Entrepreneurship education: implications for teacher training

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ABSTRACT
An unemployment rate of 32.6% emphasises the absolute necessity for a strong entrepreneurial driven economy. Entrepreneurship Education is the one variable that appears most consistently in programmes and strategies that governments and policymakers around the world embark on to create an entrepreneurial driven economy. In South Africa Entrepreneurship Education is part of the learning area: Economic and Management Sciences, which forms part of Curriculum 2005. The aim of this article is to explore the implications of Entrepreneurship Education for teacher training, and to suggest some guidelines for compiling a curriculum for teacher training.

INTRODUCTION
Since the turn of the century a shift in the paradigm from vocationalisation to enterprise learning has been experienced (Wellington 1993:32). The past decade has also witnessed a shift in the search away from vocationalisation and the link with the world of work models to the entrepreneurial landscape, which, for centuries, has been the sole domain of economics (Mthunzi 2000:5).

The key to the success of establishing a culture of entrepreneurship in South Africa is education, which depends on all stakeholders including the state, teachers, parents and the learners themselves.

The learning area: Economic and Management Sciences is one of the learning areas that has been incorporated into Curriculum 2005 (the National Education Curriculum for South Africa). This learning area has the vision that Entrepreneurship Education will become an integral part of the lives of every child, teacher and adult. In essence this means that learners will need to become creative, adaptable, critical, autonomous, entrepreneurial, and employable citizens. These citizens will then be able to contribute meaningfully and responsibly to their own communities, and ultimately to the South African environment, economy and society. This implies that teachers, also existing teachers, will have to be trained to teach this new learning area.

The purpose of this article is to present some guidelines that can be used when compiling an entrepreneurial curriculum for teacher training.

BACKGROUND
In recent years, many industrialised countries have suffered from economic recession, high unemployment rates and fluctuations in international trade cycles to a degree not experienced since World War II. This situation has tended to increase the attention paid by policymakers and political decision makers to the potential role of entrepreneurs as a possible solution to rising unemployment rates, and as a recipe for economic prosperity (Caravan & O’ Cinneide 1994:3).

In South Africa the unemployment situation is far more serious than people think it is. According to the Central Statistical Service about 4.7 million or 32.6% of economically active people are unemployed. Currently, only one out of seven job seekers in South Africa is likely to find a job, and over the past few years the South African economy has lost more than 500 000 jobs. It is also estimated that more than five million people will remain permanently unemployed.

Unemployment has serious consequences, not only for individuals but also for the country as a whole. For example, the immediate consequences of unemployment for the society as a whole are firstly, an increase in crime, and secondly, an increase in frustration, which is often expressed in violence. This can develop into a state of uncertainty and possibly even anarchy. The effect of unemployment on stability in society has already had a negative impact on general confidence, mutual respect, tolerance and peacefulness.

For the economy as a whole, the consequences of unemployment are that valuable and potential skills are lost because they are not utilised. No country in the world can afford to allow its most valuable resource—labour—to be unutilised. Unemployment has a negative effect on people’s perception of the
success of the market economy. They get the idea that the market cannot solve the unemployment problem and that it is indeed responsible for the high unemployment rate.

The macroeconomic consequence of unemployment is that the country cannot achieve its full potential in the production of goods and services. The gross domestic product is lower, fewer consumer goods are available, there is less investment and the level of prosperity in the country is relatively lower than it would have been with less unemployment.

The microeconomic consequences of unemployment are also serious. Firstly, the concept “labour” refers to a factor of production and to people. Unemployment means that someone without work and without income is dependent on someone else. Secondly, there are other factors of production that are also under utilised. During periods of unemployment, labourers, machinery and equipment stand idle and this also affects future production. (Swanepoel & Van Zyl 1992:265 266, Gouws 1999:2)

Unemployment is a problem that requires speedy and imaginative solutions because its growth may threaten the individual and society. Solutions for the unemployment problem can be found in various fields, such as general education and the establishment of an entrepreneurial culture.

In programmes and strategies that governments around the world embark on to stimulate entrepreneurship, the one variable that appears most consistently is Entrepreneurship Education. (It would not be entirely accurate to state that education is a pre-requisite for entrepreneurship, since many exceptions exist where school dropouts have started successful businesses. However, it is an accepted fact that entrepreneurs have higher educational levels than the general public (Hatten 1997:44).)

Entrepreneurs throughout the world are stirring up a revolution that is reforming and revitalising economies. In the USA, small businesses have created 20 million new jobs in the past decade, while entrepreneurs are responsible for almost zero unemployment in countries like Indonesia, Malaysia and Singapore. However, the World Bank found that in South Africa small businesses were under represented relative to international norms (Cronjé 1999:3, Cordeiro 1998:8). One of South Africa’s greatest limitations to economic development is definitely the shortage of entrepreneurs. The ratio of entrepreneurs to other workers in South Africa is currently 1:52, while the ratio in most developed countries is 1:10.

According to Ramano (2000:6) “job creation and economic growth are the most daunting challenges we face in our country” .... “and self employment and establishing new initiatives for growth and development must be the rallying point and formulation for this campaign”.

In South Africa entrepreneurship is also seen as a possible solution to the unemployment problem. This is reflected in the emphasis of the government on the establishing of an entrepreneurial culture by, for example, including Entrepreneurship Education in a learning area of Curriculum 2005, and with the vision that Entrepreneurship Education will become an integral part of the lives of every child, teacher and adult.

After the President’s Conference on Small Business in 1995, a framework was put into place to support the development of this important sector of the economy. NTSIKA (Enterprise Promotion Agency), located within the Department of Trade and Industry, supported 442 enterprises during 2000, through their Technopreneur programme, and, through these entrepreneurs, created 734 jobs involving mainly previously unemployed people (Moloto 2000:9).

According to Davies and Pillay (2000:200) there is also a need to aggressively stimulate and support small business expansion in Kwa Zulu Natal to achieve economic growth and social stability. A “Business Clinic” at Technicon Natal was established to contribute to economic growth processes in the province: by developing a wider base of innovative, entrepreneurial individuals and supporting self employment as the alternative to unemployment.

The current unemployment situation in South Africa therefore places additional pressure on those institutions working in the field of entrepreneurship training to find ways of making entrepreneurship training more effective, efficient and relevant to the demands of the South African society.

From the aforementioned the following question arises: How do we train teachers to teach entrepreneurship and present this new learning area in South African schools? This question presents unique challenges to trainers and especially higher education institutions.

DEFINITION OF CONCEPT

The bewildering number of definitions given in the literature is evidence to the fact that the terms “entrepreneurship” and “entrepreneur” almost defy definition.

Ronstadt (1985:28) defines entrepreneurship as “the dynamic process of creating incremental wealth. This wealth is created by individuals (entrepreneurs) who assume the major risk in terms of equity, time and/or career commitment for providing value for some product or service”.

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The following definition of the Commonwealth Secretariat is used worldwide to describe an entrepreneur: “An entrepreneur is a person who is able to look at the business environment, identify opportunities, bring together resources, and act to take advantage of opportunities” (Cordeiro 1998:4).

Van den Aardweg and Van den Aardweg (1993:76) define education as a “purposeful, conscious intervention by an adult in the life of a non adult with the specific purpose of bringing the non adult success fully to adulthood. Education includes, not only the teaching of subject matter but through teaching the imparting of qualities such as leadership, perseverance, patience, morals, values, decision making and so on”.

Therefore Entrepreneurship Education could be defined as the purposeful intervention by an adult (the teacher) in the life of a learner to impart entrepreneurial qualities and skills to enable the learner to survive in the world of business.

RESEARCH DESIGN

During 1996, the researcher undertook an intensive research project on entrepreneurship from an educational point of view. A thorough literature study was done together with an empirical study that consisted of structured interviews with 60 experts in the entrepreneurial field in South Africa. The results of this research were published in the South African Journal of Education (Gouws 1997). The research showed that various programmes aimed specifically at training entrepreneurs on how to start and run a business effectively exist in South Africa, although no programmes/curricula for teacher training were available (Gouws 1997:145).

In the research undertaken, it was found that many of the foremost academics and researchers in the field of teacher training programmes are to be found in the United States of America. The USA is also seen as the most successful economy in the world, where the emergence of small businesses during the past decade averages 600 000 per year. Today entrepreneurs constitute more than 90 percent of the entire business population (BRAIN 1999).

As a result of the findings of the first research, a second research project, which aimed to investigate the views of “experts” in the field of Entrepreneurship Education in the USA, was undertaken in 1998. A qualitative research design was considered appropriate for this aim, thus allowing for flexibility. Each interview with the 12 “experts” in the USA (referred to as Group EX in the remainder of the article) involved stages of planning, data collection and reflection, similar to an action research design (Kemmis 1988).

To assist the researcher to suggest some guidelines for educators when designing a relevant curriculum for teacher training in Entrepreneurship Education, information that had been gained in the following ways was utilised:

- information obtained from research done during 1996;
- information obtained from studying various entrepreneurship training programmes for teachers (in the USA during 1998);
- information obtained by attending two workshops (one in Boston and one in Chicago during 1998);
- information obtained from interviews with Group EX during 1998.

DISCUSSION

The findings were interpreted against the above mentioned background. The interpretation of the author as researcher is included as cohesive narrative device (Wolcott 1994).

For the purpose of this article the findings will be discussed under the following headings:

- The aim of entrepreneurship education
- Teacher training programmes
- Teaching methods.

The aim of entrepreneurship education

The aim of the majority of teacher training programmes in Entrepreneurship Education in the USA is to supply teachers in the formal and informal sector with:

- teaching strategies and techniques that will enable them to teach Entrepreneurship Education successfully
- practical and theoretical knowledge to facilitate the learning of entrepreneurship
- improvisation techniques to enable teachers to teach entrepreneurship concepts where facilities are inadequate.

The aim of the Illinois Institute for Entrepreneurship Education is also to act as a link between business and education in order to assist teachers in delivering the message that entrepreneurship is a viable lifelong career option.

The above mentioned aims imply that teachers have to be trained to achieve these aims.

Teacher training programmes

The challenge for the training of teachers lies in the notion that teachers should be trained in such a way that they can present entrepreneurship as a subject in
the classroom without having to be entrepreneurs themselves.

The question that arises is: what should be in such a teacher training programme? This is not an easy question to answer since different organisations in the USA offer teacher training programmes in entrepreneurship in varying formats and for educators within widely different situations, for example:

- EDGE (Educational Designs that Generate Excellence) is a national corporation that trains educators to teach entrepreneurship in schools, in after school programmes and camps. The curriculum is different for every stage.
- IIEE (Illinois Institute for Entrepreneurship Education) trains educators from kindergarten through to adult education. The courses are accredited by Illinois State University.
- NFTE (National Foundation for Teaching Entrepreneurship) has an extensive teacher training programme. Teachers are trained at Babson College. They also offer a one day training session to teach educators to teach entrepreneurship online (sponsored by Microsoft).
- CETE (Center for Education and Training for Employment) at Ohio State University trains educators to teach entrepreneurship in high schools and community colleges.
- The Center for Entrepreneurial Leadership’s Jump Start, trains educators to offer entrepreneurship to Latinos, African Americans and Native Americans.
- There are also (as in South Africa) a lot of organisations that offer courses in entrepreneurship to students from primary school to out of school youth. An examples of this are Junior Achievement (this organisation is also known in South Africa) and the Center for Entrepreneurial Leadership. These organisations train their own instructors. Instructors offer these courses and no additional work is expected from teachers.

Although the curricula of the different organisations differ from one another, the focus of all the teacher training curricula was on how to:

- teach youth basic entrepreneurial skills
- help youth understand the real world of work and entrepreneurship
- provide youth opportunities to learn about the importance of entrepreneurship to the economic system through classroom and practical experience
- launch an in school business
- help youth explore their entrepreneurial qualities
- teach education economically.

The youth entrepreneurship programmes in the USA serve a wide variety of youth: boys and girls, rich and poor, and urban, suburban and rural. This also has an influence on the curriculum. Cathy Ashmore (CETE) suggests that in providing training to teachers on entrepreneurship, one should also emphasise the possibility of teaching entrepreneurship while teaching academic subjects. She states “There is room for entrepreneurship in some way everywhere in our educational system”.

But, as Group EX stated: entrepreneurship in the school environment is not about teaching children to play shop.

**Teaching methods**

It is not easy teaching entrepreneurship to teachers. This was the general comment from Group EX. Zira Smith (IIEE) gave the following example:

One of the teachers (students) in my Entrepreneurship Education class remarked in a distressed manner, “How are we supposed to teach children to become these creative, innovative entrepreneurial people when we’ve been taught to be workers and wait for direction from others?”

Group EX also noted that some teachers are not sincerely committed to learning about entrepreneurship and to search for knowledge about starting a business on behalf of their students. Teachers want to help their students but they do not want to make great sacrifices of personal time and energy to do it.

There is a mix of approaches in teaching entrepreneurship, with some programmes using only class room training, some combining classroom lectures with more experiential and contextual learning, and others having little traditional learning and focusing on hands on learning. Programmes for teaching entrepreneurship to primary school children focus on simulation.

Entrepreneurs cannot be trained by traditional methods. The wider range of activities that have to be dealt with in business requires an unusual approach, and the needs of the students have to be taken into consideration. For example: the reading intensive approach that many entrepreneurship curricula employ does not work well with Appalachian youth (many possess low levels of reading and writing proficiency). Appalachian teachers also found linear teaching methods ineffective. This stresses the point that teachers must be flexible to adjust their lesson plan to fit what the students need.

However the aim of all the teacher training programmes is to change the image of the teacher from an advisor to facilitator.
IMPLICATIONS FOR TEACHER TRAINING

From the above discussion it is clear that teachers in South Africa should be trained to teach entrepreneurship. This should apply for initial and in service training. It is also clear that it is no easy task compiling a single curriculum to suit the needs of South Africa. Educators in South Africa can draw on the research findings discussed above, but there is a real need for an indigenous entrepreneurial curriculum that responds to the unique needs of the country.

However the following should be taken into consideration when designing a curriculum for teacher training in Entrepreneurship Education:

Aim of entrepreneurship education

In curriculum development it is essential to have an aim. It appears from the literature study and research done, that the primary aim of Entrepreneurship Education in South Africa, should be to develop a cadre of entrepreneurs who will promote economic growth and create employment to meet the rising economic expectations of all South Africans. Teachers should then be trained to meet the primary aim of Entrepreneurship Education.

Teaching methods

According to Kent (1990:21) practical experience is the most important means of achieving positive results with Entrepreneurship Education. Entrepreneurship training is therefore a matter of inculcating practical skills, which cannot be applied by learners whose participation in the learning process has been confined to being mere spectators. At the end of each exercise, the pupils, as well as the teachers in their capacity as facilitators, must jointly take stock of what the pupils have learnt and of their reactions to the stimuli that they were exposed to.

By using teaching methods that are closely associated with reality, pupils are given the opportunity to acquire directly relevant knowledge of entrepreneurship. The author supports the uniqueness of entrepreneurial training and is of the opinion that traditional methods cannot be effective in the training of young entrepreneurs.

OBE (Outcomes Based Education), the learning approach of Curriculum 2005, links up closely with this view of entrepreneurship training. The emphasis of OBE is not on what the teacher wants to achieve, but rather on what the learner should be able to know, to understand, to do and to become. This means that OBE involves the following:

- ongoing assessment of learners
- critical thinking
- reasoning
- reflection and action
- learning that is relevant and connected to real life situations
- learner centredness with the teacher as facilitator using group work
- learning programmes as guides that allow teachers to be innovative and creative in designing programmes
- learners who take responsibility for their own learning and who are motivated by constant feedback
- flexible time frames that allow learners to work at their own pace and where input from the community is encouraged (Department of Education 1997:7; GDE/GICD 2001).

Rabbior (in Kent 1990:56-65) sets certain guidelines for entrepreneurship training for example:

- Facilitators must not insist on a single definitive answer
- Training should be goal and achievement oriented
- A variety of teaching styles and approaches should be used
- Familiar information should be presented in unfamiliar ways
- It should:
  - surprise students by presenting the unexpected
  - challenge the status quo
  - focus on better integration with communities
  - entail frequent feedback and team activities
  - entail activities and approaches that enhance self-confidence
  - highlight common pitfalls threatening the success of ventures
  - focus on opportunities
  - entail practical application of pupils’ knowledge and skills
  - be readily adaptable by individual trainers for different circumstances
  - address behaviour dimensions rather than just content issues.

From the guidelines given by Rabbior, it can be deduced that an entrepreneurial way of life cannot be instilled in the learner by means of a prescriptive approach. Teaching methods will have to be adapted as learning activities will become more important than just teaching lessons. OBE, as described above, is ideal for the facilitation of Entrepreneurial Education.

Teacher training programmes

Many teachers are unfamiliar or even distrustful of business, and have not been taught how to teach entrepreneurship and its special demands for simula
tion or experiential learning. Guidance and other teachers do not see self-employment as a viable career option. It is indeed no easy task to compile a curriculum for teacher training.

The training of teachers is more crucial now than ever before. Abe Seakamela, (Education Department’s director for teacher and technical colleges North West Province) has the following views regarding OBE and teacher training: “I think that teacher training should, from the start, run simultaneously with classroom teaching, so that theory can always be tested against classroom realities in a dynamic interaction between teacher and pupils. That will develop a tested methodology for OBE, but it will require training colleges to concentrate all their resources on OBE for all teachers, so that it is being constantly emphasised. The hit and run method of giving a course of a few hours in what OBE is all about won’t work because it is not a Holy Grail waiting to be discovered. It must be created as a living reality within the particular teaching/learning conditions of SA” (Financial Mail 1999:12).

The author fully endorses the views of Abe Seakamela, because teachers will not only learn how to handle OBE in the classroom, but they will be given the skills needed to teach entrepreneurship.

From the research it became evident that in all entrepreneurship programmes there are two focus points: the entrepreneur as a person, and the entrepreneurial process. These themes should be taken as a guideline when compiling a curriculum for teacher training. In order for learners to benefit from Entrepreneurship Education in the curriculum, teachers should be trained to teach both these themes.

In terms of the theme of “the entrepreneur as a person”, aspects such as the following should be included:

- entrepreneurial qualities, for example: achievement motivation; creativity; decision making; initiative; innovation; locus of control; and risk taking.
- entrepreneurial skills, for example: strategy formulation; leadership; planning and time management; and financial, communication and negotiation skills.
- self-knowledge.

The focus here will be on how to help learners explore and develop entrepreneurial qualities and skills, and how to answer the question “Who am I?” Research has demonstrated that entrepreneurial qualities and skills can be enhanced through formal education, training and practical experience. One should bear in mind that different ventures require different skills, for example, the skills needed in order to be a baker are different from those needed by a bookkeeper.

In the theme “the entrepreneurial process” the following aspects should be included:

- economic education, for example: unemployment; economic growth; tax; personal financial management; productivity and industry knowledge (entrepreneurship);
- business idea, for example: searching for an idea; creativity and innovation;
- business plan, for example: compiling a business plan;
- starting a business, for example: real business in school; during flea market or simulation.

In Entrepreneurship Education the focus should fall in equal parts on the two themes, as if a set of scales were being balanced. The author is of the opinion that the emphasis in the primary school should fall on the entrepreneur as a person. As the learner becomes more familiar with Entrepreneurship Education, the scales can be made to balance. The idea is best illustrated in Figure 1.

Developing entrepreneurial qualities and skills is a process that takes place over an extended period of time. It is not something that can be developed in a few sessions. In order for learners to benefit from Entrepreneurship Education in the curriculum, teachers should be aware that the purpose of self-employment at school level is the inculcation of the skills needed in order to be successful, rather than focusing on profits. It is a fact that education alone cannot completely prepare entrepreneurs to be successful business owners, but education increases the chances of success.

THE VALUE OF ENTREPRENEURSHIP EDUCATION

Not everyone has what it takes to be an entrepreneur, but then our society does not need everyone to be an entrepreneur. “Why then do I need to teach entrepreneurship to all my learners?” This is a question often raised by teachers. Here are some answers to this question:

- Since it is impossible to identify learners possessing entrepreneurial potential correctly, Entrepreneurship Education should be extended as broadly as possible throughout the total education curriculum. Cronjé (1999:86) states that entrepreneurship is a creative process and that entrepreneurial activity stimulates innovation. He is also of the opinion that economic growth depends upon the existence of an innovative environment. Therefore, understanding the role of entrepreneurship in economic progress, is critical for an understanding
of the dynamics of society and its future well being.

- All learners benefit from Entrepreneurship Education, as the qualities and skills needed to be an entrepreneur can also be used beneficially in life in general. Pupils who have gone through an entrepreneurship programme will understand the world they live in and will be able to contribute to it in an informed way. The most important benefit is the ability to restore creativity in expression and thought, and the realisation that failure is not necessarily the end of life but, potentially, the beginning of success.

- Learning about entrepreneurship is clearly highly desirable in preparing youth for the world of work. It matters less that they make a success of a business venture when they are young, although it is clearly a bonus. It is more important that they have the opportunity to consider self employment as a legitimate career option, one which they may return to later in life or whose skills may be usefully applied in the workplace.

- One cannot say that educated entrepreneurs will necessarily be better entrepreneurs, but they will be better equipped to know when, where and how to start new ventures. They will also be better equipped to maximise their talents within the community, for their own sake as well as that of the community as a whole. Entrepreneurship Education offers the youth new economic tools to change their view of themselves. The use of new terminology, business plans, and the experience of generating income from their own ideas, have an empowering and transformational effect on many youth.

- Entrepreneurship can help create new stories to pass along to peers and family about entrepreneurial success with legitimate businesses. They give a new perspective on how to succeed in the mainstream economy, proving that there are alternatives to drugs and street crime.

CONCLUSION

Teacher training institutions in South Africa have not yet responded to the apparent demand and necessity for Entrepreneurship Education. Despite the problem of unemployment and the inclusion of entrepreneurship in Curriculum 2005, no traces of an integrated educational strategy for Entrepreneurship Education can be found.

This research highlights the importance of teacher training programmes for Entrepreneurship Education and presents unique challenges to trainers and especially to training institutions. Higher education institutions should take the above guidelines into consideration when developing and presenting programmes for the NPDE (National Professional Diploma in Education); INSET (training of teachers to present OBE in the classroom, during 2001-2002 grade 5 and 9), HDE upgrading courses as well as initial teacher training courses, for example.
Given South Africa’s unemployment problem, the role of effective entrepreneurship education is seen to be indispensable in the future economic prosperity of the country. The only way in which this can be done is to train our teachers to teach learners entrepreneurial skills and through that establish a culture of entrepreneurship.

REFERENCES

BRAIN 1999. 15 June. Homepage of the BRAIN (Business Referral and information Network).