

INSATIABLE DEMAND OR ACADEMIC SUPPLY: THE INTELLECTUAL CONTEXT OF ENTREPRENEURSHIP EDUCATION

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Conceptual Paper

Purpose

To consider whether the growth in management and entrepreneurship education is driven by (external) demand or (internal) academic supply.

Design/Methodology/Approach

Three key elements of the intellectual context of management and entrepreneurship education are considered: the apparent causal relationship between improved management and economic performance; the privilege afforded to management as an agent of change in the context of globalisation; reforms in the public sector which define problems in terms of management rather than resources.

Findings

There is a lack of clarity as to whether the purpose of entrepreneurship education is about promoting higher levels of activity or better recognising entrepreneurial activity

Originality/Value

The paper offers an alternative perspective on entrepreneurship education through an examination of its purpose rather than its form and content.

Introduction

Over the past decade in the UK, debates on education have tended to focus on the issues of achievement and output. This is reflected in, for example, policies based around increased testing at all ages, from primary through secondary and onto further and higher education. The aim of this article is to consider education in a broader context. In focusing on management and entrepreneurship education in the higher education sector, the article considers the extent to which it is fit for purpose. The article uses a metaphor derived from basic economics and examines the relationship between demand and supply. We argue that rather than creating a state of equilibrium where the requirements of both the provider and user are met, the dynamics of the relationship have resulted in a state of uncertain disequilibrium which questions both the purpose and form of this type of education.

Management education neatly combines two of the more prominent obsessions of UK policy makers since 1997; improvements to both management and education. Whilst there is a general consensus about the relationship between improved education and economic performance, a more specific case is often made for management education (Adcroft et al. 2004a). Nobel Laureates will be aware of the dictum that “*in science, the truth always wins*” and it is worth examining some of the numbers which underpin this relationship. For example, between 1997 and 2001 in the UK the number of enrolments onto postgraduate business and management programmes increased by over 25% such that well over 30,000 students were studying MBA programmes by 2001; on the output side, this is an activity which produces over 12,000 new graduates each year. Thus, one in five postgraduate students in the UK studies business and management and, at undergraduate level, the

figures are no less startling; in the same period of time, enrolments onto undergraduate programmes have increased by over 10% such that almost 120,000 new undergraduates enter into business and management programmes each year. Management education has set an example to the rest of the economy; postgraduate business and management programmes in the UK generate over £500 million of overseas earnings from almost 20,000 foreign students (QAA, 2002).

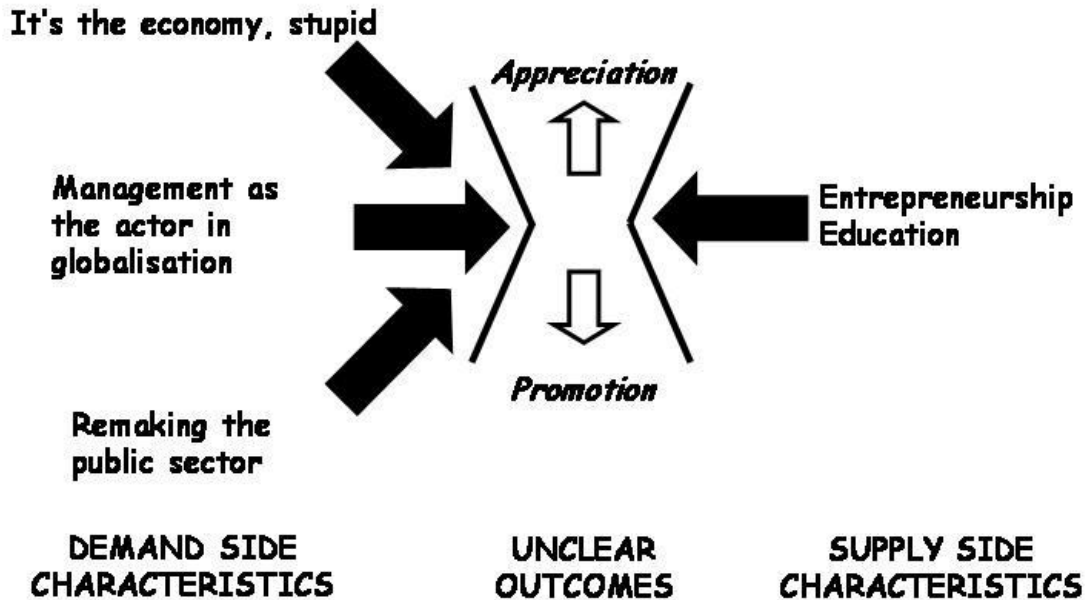
Against this background of market growth, the Secretary of State for Education is famously “*relaxed*” about the trend for students to turn away from academic disciplines like Classics and towards more vocational courses like management and business studies. The case for past and future growth in provision and take-up of management education rests on there being some sort of causal relationship between organisational performance and management. For example, in their discussion of the nature of MBA programmes, Kangis and Carmen (2001) make the link between better managers and management education when they argue for “*learning outcomes relevant to students as present or future senior managers*”. This reinforces the point that “*the objective of business and management programmes is to educate individuals as managers and business specialists, and thus improve the quality of management as a profession*” (QAA, 2002). Again, this rests on the assumption that higher quality management delivers improved organisational performance.

The leap from generalist management education to the more specific entrepreneurship education, which is the focus of this article, is a natural one to make. Anderson et al. (2003), for example, note both the drivers of the growth in this

educational activity and also the form and content of entrepreneurship education. In more general discussions of the form of education, two points are common across much of the literature: First, is the relationship between education and the 21st century (new) economies and, second, is the view that education is about equipping students with the necessary knowledge and skills required to prosper in such working environments. Kirby (1992) suggests that the purpose of entrepreneurial education is to develop in the student “*the skills, attributes and behaviours characteristic of the enterprising individual*”. This article, however, is not so much concerned with the form of entrepreneurial education as the main drivers behind its growing prominence.

The argument that we make in this article is necessarily indirect and possibly circumstantial. Rather than provide a whole range of quantitative data, we prefer a more gentle and scholarly approach and so make suggestions rather than draw absolute conclusions. Our proposition is that the growth in prominence of entrepreneurship education is a reflection of three broad intellectual and policy trends in both the UK and a wider international environment over the past two decades. The first trend is the increasing acceptance of a causal relationship between economic prosperity and levels of education. The second trend is the growing emphasis placed on management as the main cause of organisational success in the ever expanding literature on globalisation. The final trend is based around government attitudes to the public sector and a long history of policy changes aimed at remaking the public sector in the image of the private sector. The main arguments of the article are laid out in the diagram below.

SUPPLY AND DEMAND: THE OUTCOME OF ENTREPRENEURSHIP EDUCATION



Insatiable Demand

It's the economy stupid

Bill Clinton's famous response in 1992 as to what would swing the presidential election was that "*it's the economy stupid*". The assumption was that politicians are judged primarily on their economic record, especially in relation to how economic conditions affect the ability of people to find worthwhile employment. Whether it is wrapped up in a neo-liberal or a third way spin, the orthodoxy is that get the economy right and all else follows; when the economy is doing well, personal taxation can fall and public services can be maintained, incentives to commit crime or take drugs are reduced, jobs are plentiful, personal consumption can grow and so on. Clinton may have been the first to express it in such a vulgar and crude manner, but there is probably nothing new in this view of electioneering. There is a significant volume of literature (for example Driver and Martell, 2002 and Chadwick and Heffernan, 2003) that suggests that what the new Democrats began in the early 1990s

in the United States, new Labour continued in the late 1990s in the UK. In terms of the economy, pre-1997 the new Labour emphasis was always on “*reassurance, reassurance, reassurance*” and post-1997 it was always about “*prudence, prudence, prudence*”; nothing should be done, either in or out of office, to suggest anything other than economic competence.

Post-1997 economic policy in the UK has been guided by a number of different factors which can broadly be described as a combination of a post-Thatcherite consensus, a search for a new ideology and political expediency. Hay (1999) argues that current economic policy represents a continuance of the economic policies pursued in the 1980s and early 1990s. This began with “*questioning the assumptions of the Keynesian orthodoxy*” of the role of government as demand manager and resulted in a “*transformed political debate*” where emphasis has shifted onto government intervention aimed at the supply side of the economy. In translating this acceptance of previous economic philosophy into some kind of coherent ideology, the Prime Minister has argued that a new third way form of politics is needed where the objective is to create “*a dynamic knowledge based economy ... where governments enable not command and the power of the market is harnessed to serve the public need*” (Blair, 1998). Notwithstanding the philosophical and ideological underpinnings of attitudes towards the economy, Driver and Martell (2002) suggest that there is a clear objective in economic policy which is to “*create the kind of incentives and stable expectations that are meant to encourage investment, entrepreneurialism and new business formation*”.

Central to this kind of management of the economy is the issue of jobs and employment and here there is a break with previous economic policies. Much of economic policy in the 1980s and 1990s was about providing disincentives to be unemployed through, for example, an increasingly parsimonious attitude to unemployment benefits but, since 1997, policy has been about creating incentives to be employed. This has manifested itself in a whole series of different ways. For example the introduction of a national minimum wage was designed to ensure that employment pays more than unemployment and a great deal of social policy has been very much centred on employment through mechanisms like Sure Start and the New Deal. The key point here is that whilst employment has been placed centre stage in economic policy, the means to achieve it have not focused on government propping up the demand side of the economy but rather have been about intervention in the supply side, what the Chancellor famously, if a little unintelligibly, described as post-neo-classical endogenous growth theory.

One of the main elements of this supply side approach has been through education and this has happened at a number of different levels. The approach has started with a clear definition of the main cause of the UK's economic problems; "*by comparison with other industrialised countries, achievement by the average student is just not good enough ... national prosperity depends on well developed education*" (Department for Education and Employment, 1997). After decades of de-industrialisation and balance of payments deficits the lack of competitiveness of UK industry is blamed, not on the dwindling number of companies involved in international trade, but on the education system which fails to provide a workforce of the right calibre. The logical outcome of this problem definition is a solution which

aims to make “*British business more productive and competitive by promoting a more skilled workforce*” ((Department for Education and Employment, 1997).

All of this raises interesting points about the purpose of education. Under current policy regimes, education is not seen as having value in and of itself but rather is viewed as an instrument of economic policy where the value is assessed in those terms alone: “*Our success depends upon mobilising even more effectively the imagination, creativity, skills and talents of all our people. And it depends on using that knowledge and understanding to build economic strength and social harmony*” (Department of Education and Employment, 2003) which puts a slightly different spin on the Prime Minister’s priorities of “*education, education, education*”. Our argument is that the creation of the Department for Education and Employment did not happen by accident and this may represent some form of commodification of education; if the role of education is little more than to provide a supply chain of well skilled workers for firms and businesses, the growth in management and entrepreneurship education is a natural and logical outcome.

The only game in town: management and globalisation

The second key driver behind the demand for management and entrepreneurship education is the growing emphasis attached, especially in the literature on globalisation, to management as being the fundamental determinant of organisational success. This creates two problems. First, in an article of this length it is impossible to do more than scratch the surface of the literature. Evidence from the Library of Congress suggests massive growth in the globalisation literature with 4,500 new articles being added to the stock already available every year (Adcroft et al.

2004). Second, there is little consensus in the literature as to what the concept means; inevitably when academics are gathered together the result is debate and uncertainty rather than the resolution of issues (Held and McGrew, 2000). Thus, in making the argument we can provide only an illustrative and not an indicative set of positions and perceptions.

For the purposes of this article, we will consider the ever expanding literature on globalisation in the context of three different schools of thought. The first school is built on the acceptance that the world of tomorrow will be significantly different to the world of today and that globalisation is new and different. The second school argues that, under a set of very different operating conditions, in order to be successful managers must behave in a very different manner to how they behaved in the past. The third school focuses on specific managerial responses to a globalising world which explains to firms what they have to do to deliver that success. Central to the review of the literature is the notion of globalisation as a specific management issue; both explicitly and implicitly, much of the literature offers the message that with the right kind of management, globalisation offers an endless series of opportunities to be grasped rather than threats to be avoided.

We start with some illustrations of the first two schools of thought. For example, Moss Kanter (1995) points out “*sweeping changes in the competitive landscape*” and Ohmae (1989) demonstrates this with the assertion that “*boundaries have largely disappeared*”. The work of Bartlett and Ghoshal (1987) is firmly placed into the context of “*recent changes in the international operating environment*” and Prahalad and Doz (1986) give substance to these changes by emphasising “*intense*

competition brought about by overseas competitors". Globalisation thus offers a very different set of outcomes. Levitt (1983) argues that globalisation will allow firms to "*sell the same products in the same way everywhere*", a view rejected by Douglas and Wind (1987) as "*naive and oversimplistic*". Bartlett and Ghoshal see the challenge of the global economy as "*managing across borders*" whereas Ohmae sees it more as "*managing in a borderless world*". The result of this is increasingly emphatic and dogmatic management-speak which involves prescriptive advice; Companies should think about "*integrating their world-wide strategy*" (Yip et al., 1988) and therefore "*re-think their strategies and structures*" (Moss Kanter). Ohmae brings in a market focus by pointing out that "*customer needs have globalised, and we must globalise to meet them*"; Bartlett and Ghoshal think that all this means "*not only a total strategic re-orientation but a major change in organisational capability as well*" and Prahalad and Doz argue that we must now "*go beyond the analysis of existing rules and examine how determined companies often change those rules*".

The final school of the literature on globalization that we will consider privileges management as the key agency of organizational performance; management is the real difference between success and failure in the global economy. We can demonstrate this point through an examination of three of the key instalments in the development of this school: The 1980s and early 1990s business school obsession with Japanisation; the prominence of Business Process Re-engineering (BPR) in the 1990s and the more recent development of the revolutionary school of management. We begin, therefore, with Japanisation and the most logical starting point for this discussion is the large-scale entry of Japanese manufacturers into the

American car market during the 1980s: By the end of the decade one in three cars sold in the United States was Japanese.

Womack et al. (1990) provide the most influential explanation of Japanese success (and American failure) and this explanation was based around two main conclusions: First, the Americans lost because Japanese management was superior and, second, if the American industry was to ever recover then a new form of management was needed. The management that defeated the Americans was coined “*Lean Production*” and it is superior because it “*takes half of everything; half the human effort in the factory*”. In addition, Womack et al. argued, it was “*a superior way for humans to make things*” and so concluded that “*it is in everyone’s best interest to introduce lean production everywhere, and as quickly as possible*”. Explicitly in the Womack et al. text is the argument that best practice in manufacturing works in any national, organizational or cultural context. More implicit in the text is the argument that, under any sort of difficult conditions, provided management does the right things and makes the right decisions then success will always be guaranteed.

The Japanisation panacea for manufacturing firms was superseded in the mid-1990s by Hammer and Champy (1995) and their new prescription of BPR. This was a management prescription which offered something significantly new and different: “*Advanced technologies, the disappearance of boundaries between national markets and the altered expectations of customers who now have more choices than ever before have combined to make the goals, methods and basic organizing principles sadly obsolete*”. Under these kinds of conditions, management must become a much

more dramatic activity as *“Reengineering can’t be carried out in small and cautious steps”* because it involves *“tossing aside old systems and starting over”*. For BPR, the key words are: Fundamental, Radical, Dramatic and Process. Again the explicit message is that only the right kind of management can deliver success even though authors like Willmott (1995) argue that those who sign up to BPR are like *“turkeys voting for Christmas”* given the poor results of most BPR experiments. These poor results are explained away by Hammer (1996) because *“many people who use the word [re-engineering] don’t understand it. Consequently a lot of half-right ideas and some plain nonsense are being passed off these days as reengineering”*.

The revolutionary school of management (Adcroft et al., 2004) reflects the perceived need for organizations to reinvent themselves in the face of turbulence created by technological change and globalization. Two of the main themes of this school are, first, discussions of the likely obstacles to organizational revolution and, second, how organisations can become more revolutionary and overcome these obstacles. In discussing the obstacles to revolution, Beer and Nohria (2000) suggest; *“Today’s fast paced economy demands that businesses change or die. But few companies manage corporate transformations as well as they would like”*. One possible explanation of this problem is given by Collins (1999) who argues that corporate executives fail in transformation because even *“with the best of intentions, they install layers of stultifying bureaucracy”*. The need for a more revolutionary approach to transformation is given by Pascale et al. (1997) who point out the weaknesses of an incremental approach; *“More and more companies struggle with growing competition by introducing improvements into every aspect of performance. But the treadmill keeps moving faster, the companies keep working harder, and*

results improve slowly or not at all". The most influential author in this school, Hamel (2000), offers a revolutionary prescription to drive change and argues; *"To be an industry revolutionary, you must develop an instinctive capability to think about business models in their entirety ... this is mental training for industry revolutionaries"*. With the mindset comes the revolution: *"How to start an insurrection ... Build a point of view ... Write a manifesto ... Create a coalition ... Pick your targets and pick your moments ... Co-opt and neutralize ... Find a translator ... Win small, win early, win often ... Isolate, infiltrate, integrate"*.

Remaking the Public Sector

The final piece of the jigsaw concerns changes that have taken place in the public sector over the past two and a half decades. This is an important example for two reasons. If the first driver is economic in nature and the second managerial, changes that have taken place in the public sector neatly combine elements of both; changes began with the assumptions of the economic problem definition discussed earlier and have increasingly focused on management as a privileged agent of organisational change in a similar manner to the debates on globalisation. The second reason why this is an important example is situational. Higher education has been as affected by changes in attitude as any other element of the public sector and so it is a reasonable argument to make that the content of higher education will have been affected by the manner in which the sector is run and managed.

The cliché goes that change has now been added to death and taxes as the only real certainties in life and any reasonable analysis of the public sector over the past 25 years would seem to give credence to this cliché. If we take the late 1970s as the

starting point for public sector change, Thomson (1992) argues that the shift was caused by a new set of a priori assumptions of government policy. The first of these assumptions was based around the (perceived) causes of the lack of economic competitiveness which highlighted weaknesses across all elements of the economy for which the government was responsible, “*from nationalised industries to the education system*”. The second assumption was the perceived failure of corporatism and collectivism and is reflected in the shift away from an emphasis on the demand side towards an emphasis which stressed the discipline of the market and the need for efficiency and value and money.

The causes of these shifts in problem definition are a combination of ideological change and economic necessity. Yergin and Stanislaw (1998) characterise the ideological shift as “*the triumph of the market over the state*” and this is reflected in a political language that is still dominant today. In this language the key words are market, competition, enterprise, efficiency and profit with management providing the adhesive to hold them together. One interpretation of change in the public sector could be *commodification* which reflects both the process and outcome of new practices. We would define commodification in terms of the transformation of relationships into quasi-commercial relationships with an emphasis placed on, for example, the economic activity of buying and selling which results in the optimum allocation of resources. This could manifest itself in the commercialisation of activities such as research in higher education institutions where there is an increasing focus placed on “*harnessing knowledge to wealth creation*” (Department for Education and Skills, 2002). Perhaps an international comparison is useful. Lincoln (1998) notes the American experience where researchers are forced to “*consider their*

work as a form of commodity” but also draws attention to the commercialisation or corporatisation of organisations previously exempt from business pressures; Altheide (1987) argues that the process inevitably spreads to all non-profit organisations that are forced to adopt “*business processes and ideas*”.

The shift has taken substance in a number of different ways, the most obvious of which was the transfer of huge tracts of the public sector into the private sector through privatization, and more recently the transfer of management practices in from the private sector. Flynn (1995) highlighted three intentions of this; increases in efficiency, a “*results orientation*” and an extension of the planning cycle. Not just in the UK but across the whole of western Europe, economic and social pressures “*make reform of the management methods in the public sector essential*”. The net result of this, in the 1980s and much of the 1990s was a much “*more consciously managerial approach*” (Thomson, 1992) with a number of components such as organisational restructuring, improvements to the quality of service provision and shifts in public sector culture.

Management has long been an issue in the public sector and the origins of the current form of managerialism probably lies in the 1980s and the early work of the Audit Commission (Local Government Finance Act, 1982). The work of the Audit Commission is important not only in terms of its managerial legacy but also as a tracking device to assess how structures have changed (Power, 1987). The Audit Commission began with a problem definition which stated that public sector (under) performance was a product of (poor) public sector management and the solution to these problems was the creation of frameworks which mimic the private sector (Audit

Commission, 1988, Banham, 1987). The broad managerial context for these changes was the need for public sector organisations to become more like the private sector in their behaviour with the need for, for example, “*corporate vision*” and “*a shared culture*” (Audit Commission, 1986).

If it is now more about the transfer of practices in than the transfer of assets out of the public sector, Lawler and Hearn (1995) argue that this “*implies that there are certain core functions of management applicable across all organisational contexts and that certain management techniques can be transferred across contexts – in this case, from the private to the public sector*”. Similarly, Drucker (1995) argues that much current practice is built on the assumption that “*what one organisation does, any other organisation can do as well*”. Authors suggest a legion of benefits to be gained from the transfer of best management practice. For example, Drucker discusses the benefits in terms of generating new and additional resources, clearer understandings of economic chains, wealth creation and as both the “*creatures and creators of a material environment in which opportunities lie*”. Equally prosaically, Kaplan and Norton (1992) in discussing performance measurement, suggest the benefits are in the translation of the organisation’s “*strategy and mission statement into specific goals and measures*” which allow for, amongst other things “*products to market sooner and innovative products tailored to customer’s needs*”. If there are organisational benefits at the strategic level, there are also benefits further down the organisation’s food chain; “*the average quality of decisions made day in day out will be vastly higher than before. When that happens you can bet the [organisation’s] performance will show it*” (Ness and Cucuzza, 1995).

We recognise that in transferring a set of management practices from one context to another something will always get lost in the translation; it is, perhaps, more about principles and cultural change than actual activities. We do, however, note that what has been translated without dilution is the language of management. The echoes of Hamel's revolution can be heard, for example, when the focus of policy makers is on transformation; "*We will build on the many strengths in the public sector to equip it with a culture of improvement, innovation and collaborative purpose*" (The Cabinet Office, 1999). Transformation is now offered across the public sector: In the NHS, for example, "*change is an essential part of the transformation*" (NHS, 2002) and in higher education the government offers "*reforms which will transform the future of the sector*" (Department for Education and Skills, 2002).

In discussing the endogenous relationship between education and economic performance, globalisation and management agency and public sector reform we recognise that the relationship between these issues and entrepreneurship education is indirect. The aim of this section of the article was to provide a discussion of some of the contextual drivers of the growth in management and entrepreneurship education. If nothing else, the growth in the volume of management and entrepreneurship education is at least illustrative of the growing importance attached to management in these three different arenas.

Academic Supply: geographic chronology and the purpose of entrepreneurial education

The growth in entrepreneurship as a key component of management education should come as no real surprise. As Kirby (2003) has pointed out; “*business and entrepreneurial development has been listed as one of the four strategic goals of British universities*” and the National Committee of Inquiry in Higher Education (1997) recommended that universities should “*consider the scope for encouraging entrepreneurship through innovative approaches to programme design*”. This centrality of entrepreneurs and their activities is not a new idea. For example, Schumpeter (1934, 1939) argued for the key role of innovation in driving forward capitalist development and the key agent of this was the entrepreneur through the creation of “*new combinations*”. For Schumpeter, therefore, entrepreneurs were the cause and not the effect of long term economic progress. Given the context in which management education has flourished over the past few years, entrepreneurship education would almost seem to be a natural outcome; Hamel’s propositions for organisational transformation and revolution, for example, fit in neatly with Chaharbaghi and Willis’s (1999) definition of entrepreneurship as the creation of “*new market values*”.

One of the crucial questions for entrepreneurial education centres on the extent to which this is a form of activity that can be taught. This question, whilst never being fully resolved, is usually considered at two levels; the entrepreneurs themselves and the activities they carry out. In terms of the individual entrepreneur, research suggests that these people do have certain characteristics and character traits that make them stand out (Burns, 2001). These traits are well documented in the literature on the

subject and include; risk taking and the need for achievement (McClelland, 1961), locus of control (Rotter, 1966) and the desire for autonomy and deviancy (de Vries 1977). If these are the fundamental ingredients of the successful entrepreneur, does management education have a role in mixing them and blending them into the finished form? In the context of management education, the debate on this issue broadly reflects the wider debate about entrepreneurship in general. At one end of the spectrum, Chaharbaghi and Willis are sceptical about the value of this type of education. They argue that “*entrepreneurs cannot be manufactured, only recognised*”. On the other hand, Kirby offers a more optimistic assessment. In discussing the characteristics of entrepreneurs, he argues “*these attributes can be developed ... but not by using the more traditional pedagogic teaching methods*” and concludes that, wherever possible, business schools should “*retain their premier position in the creation of entrepreneurs*”.

Resolving this debate is clearly beyond the scope of this article. Whilst we would prefer to illustrate the debate rather than engage in it, we would also point out that it raises a fundamental question as to the purpose of entrepreneurial education; does it take place in order to recognise the activity when it happens or does it take place to foster and engender higher levels of the activity? In either case, there are issues to be discussed. If it is simply about recognition then we would ask whether there is any more value in a management student analysing an entrepreneurial event than there is in, say, an art student analysing a great sculpture. If it is about promoting higher levels of the activity, we need to recognise the complexities of the entrepreneurial equation. Social sciences, like sociology, economics and management, are, more often than not, careful to place any organisational analysis into a broad

environmental context where the conditions of one are both reflected and dependent on the conditions in the other. The same is true of entrepreneurship.

Entrepreneurial events need to be analysed from two perspectives: First is those who do it and the skills they have and require; second, is the external context in which it takes place. For example, Dhaliwal (2001), in discussing the nature of second and third generation Asian entrepreneurs in the UK, draws attention to a number of external support mechanisms and systems which must be in place to facilitate the event such as family, access to finance and training organisations. On this side of the equation there is also the issue of chronological geography; the entrepreneur being in the right place at the right time which may involve elements of judgement but also involves elements of serendipity. The other side of the equation is having both the character traits and the necessary skills to take advantage of whatever opportunity has either presented itself or been created. In so far as the purpose of entrepreneurial education as being about increasing the volume of activity, we would recognise the contribution of management education to providing the skills (after all even Tiger Woods has a coach) but question the contribution that can be made to the geographic chronology which is part and parcel of the activity.

Conclusion: The dog that didn't bark

In the Sherlock Holmes mystery, "Silver Blaze", the key to solving the case was not in what happened but rather in what did not happen; the great detective was able to make more crucial deductions because the dog did not bark than because the dog did bark. Similarly, the documented growth in management and entrepreneurship education is as significant for what it does not contain as it is for what it does contain.

Both the growth in, and the form of, this type of education reflects an increasingly accepted assumption of the universality of management; under whatever conditions, global or national, public or private, the key determinant of organizational success is management.

Williams et al. (1992) suggested that whilst an earlier age believed in miracles, this age believes in management. In defining and explaining organizational success and failure, like Fromm (1960), we reject the benefits of “*reciting optimistic formulae*” as being simply too uni-dimensional whether discussing the success of a global corporation in securing new market space or a public sector body improving the quality of service provision; we note the important contribution that can be made by management but also recognize the important contributions made elsewhere. No discussion of Japanese success, for example, would be complete without a discussion of industry structures, market conditions and comparative labour costs and, similarly, no discussion on improvements to NHS performance would be complete without a consideration of the availability of new resources. There will always be factors both inside and outside the boundaries of the organisation that are beyond the control and influence of management. Management is only ever one part of the equation and whilst there are clearly merits in improving the quality of management as a profession this should not happen at the cost of “*looking in the wrong direction*” (Adcroft and Willis, 2002) deliberately or otherwise.

The specific case of entrepreneurship education is instructive on this point as it reflects McCloskey’s (1990) question “*if you’re so smart, why aren’t you rich?*” which the management educator has no simple answer to. Is entrepreneurship

education there to just recognize, analyse and appreciate those who have become rich or is it there to instil in others the skills that will make them rich? The case for the entrepreneurial skills of creativity, leadership and innovation is made in the globalization literature, by the management gurus like Gary Hamel and in the imposition of private sector management on the recalcitrant public sector. Chell et al (1991) ask the question as to whether entrepreneurship education is for entrepreneurs or simply about them. If we accept the argument that these people are born then the role of education must be about identifying them and then providing resources to allow them to flourish. However, if entrepreneurs can be made or taught, the role of education must begin with the identification of a generic set of skills. However, unless and until the tension between recognition and promotion is reconciled, the suspicion will remain (to the outsider at least) that it is little more than a case of academic supply creating an insatiable and unrealistic public and private sector demand.

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