the value of student self-governing clubs for student learning (Rubin et al., 2002). Studies have illustrated the value of club involvement for the development of practical skills (Burggraaf, 1997), noted their importance to recruiters (Rutter & Jones, 2007), and highlighted their impact on college attendance (Mahoney, Cairns, & Farmer, 2003) and career attainment (Boone, Kurtz, & Fleenor, 1988).

Looking at learning, research has shown that involvement enhances interpersonal skills (Burggraaf, 1997), improves opportunities for practical application (Evans & Evans, 2001) and widens engagement with communities of practice (Block & French, 1991). Research has linked clubs with improved learning from mistakes (Grinder, Cooper, & Britt, 1999); the development of stronger oral, written, management and enterprise skills (Montes & Collazo, 2003); and enhanced motivation and self-confidence (McCorkle, Alexander, Reardon, & Kling, 2003). Though many prior studies were based on anecdote and experience, rather than empirical research, more comprehensive studies have confirmed this picture (Rubin et al., 2002). There are also noteworthy benefits accruing to founders and leaders of clubs, that likely encourage ambitious students to take the initiative to start new clubs, as well as take on executive leadership roles in established ones (Pittaway et al., 2015).

Faced with the growth in provision and interest in entrepreneurship clubs, researchers have begun to explore the benefits (Preedy & Jones, 2017). Clubs gain support from universities, national organisations, individual donors, corporate sponsors and national governments, with the confirmation that they provide value. Studies have begun to unpick tangible benefits of extracurricular entrepreneurship education for students. Pittaway et al. (2011), for example, show a range of learning outcomes including students learning by doing, increased reflective learning and value from social learning. They also observed transformative learning from critical moments accrued from mistakes and failures experienced. They also noted that certain aspects of entrepreneurial learning, such as experiencing uncertainty, ambiguity and emotional exposure were observed less often.

Taking the topic further, Pittaway et al. (2015) expanded the prior qualitative study and conducted a survey of students. They found that 'accommodating learning' stood out as a major benefit. This type of learning implied students were engaged in active experimentation and gained experience from managing clubs and leading projects. Such experience was also contextual and situated, so that it was relevant to specific forms of entrepreneurial effort engaged in (Pittaway et al., 2015). 'Assimilating learning' was also highlighted. Students got close to the 'lived experience' of entrepreneurs, through speakers and consulting projects, and this led them to greater insights and learning socially from their 'community of practice'.

Recent studies have built on this work. Almeida et al. (2021) studied Junior Enterprises (JE) and showed that JE members gain practical experience, get opportunities to network with business professionals, develop entrepreneurial and management skills, and improve their employability, leading to an entrepreneurial 'spirit'. They demonstrate that JE students have higher perceived behavioural

control and have an improved perception that they can act as an entrepreneur. They also confirm a link between engagement in clubs and improved entrepreneurial intent (Almeida et al., 2021). Students are considered more likely to engage in entrepreneurial activity after being involved in a JE company. Arranz, Ubierna, Arroyabe, Perez, and Fdez. de Arroyabe (2017) and Padilla-Angulo (2019) observe the same relationship, linking club involvement to increased entrepreneurial self-efficacy and intent.

Preedy and Jones (2017) highlight the continued growth of clubs in UK entrepreneurship education; with NACUE growing from 30-member organisations in 2011 to 64 by 2013. Their research confirms the role of experimentation, learning by doing and illustrates a general frustration, among participating students, with traditional higher education curricula. They also confirm the importance of clubs for improving interpersonal, communication, people and enterprise skills, as highlighted elsewhere (Burggraaf, 1997; Montes & Collazo, 2003). Like other studies, they find a surprising connection to motivations and benefits aimed at improved 'employability', alongside narrower aims focused on leading entrepreneurial endeavours. The importance of social learning is confirmed; groups link closely with their communities of practice via networking to gain access to knowledge, mentoring and finance. In this study, the benefits are higher for leaders of clubs and projects (Pittaway et al., 2015).

The research on the learning benefits of entrepreneurship clubs highlights consensus around why students engage with them and why they are helpful for student learning. Entrepreneurship clubs vary, adopting aspects of local culture and cross a spectrum from loose arrangements to corporate-sponsored international organisations. These are self-organising groups of young people, who want to have fun and meet each other. Alongside this social function, clubs have professional aims to support enterprise skills, venture creation and aim to improve employability (Brew, 1943). There are many learning benefits; students learn by doing, become more reflective practitioners, social learning allows them to gain from peers and grow closer to their target communities of practice. They pick up interpersonal, communication, people and enterprise skills to assist them as a founder or employee clubs improve self-efficacy and intentionality for taking on entrepreneurial efforts and thus help encourage students to take the plunge.

Given these benefits, universities, centres for entrepreneurship, employers, governments and corporate sponsors are keen to use extracurricular activities to support entrepreneurship education. As these are 'self-organising groups of young people', there are many challenges in managing clubs and these considerations are next.

ADVISING ENTREPRENEURSHIP CLUBS AND SOCIETIES

As extracurricular entrepreneurship education opportunities are led by students and combine social and professional aims, advising them brings challenges. The role of the advisor is fraught with tensions; advisors want clubs to be successful,

but students should take the lead, learn through their experience and be allowed to fail. Advisors also have ethical and legal responsibilities. They are expected to prevent hazing and must monitor behaviour while ensuring students properly represent their institution. Advisors are called upon to make sure students follow relevant codes of conduct, both internal to the institution and maintaining adherence to any local or federal laws, and operate their activities or organisations ethically. Meanwhile, students want space away from their formal academic experience, often prefer minimal direction and engage in socialising, which can be problematic. Due to these tensions, it can be difficult to balance between overzealous micromanaging and an anything goes, *laissez-faire* approach. We consider some of the common issues faced and make suggestions for advisors.

Getting Started

Club startup processes offer some considerations. If educators or entrepreneurship centres wish to establish a new club, the startup process ought to be led by students and advisors might have to first demonstrate the benefit of the club. So how does one guide the effort to get a new club started when no students have expressed an interest? As students appreciate the employability benefits from starting or leading a club, faculty are sometimes invited to be advisors of new efforts, even when there appears to be little demand or the proposed club duplicates existing ones. Another question arises: How do you manage student expectations for new efforts and channel them productively? In both situations, entrepreneurship programs need to be proactive. It is important to have a strategic view about which and how clubs are to be supported, taking into consideration the number of clubs and membership. This requires thought and can impact how entrepreneurship programs are evaluated and ranked. As programs aim to promote student initiative, it is also important to be flexible and open to student proposals, to encourage learning by doing and not be too wedded to prior strategic decisions.

Advisors can still support the establishment of a club but need to recognise that the club's foundation must be student-led. A common technique is to headhunt a founding team, either via recommendations, cherry-picking known student leaders or assessments of academic performance seeking students in disciplines relevant to the new club or its executive roles. Student founders must be motivated. Just like startups, getting the right team at the beginning can make an outsized difference later. The advisor taking time to target key leaders and engage in 'selling the value' of founding a club is worth the effort. Recruiting to four roles at the outset (e.g. President, Vice-President, Recruitment Chair and Treasurer) is recommended. Other efforts by the advisor can help, such as finding stakeholders (e.g. advisory boards and company sponsors), who are willing to raise awareness and help the club.

Dealing With Bureaucracy

Though entrepreneurship clubs are self-organising, most universities have governance structures that must be followed. In the USA, these are led by campus involvement centres, student senates, and sorority and fraternity offices, while in

the UK, student unions provide this oversight. Institutions have varying expectations including bylaws, training, funding and recruitment support, compliance, and assistance with financial accounts. Student leaders are expected to navigate these requirements on behalf of the club. Advisors are wise to take a role. Being aware of these expectations is a minimum obligation, but advisors are encouraged to meet with representatives from the governing body. Club operation is often impeded when student executives fail to complete their bureaucratic function (e.g. registering as a student club, completing financial reports, engaging in required training), and it is important that advisors are aware if clubs are about to break compliance rules (e.g. serving alcohol at a function, posting fliers where they are not allowed, etc.). Though we want students to learn by doing and fail occasionally, the advisor needs to be on hand to help students navigate these bureaucratic requirements.

Building Structures, Getting Organised and Recruiting

One of the first decisions a club needs to make concerns the foundational structure of the organisation, deciding whether to adopt an in-house or franchise model (e.g. self-organised or an affiliated chapter). This decision has many downstream effects, both positive and negative. A club built in-house may require a longer start-up period but allows substantially more freedom in building a business model, influencing the planning and management of student-targeted resources, while keeping students focused on campus-specific impact. Choosing a self-built structure, however, can take a long time to implement.

A franchise model (e.g. Epsilon Nu Tau or Enactus) in contrast can assist a quicker start-up via the adoption of an established business model, well-defined structures and operating procedures, but does not allow for customised procedures, flexible schedules and total control of finances. Some franchise models (e.g. professional fraternities) also take a cut of membership fees/fundraising which can impact downstream viability. Other franchise models (e.g. Enactus) can offer additional resources and opportunities that might not be available otherwise. Carefully considering the purpose of the club and the best model is worthwhile.

Because clubs are largely structured around a shared interest, it is important to avoid homogeny among club members. Diversity, equity and inclusion should be a key components in a recruitment strategy, as this is an important way to avoid groupthink and consider a variety of experiences and perspectives. One strategy to increase the likelihood of diversity in clubs is to avoid restrictive barriers to entry or involvement, like expensive membership fees or requiring members to be in a specific program of study.

Students are the key resource of entrepreneurial clubs, recruitment strategy and procedures are thus of strategic importance to birth, growth and long-term success. Universities host many clubs that compete for new members and there can be a bias towards starting new clubs. Establishing a recruitment strategy, developing innovative procedures for attracting talented students, and publicising the club's mission and initiatives are consequently of importance. Advisors ought to pay close attention to recruitment efforts led by students, to ensure club