CELEBRATING THE HETEROGENEITY OF ENTERPRISE EDUCATION: MYTHS AND REALITIES

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ABSTRACT
Are enterprise educators different for other educators more than they are different from each other? This question, inspired by William Gartner’s earlier discussion of heterogeneity in the process of new venture creation, is the focus of our efforts. Borrowing from the inspiration of Gartner’s approach, we surveyed enterprise educators across a range of issues. Their responses confirm the degree to which the domain of enterprise education is beset with significant heterogeneity. This paper uses discourse analysis to dig subjectively deeper into the hidden meaning of the respondents’ comments.

INTRODUCTION
During the last few decades the field of enterprise education has rapidly established its own identity along with a burgeoning literature base. One issue that remains relatively unexplored is the degree of heterogeneity related to our teaching contexts and pedagogical practice. This paper is born from a paraphrasing of a seminal quote by Gartner (1985). We argue that with respect to the differences in teaching style, that the diversity in context and approach between enterprise educators may in fact be larger than the differences between enterprise educators and non-enterprise educators. Given the nature of previous concerns as to the legitimacy of the field of enterprise education in higher education (see Hindle, 2007), this is an issue of significant importance. Rather than being threatened by a lack of consensus as how enterprise education should be delivered, we aim to highlight and celebrate the nature of such diversity. This paper aims to highlight areas of difference that are real in every sense and that stand in the way of us understanding the enterprise education landscape.

Throughout this paper, several contemporary issues are discussed from a global perspective with perceived differences and similarities highlighted. Issues include the primary purpose of enterprise education, the most significant challenges facing enterprise education, student diversity, the development of student resource profiles, the capacity of our students to sell, and the importance of using business plans as a tool of learning in enterprise education. In keeping with the aim of Bill Gartner’s (1985) inquiry into heterogeneity, this paper does not seek to provide a framework or catalogue for accounting for any such heterogeneity in our field. Rather, we aim for this paper to raise awareness of such diversity in a way that increases both recognition and appreciation of the complexity and variation that is ever present in enterprise education. However, let us first briefly consider the current state of enterprise education.

MAKING SENSE OF ENTERPRISE EDUCATION
It would seem there is universal agreement (see Katz, 2003 and Kuratko, 2005) that enterprise education emerged in the United States of America in the 1970s before finding isolated support in the 1980s/1990s in United Kingdom and Europe, eventually emerging as genuine course offering for undergraduates in the 2000s globally. Students it would seem have also voted with their feet seeking out course offerings that they perceive offer value within the context of the costs and benefits of acquiring their educational degree. However, it would seem that the fragmented nature of early enterprise education offerings combined with the velocity of the field’s development has resulted in “a veritable pot-pourri of activity delivered under the enterprise/entrepreneurship umbrella” (Warwick, 2001) in Gibb (2008).
Despite the rapid growth of enterprise education, many questions remain unanswered as to what is its future direction. For example, respected entrepreneurship researcher David Birch (see Aronsson, 2004) has argued that it is not possible to teach people to be entrepreneurs, suggesting that ought to complete an apprenticeship in preference to a traditional classroom-based degree. His argument is developed around three fundamental qualities he attributes to the developed entrepreneur (i.e. selling, working with people, and creating products and services) that he argues are difficult to codify and embed in a curriculum. What if he is right? Might this mean that enterprise education is more of a sorting ground where entrepreneurs are to be found, rather than made?

Recently, David Storey (2009) challenged enterprise educators to demonstrate the productivity of enterprise education vis-à-vis stimulating the supply of entrepreneurs into society. Storey’s primary argument being that throughout time, the supply of entrepreneurs within society has always been consistent. Therefore, why the need for enterprise education when entrepreneurs have a way of always being found in society? Also, there seems to be much emphasis placed on the role and importance of the business plan in enterprise education. However, Bygrave (2009) suggests we may have over extended its potential contribution to enterprise education. With reference to recent research at Babson College, the success of past students in their current activities was deemed to be more related to their networking abilities (i.e. social capital), their ability to raise finance (i.e. financial capital) and their development of human capital (i.e. industry knowledge), rather than from the development of a business plan as part of their studies.

As such issues are raised by respected persons who live within the enterprise education landscape, it is no surprise really that Hindle (2007) raises concerns about the legitimacy of enterprise education as a source of value within the broader higher education community. He argues that it is down to us collectively to provide logical justification that enterprise education is a feasible and desirable form of education in society. Given the high expectations of policy makers for enterprise education and the various institutional challenges we as educators have in practicing our craft, there is clearly a need to think about why we teach entrepreneurship and how we teach entrepreneurship. Again it is not the aim of this paper to suggest how we should teach enterprise education, but rather to highlight the nature of ever present heterogeneity with enterprise education.

**SOURCES OF HETEROGENEITY**

The temptation of achieving statistical rigor appears to again be gaining the upper hand in our collective pursuit of what constitutes excellence in research on enterprise education. We were warned by Gartner (1985, p.701) that “the search for key variables, for general principles, for universally applicable laws of entrepreneurship that has characterized much of the entrepreneurship literature betrays an impatience with the slow methodical process of description”. On that occasion, Gartner championed an illuminative framework designed to draw our attention to a finer grained analysis of new venture creation. In the same vein, this paper aims to draw your attention to contextual factors that should prevent any premature movement towards notions of homogeneity vis-à-vis the context of enterprise education.

Gartner (1985) identified four components to his framework; individuals, the environment, the organisation, and process. We suspect that these areas of focus will also provide satisfactory evidence of heterogeneity within the context of enterprise education. We take individuals to relate to difference in the nature of enterprise educators. We refer to environment in terms of the institutional environment where enterprise education is situated. By organisation, we mean that underlying purpose of the program of education, and by process, we refer to the development trajectory and underlying pattern of delivery associated with different programs of enterprise education. Just as Gartner made no attempt to capture the actual breadth of variance associated with new venture creation, neither do we in relation to enterprise education. We simply aim, to again paraphrase Gartner, to encourage a shift away from viewing enterprise education as an unvarying, homogeneous form of education, and towards a recognition and appreciation of the complexity and variation that abounds the phenomenon of enterprise education. Let us first consider the method used within our approach to discover such assumed heterogeneity.

**METHODOLOGY**

The research in this paper is based upon a global survey of enterprise educators operating in higher education. An online survey designed around expected contextual issues faced by enterprise educators and other assumed emergent issues related to individuals, their environment, the organisation of their
program and the processes related to their program was sent to in excess of 300 enterprise educators, known personally or who held membership with online portals directly related to enterprise education. We received 97 responses from educators in 85 different universities across 32 countries. The survey questions enabled us to discern the experience of the educators in terms of years of teaching, their past history as an entrepreneur or non-entrepreneur, the degree of institutional constraint they face as enterprise educators, their primary methods of teaching, the sources of direct influence upon their teaching practice, their teaching philosophy, and the nature of the outcomes they wish for their students. Also, eight contemporary emergent issues where offered for consideration. Issues such as, consideration of business start-up rates, student diversity, student resource profiles and the process in which entrepreneurial opportunities are evaluated. From the responses to the eight emergent issues and other qualitative answers we were able to perform a process of discourse analysis.

The process of discourse analysis enabled us to discern between the categories, constructs and concepts used by the respondents to answer the survey questions. Our aim was to better understand the nature of social interaction produced between educator and students across the institutions represented in the received sample. For example, this approach enabled us to better discern between educators that were educating ‘about’ enterprise from those that were educating ‘for’ or ‘through’ enterprise. Essentially, using this process to deconstruct the survey participant responses enabled the responses to be read outside of the assumption of a known set of outcomes. This methodology disrupts the assumption of the hierarchical relationships naturalized by binary oppositions or yes and no and allows an expression of subjectivity and open-endedness. We will elaborate more on the nature of this aspect of the methodology as we use the process discourse analysis.

**DISCOVERING HETEROGENEITY**

The online survey revealed an enormous level of heterogeneity across the sample of educators. Even at the level of describing their approach to delivering enterprise education, respondents variously described their approach as reliant upon forms of the case-method, personal development, reflection-based, theoretical approach, practical learning and/or experiential learning. There was a complete fragmentation of influences reported with regard the development of a personal teaching philosophy. When asked to nominate their own sense of the purpose of enterprise education, the respondents answers can be grouped in various (related) categories, as illustrated in Figure 1 below. Clearly, at the level of the individual educator, there is much heterogeneity that is seemingly born from the influences upon their approach to teaching enterprise education.

**Figure 1 – The Value of Enterprise Education**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To develop initiative, a sense of freedom and passion to succeed</td>
<td>23.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ungrouped responses</td>
<td>21.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enterprise knowledge and an altered sense of perception</td>
<td>13.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-confidence</td>
<td>12.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capacity for creative thinking</td>
<td>11.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enterprise Skills and an awareness of such skills</td>
<td>9.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-employment</td>
<td>5.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ability to cope with failure/ambiguity</td>
<td>2.3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

What would seem apparent is that the four elements (derived from Gartner) nominated above as starting points from which to consider the issue of heterogeneity in enterprise education, perhaps represent just the tip of an heterogeneity iceberg. Detecting discrete groups within the respondents’ replies was challenging. Consider the issue of the most pressing challenges facing enterprise education. As illustrated in Figure 2 below, the respondents concerns were grouped across four specific areas, educator issues, pedagogical issues, student issues, and institutional issues. Yet within each group, the type of concern fragmented considerably.
For example, if we consider the nature of institutional issues noted, we can see there are many issues related to the legitimacy of enterprise education. However, country differences add another layer of complexity as to what is legitimate and what is not. In Ireland it was noted that enterprise education is frequently misunderstood and ridiculed. It was observed that the delivery of education was class based and content driven. Alternatively, in Australia, it was argued that all too frequently we encounter resistance from our universities, their Deans and our colleagues as to the potential contribution of enterprise education. It was also suggested that in Australia that enterprise education lacks credibility within business schools, which when combined with the dominant silo mentality, restricts the co-delivery of enterprise education programs thereby potentially preventing budding entrepreneurs within higher education of gaining access to our programs. What is clear is that there are likely to be almost never ending sources of heterogeneity in enterprise education. But perhaps as a field we should accept such heterogeneity and find ways to celebrate it. We would argue that perhaps enterprise education educators are possibly caught in between being an originally entrepreneur who is seeking to educate and being an educator and/or researcher who is attempting to be an entrepreneur. We will return to this issue in our concluding discussion. However, let us now enter the world of discourse analysis in an attempt to shine light on an alternative way to consider the issue of heterogeneity.

MAKING SENSE OF HETEROGENEITY

In seeking to demonstrate the heterogeneity in the field of enterprise education this paper seeks to offer new ways of understanding how we as educators and academics understand the identity of enterprise education and educators and in doing so, how this identity can be scrutinized and articulated to be more inclusive and subjective, to offer a greater range of options in the way we read and write the entrepreneur educator and their environments so as to not unconsciously render the discussion of enterprise education to a discursively limiting set of assumptions, based on a dominant culture or hierarchical view of the world. The deconstruction of enterprise educators reflects an inquiry into how what we assume to be an enterprise educator functions in multiple ways beyond and through accepted definitions and understandings and how we think, talk and write about entrepreneur education.

In many discussions of enterprise education, there is a suggestion of a linearity to the entrepreneurial learning arc, rather than a chaotic and cascading set of simularic opportunities, both by design and happenstance, that direct the entrepreneurial decision making process. The student goes into the process, and comes out the other end on graduation with a defined and graded competency and the assumed or suggested intention of starting a business or being entrepreneurial. The post-student entrepreneur is positioned to aspire to being a serial entrepreneur, that their behaviour is exactly this repetitive loop of venture identification, pursuit and execution as taught in a linear education system. As enterprise educators, this is the uncomfortable nexus of trying to teach a concept that is no more linear than it is fixed or stable as a set of pedagogical principles, within an institutional setting that craves uniformity, measurability and the way we do things round here. In an attempt to describe the challenges of enterprise education and the heterogeneity of the educators, the analysis of surveying the contemporary issues offered up for consideration to survey participants has been undertaken using a theoretical toolset that enables the simultaneous appreciation of their remarks, and the broader subjective themes that emerge through their comments.

Central to the analysis of this survey is the use of discourse and narrative analysis and theories of subjectivity as a new toolset to reflect on how enterprise educators are constructed and constrained
through the institutional narratives which are created to describe enterprise education. This is undertaken using language in an interdisciplinary fashion, in the poststructuralist mode of language where it becomes not simply a vehicle of communication, but as a site where subject positions are constructed. This methodology is applied to the analysis of comments about enterprise education derived from the survey and situated within the four main discourses that emerged from the responses: Institutional constraints, including peers as well as programs, attitudes and infrastructure; the different approaches and experiences of the educators and thus the subjective position they brought to their responses; the different types of development trajectory, i.e. the type of program it was located in and the anticipated outcomes (science and engineering vs. Business and management for example) and relating to this point, the process of program development and funding genesis. These four threads strongly influenced the responses, but undeniably the questions as well, as the authors are similarly part of the same process as the survey participants.

Investigation undertaken within a discourse analysis based methodology does not offer the same clear cut steps to problem-and-solution as the classic hypothesis driven structure of the social, physical or life sciences or the use of quantitative data to demonstrate weightings and frequency as the basis of proof. Much of the methodology of entrepreneurial enquiry is located around quantitatively driven theory, which while favoured within the traditional disciplines of business and management, has limitations when making analysis of entrepreneurship. By introducing the theoretical undertakings more common to philosophy and cultural studies modes of enquiry, this method tactically reflects the diversity and continual change not only in the literature around entrepreneurship, but also within the anecdotal characteristics of the enterprise educators themselves, and as such is highly complementary to the investigations of the heterogeneity of enterprise educators.

It is important to spend a little time defining explicitly the theoretical terms employed and the manner in which we are using them for this paper. As mentioned, discourse and narrative analysis are applied in a cross-disciplinary context to business, management and entrepreneurial studies. From this theoretical position, academic writing of this nature is nothing if not subjective narrative, including that driven by the hard science of statistic due to the subjective biases of the writer and interpretations. This paper is no different in presenting a view of the entrepreneurship educator that foregrounds particular concepts, while leaving others present but unspoken, through choice, omission, or the authors’ self-limiting belief systems. Our writing on this topic refers to (our) principally first world global experience of the enterprise educator, rather than making statements about the true global experience of the entrepreneur that explicitly encompass race, oppression and culture outside in emerging economies.

Discourse analysis disrupts the assumption that the hierarchical relationships naturalized by binary oppositions reflect nature or truth. This naturalization of binary opposition’s remains typical to ideologies in which boundaries are drawn between what is acceptable and what is not, self and other, presence and absence etc. (Eagleton, 1983). We accentuate this discussion of discourse analysis as part of an anti-methodology as it were, as deconstruction is not commonly labeled a methodology because of its relation to the unpredictable. (Royle, 1996) And enterprise education is nothing, if not unpredictable. The relevance of employing this type of theory to the entrepreneurship educator is in its disruption to the definitions of the educator and entrepreneur. This use of discourse analysis disrupts the search for the true entrepreneur educator; we recognize the kinetic political and ideological aspects of language, and the implicit and always present heterogeneity.

The use of discourse analysis is valuable as it is not solely a constantive term, but is both constantive and performative (Royle, 1996). By constantive we refer to the assumption that a term’s meaning can be simply stated and declared either true or false. Performative language refers to language that both says and does. Within the context of this paper for example, when we enquire what are the implications for enterprise educators this question itself blurs clear distinctions between constantive and performative language. While we can say that an entrepreneurship educator is X and therefore will respond Y, discourse analysis points to how this statement’s performativity reflects that it is doing something and this doing is not simply in what is read, but also in what is not. For example, when asked in the survey about the diversity in students backgrounds, attitudes to studies, aspirations and learning personalities and what the implications are for enterprise educators, the answers ranged from “leave them alone” to “entrepreneurship teaching transcends these barriers” to “there are entrepreneurs in every niche or society from plumbers to sexual deviant activity. We teach concepts; they find the niche that matches them.” The range of 75 answers to this question were all different, and even
subversive in the sense of not answering the question at all, just putting “XXXXXXXXX.” Respondents were in all cases making a statement about their experiences, both explicitly, in terms of student diversity, but also implicitly, in terms of their own experiences of diversity, discrimination, entrepreneurial teaching and myriad other experiences in their own subject position.

Within the difference expressed as comments, all four themes mentioned earlier were present – time and course constraints of the institution, the experience of the enterprise educator and their interpretation of the entrepreneurial experience as learned, the discipline into which they were teaching and how it affected the outcomes. Is a scientist or engineer likely to become an entrepreneur, more so than a business student, one could hypothesize probably not. How does this affect the outcomes for the educator, the aspirations of their students’ ultimate success, the implications therefore for them as educators and the institutional view of their efficacy? In a variety of ways, and from the questionnaire it was obvious that many educators are under a type of institutional siege. When asked about the most significant challenges faced by educators teaching entrepreneurship to undergraduates, there was significant pressure to somehow meet the conservative needs of the institution, and the ever changing demands of the business sector. “Some anti-entrepreneurship perspectives in education professionals need to be addressed” “resources – larger classes make applied T&L difficult” “being taken seriously by peers in a science and technology based institute” “side stepping bureaucracy” “the skills set of educators” “lack of competent faculty” “the lack of credibility within business faculties and the dominant silo mentality” “for some of the more established Professors, learning social media and new technologies.” All of these comments, and there are many more in the same vein, suggest the difficulties trying to do something entrepreneurial in a non entrepreneurial environment, as we are positioning the academy to be. Whist there is no doubt that very entrepreneurial and innovative thinking is undertaken inside the academy, it is fair to say that the institution itself is a “slow moving wheel.”

Is one of the problems of teaching entrepreneurship to undergraduates therefore the problem of the discourse of the entrepreneur as a set of behaviours and characteristics germane to the individual more than the practice, and that as an educator you need to be an entrepreneur for authenticity (and not in an academic institution) or be operating with students in the so called real world, and therefore are unable to simulate the actual experience of entrepreneurship? McKaskill (2006, p.12) defines entrepreneur through the division of “entre” meaning between and “prendre” meaning to take. In a textual and linguistic sense, this clearly articulates an understanding of the entrepreneur as a transactional state of being, and also a transient one, although is not necessarily the common definition of entrepreneur which more commonly is translated as “to undertake” or to “take into ones hands” (Burke, 2006, p. 14). The entrepreneur is, however, much more understood as a discourse of personality and behaviour than of linguistics. We would suggest that no other type of businessperson is so widely considered in terms of categorisation and dissection in narrative, and addressed with the reverence of the untameable entrepreneur. If we reiterate the distilled elements of entrepreneurship as commonly defined as the conditions that are necessary for an entrepreneur to succeed: the need for an entrepreneurial individual, a market opportunity, adequate resources, a business organisation and a favourable environment (Schaper & Volery, 2006), these have striking similarities to the themes that are brought up throughout the responses to the survey in what is challenging to enterprise educators. Interwoven in all of these categories is the notion of innovation as a key catalyst in the mix for the combination of elements to ignite into a successful venture.

Whilst there is strong support through the survey for the entrepreneur as person/student to be coterminous with the business conditions, opportunities and structures for entrepreneurship to flourish in, there is nevertheless a well established understanding of the personality types of entrepreneurs as being equally essential to success. The qualities and attributes that constitute the narrative of the entrepreneur have a proud tradition in the frontier elements of risk taking and courage. Another universal theme of the entrepreneur, along with an inability to thrive in a constrained or bureaucratised environment is the necessity of failure as part of the experiential paradigm of entrepreneurship. In the words of Moltz (2006), an entrepreneur is defined not by how he or she handles success, but how they handle failure. Failure is represented not as a trait of personality of the entrepreneur like courage and passion, rather a cyclical fundament of the entrepreneurial condition. Again, a very difficult fundament to teach in an institution where success and graded marks are the measure of achievement.

The entrepreneurship educator has interestingly evaded the same analytical scrutiny of their identity, and yet it could be argued that the entrepreneurship educator more significantly falls in-between the
understanding of the identity of the academic and the entrepreneur. This indication of who the entrepreneurship educator is, and how they create their own identity as an educator in a sector that valorises experience, success and failure as teaching tools, shadows the response to the survey. The desire to understand how the entrepreneurship educator can integrate their own tension and conflicts between the learning experience for their students, and their own simularcric value and meaning as academic entrepreneurs and educators is clear throughout the responses. When we speak of their simularcric experience, we are referring to another cultural studies term coined by Jean Baudrillard to describe the ongoing replication of a concept, which we believe has great resonance with the experience of educators in teaching entrepreneurship in an “out of the enterprise” context.

“Abstraction today is no longer that of the map, the double, the mirror or the concept. Simulation is no longer that of a territory, a referential being or a substance. It is the generation by models of a real without origin or reality: a hyperreal” (Baudrillard, 1994, p. 1). Baudrillard points to a reversal of the relation between representation and reality which constitutes a (hyper) reality, in the case of the entrepreneurship educator an educational reality which seems more real than real. The distinction between the real and the representation collapses and dissolves away when entrepreneurship is transported into the classroom. All that truly can be said to be left is the simulacra of the act of entrepreneurship itself. If the educator cannot be unconstrained to be an entrepreneur in their academic subjectivity, and the students are becoming entrepreneurs but not in many cases actually being entrepreneur, the educator is in a perpetual state of mediating the space in between being an entrepreneur and performing entrepreneur. This is, in our opinion, one of the prevailing tensions of enterprise education, and the critical nexus of why the recognition and articulation of heterogeneity is so important. The survey evidenced a strong belief that graduates shouldn’t be expected to start-up firms as part of their completion of an entrepreneurship unit, major or degree. The respondents to the question on if start-ups weren’t the outcome what should graduates of entrepreneurship act and think like strongly favoured the idea of the entrepreneur as discussed earlier as being driven by personality, behaviour and values, rather than processes. “they should add value and be intrapreneurial” “they should act like agents of change” “encourage enterprising skills” “act and think entrepreneurially” “challenge the current wisdom” “be flexible and creative” “we should help them become a decent human being.” These are all responses that could be used for the experience of enterprise educators themselves in their expression of heterogeneity, and how they explain their own value in the value paradigm of the pedagogy of enterprise education. The more enterprise education is viewed as an experience of creating value through behaviours and ideologies, which is the strong indicator from the responses to the survey questions, the more value there is to heterogeneity of educators. When enterprise education is seen as a process of teaching students to be able to graduate and create a start up, there is strong resistance from current enterprise educators who do obviously not value or recognise the learning outcomes in process driven business knowledge. Understanding ideas, value creation, personality and behavioural attributes come through the survey clearly as what enterprise educators want for their students. What they need for themselves is the capacity to be heterogenic in their own organisations, and valued for the same attributes they aspire to for their students.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION
It is abundantly clear to us that the landscape of enterprise education is extremely heterogeneous. That any attempt to capture the dynamics of the domain neatly into a few generalisable factors would be doomed to failure. To the extent that we can agree that enterprise educators will be considerably different, operate in differing institutions, seek to attain different student outcomes and be located in different contexts (engineering, business etc), we must factor in significant heterogeneity. This should be no real surprise, but it does nevertheless raise many questions as to how research in this domain should develop.

For instance, what exactly do we know about the nature of interaction between the four noted factors and other factors that might also be found to be present? We say that at present these contextual issues have been given too little attention. As a growing area of literature, enterprise education must come to grips with its own demons before it seeks to stand alone, unique, from other areas of education such as traditional business school subjects. To return to Gartner’s ideas, it is quite likely that there is more difference between enterprise educators and their programs than between our domain of study and others domains of study. We have attempted highlight the nature of such difference using the process of discourse analysis. Our collective challenge is to turn our attention to the variations that are part and parcel of enterprise education. We need to better understand our landscape before we attempt to defend it as uniquely different. If we are able to understand the variables related to such variation and consider
the range of permutations related to their operation in enterprise education we will unearth a plethora of research opportunities.

Perhaps the most obvious place to start is with the educator; their backgrounds, aspirations, degree of control and teaching philosophies. Not enough is known about how (current or past) entrepreneurs educate and how non-entrepreneurs educate in the enterprise education landscape. Given the obvious importance of the educator on mediating and facilitating the learning outcomes of the students, immediate attention would seem necessary. It is quite likely that meaningful subsets of variables can be developed to provide frameworks that will further our understanding of how such variation plays out vis-à-vis other key variables. For instance, how does the non-entrepreneur operate in controlled teaching environments versus relatively free and open teaching spaces? Alternatively, how does the current or past entrepreneur operate in such conditions?

The challenge it would seem is to avoid the trap of assuming that a convergent path towards meaning can be achieved. Just as we cannot connect a linear process to our students’ development and/or their entrepreneurial aspirations, neither should we expect to do so in explaining the process of enterprise education. It is in understanding the divergence that surrounds us all that we can move forward in developing the domain of enterprise education. This would suggest that there is a need for more fine grained analysis that employs various types of qualitative research methods to capture the various forms of meaning present in our domain. Consider the sources of influence respondents reported in the survey.

When asked to nominate the most significant influence upon their approach to teaching enterprise education, the reported information was revealing. In all, 97 educators nominated 78 sources of influence (including their own experiences/practices). The late Jeff Timmons was nominated by 10% of the sample, Allan Gibb by 7%, and Bill Bygrave by 4%. Beyond that, 75 others sources were nominated once or twice. What a great opportunity awaits us to understand why this is so, and what it means for the learning outcomes of our students. When the nature of institutional diversity is also factored into our results, in becomes apparent that it is highly unlikely that the field of enterprise education will ever converge in terms of teaching context and/or pedagogical practice. In summary, a good deal more questions are raised here than answered. As a result, we hope this paper makes a contribution to the various emerging agendas within the domain of enterprise education research. We call upon individual educators to reflect upon how our four factors relate to them and to share their sense of meaning with us all. To also suggest other factors, those that are germane to their context. Ultimately, we seek to encourage other educators to celebrate and make sense of the ever-present heterogeneity that abounds enterprise education.

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