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Social Enterprise Education: Harnessing Personal Values & Motivations Evaluation Report

Evaluation Report - July 2021

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Overview

From February through to April 2021 London South Bank University's Student Enterprise team and Careers and Employability at University of the Arts London collaboratively designed and delivered a six-week extra-curricular programme. The project was supported by EEUK and was offered free of charge to targeted students from both universities in weekly, two hour sessions online.

The students came from under-represented groups and those that traditionally experience barriers in accessing creative enterprise opportunities, support and funding.

The programme was informed by a Literature Review (see Appendix 1) which revealed the challenges that intersectional, structural disadvantage can present for emerging entrepreneurs. This review found that despite a high level of 'entrepreneurial intention' students can, at times, find it hard to identify with the language of enterprise or the journeys of entrepreneurs. This can lead to a lack of engagement in entrepreneurial education and hence a transition from intention to activity.

The pilot project informed a toolkit that reframed social enterprise education intended for wider dissemination amongst educators. The sessions explored the links between personal values, motivations, social enterprise and community impact to reinforce a values driven, sustainable and community centered approach. The toolkit aimed to contribute to the development of inclusive and creative strategies for entrepreneurial learning.

All of the sessions were delivered online (via Zoom) and featured different specialist speakers, who approached the theme 'Values and Motivations' from a range of perspectives. It also featured an embedded 'co-evaluation' session with an external facilitator. All students were offered a bursary to support participation and were recruited by an open call. 13 students took part in the sessions and they were required to keep a reflective log.

The methods of evaluation included: a pre and post online survey and a facilitated focus group. The surveys sought to benchmark entry points, capture details about barriers to access and track personal learning gain. Insights from these surveys framed the focus group discussion which shared anonymised findings with the group and posed open ended questions.

Over the six weeks the programme had 5 clear aims as set out in the EEUK project brief:

Students from under-represented groups have traditionally experienced barriers in accessing enterprise opportunities, support and funding.

These students can, at times, find it hard to identify with the language of enterprise or the journeys of entrepreneurs: this can lead to a lack of engagement in entrepreneurial education.

*This project seeks to **identify and address barriers to engagement from students from underrepresented groups.** Through **co-creating activities with students** from University of the Arts London (UAL) and London South Bank University (LSBU), we will **develop a toolkit that reframes social enterprise education**, with a focus on **exploring the links between personal values, motivations, social enterprise and community impact.***

Fig1. Summary slide 2 with KJ annotation

Pedagogical Approach

The project took an inclusive pedagogical approach, grounded in asset-based, community oriented, transformative models that centred the student voice, and recognised individuals life wide capabilities. This was achieved through:

- Making time for and valuing individual contribution equal to facilitators
- Employing diverse facilitators and speakers with wide ranging and relatable backgrounds
- Participatory or engaged activities in all sessions which gave concrete context to abstract ideas utilising tools and frameworks
- Centering peer to peer feedback moments, co-production via 1:1 breakouts and group sharing/discussion throughout
- Capping participation at 13 students to allow for bonding through shared experience
- Aiming to connect interests, motivations, values and social entrepreneurship explicitly

¹“Education can only be liberatory when everyone claims knowledge as a field in which we all labour”. An ‘open learning community’ where ‘all contributions are valued resources’ and students are seen as whole human beings (with complex lives and experiences), striving “not just for knowledge in books, but knowledge about how to live in the world,” not just seekers of “compartmentalized bits of knowledge”. See: Hooks, 1994. pg1-13

The Value of Collaboration

During the evaluation session, students were asked specifically about their experience of collaborating with others. All 13 students responded that this was a valuable and positive aspect of the programme. The break out rooms and group work provided a supportive space to speak and hear others, a way of networking and expanding understanding perspectives across disciplines.

Meeting other students on similar journeys was important for many in the group, particularly in 2020/2021 where usual socialising/networking in real life was not possible. Students commented that 'meeting other people' had 'instilled in me a spark of creativity and motivation.' This exchange with different individuals offering 'a breath of fresh air' where 'everyone brought something really different to the group and had me thinking about things in a different way than I usually do' and that working with others had 'improved my confidence'.

Many aspects of the programme's design were developed to encourage peer to peer support, so that students felt seen and heard. This opened up a space of affirmation and recognition where relatable experiences could be discussed. An important element of the project was about creating a space for honest and open engagement between peers where they could connect and offer each other guidance.

Exploring the links between Personal Values, Motivations, Social Enterprise and Community Impact

The connection between values, motivations and community impact was perceived by the students at the core of the programme offer, and the site where most learning was generated. Many gained a great deal by being able to look at their intrinsic values and motivations and then, connecting these to their interests in social enterprise, community impact and social change. For most, this was the first time they had the opportunity to self-reflect, ask big questions, connect patterns from life experience to what they are doing now and carve space for this in a supportive environment.

When asked what session or part of the project impacted their ideas the most the majority referenced the session which explored Ikigai. Through these tasks they were able to see the link between personal goals, interests, values (mission and passion) and the connection with business and social enterprise (profession).



Fig 2. Ikigai, from 'How To Find Your Ikigai And Transform Your Outlook On Life And Business', Chris Myers, Forbes online magazine, Feb 23, 2018.

2 Intrinsic motivations are those which come from an internal force, are innate to someone (connected to purpose, meaning, autonomy) rather than those that develop in relation to external reward (money, fame, deadline). See: Deci, E and Ryan, R (1985).

“I think before this I didn’t really see how social enterprises really connected with my own goals but now I do. The one I liked the most was matching up passions, skills, money-making opportunities and things the world needed. It felt like it could very easily be applied more generally with future goals rather than just in social enterprise. I really enjoyed the visualisation activity although the idea initially [sic] seemed a bit silly to me at first, it really did help.”

“Workshop 5 (exploring your competencies using the EntreComp Framework), specifically the discussion led by Vicky on Ikigai thinking. Prior to engaging in that activity I hadn’t ever taken a step back and really evaluated what I love, what I’m good at etc. Having that opportunity to listen to what the other students constructed as a potential career path or business idea on the back of my competencies / choices was fairly eye-opening and refreshing as it opens up avenues that you may not have considered or evaluated yourself.”

“The values session I think was so important because I had a general idea for a social enterprise but hadn’t connected values this clearly. Putting the values at the forefront will help me keep my focus on what is most important in the process and outcomes of a social enterprise.”

Visualising the ‘bigger picture’ appeared very important here. Many commented it was the first time that they had clarity over their sense of direction, purpose, focus and left them feeling empowered.

It is interesting to note that a significant amount of this group arrived with an idea and a third of the students considered themselves to be self-employed.

When asked: Do you have current or past experience of running a business, setting up a project or running an initiative? (This does not have to be paid experience or a funded activity – it could be a self-organised event, family business or community related) the majority responded that they did. Their experiences are outlined below:

10/13 had some kind of experience running their own enterprise or contributing to a family business.

This included:

Running and supporting independents - market stalls, and selling product online/offline (baking, print media and jewellery).

Contributing to family businesses - setting up websites, socials and marketing and assisting with day to day procedures.

Coordinating initiatives and topical projects - ideas, planning and facilitation of webinars and social engagements over lockdown. Sync-ed through UAL.

Developing community enterprise or peer networks - generating partnerships, hosting and contributing ideas and activities (creative and beyond).

Fig 3. Summary slide 20 from the co-evaluation.

When asked if they saw the value in these experiences before taking part in the workshop:

One of the students commented that their experience of helping family businesses with their website or social media, had not been something that they had considered as a skill as it was just something that they could do. Through the project they now realised that this was something useful that could help them in the future.

It appears that students' self perception of their own value was transformed through this process with students recognising that they bring considerable experience from a wide variety of transferable contexts. It is common for students from a non-traditional background to have

³ Experiential learning is 'learning by doing' i.e. "a learning process initiated by a concrete experience, which demands reflection, review and perspective-taking about the experience; then abstract thinking to reach conclusions and conceptualize the meaning of the experience; leading to a decision to act, engaging in active experimentation or trying out what you've learned." What is Experiential Learning? The Experiential Learning Institute, online (2021).

a wide range of lived experience which they feel unable to mobilise, articulate or connect as it falls outside their chosen discipline. There are very few situations where students in HE are asked to tease out the values of these experiences. Evidence suggests that confidence could be grown here if students are encouraged to identify, value and connect their life wide experiences to their future goals and are supported to regularly contextualise their experiential learning (via IKIGAI and other tools).

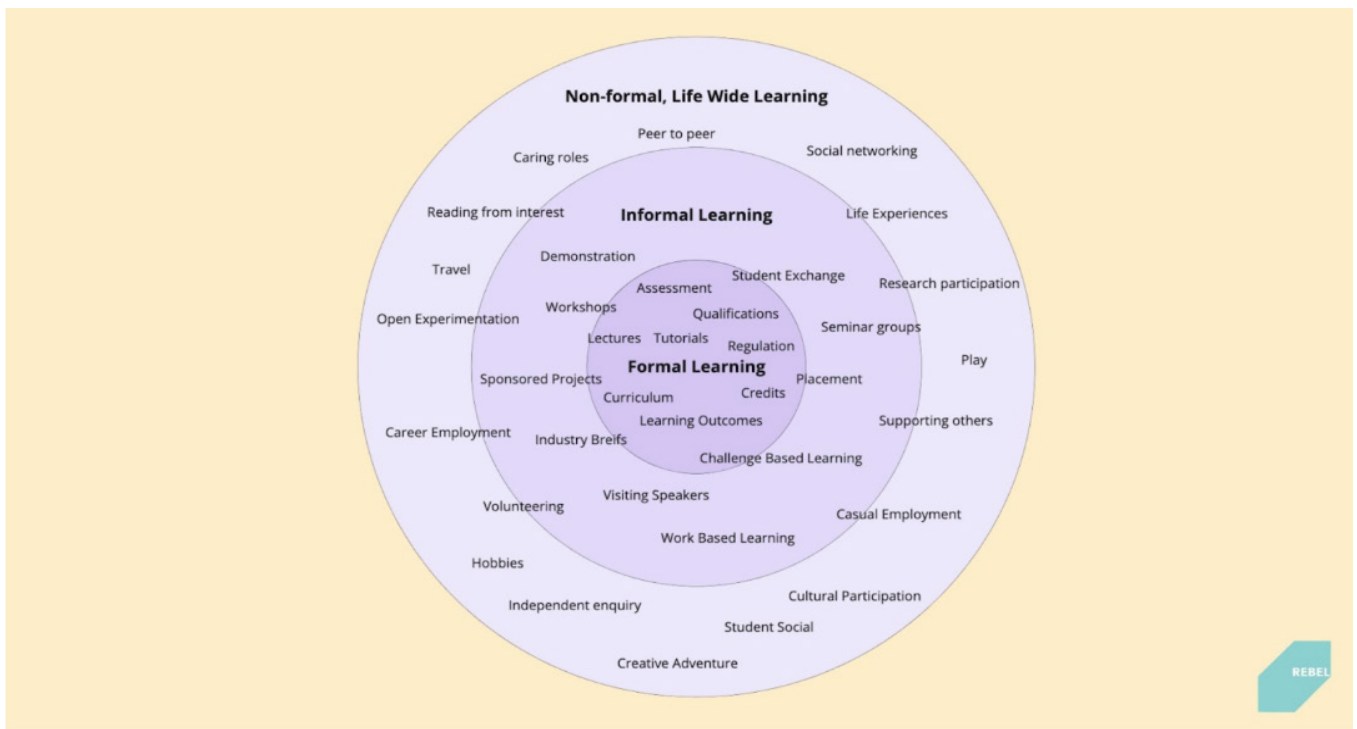


Fig 4. Life wide, informal and formal learning contexts, from REBEL (Recognising Experience Based Education and Learning) workshop slides, Professor Paul Haywood and Kerri Jefferis, 2021.

A student summarised it well in the co-evaluation:

“It is nice to understand more that your values can stem from personal and life experience and this shapes what you are doing now. The values can be from outside of the curriculum and change over time as your personal values and experience change.”

Life wide learning does not ask students to leave their complex lives and wide ranging experiences at the door but invite’s students to harness these and see them as guiding assets in their personal growth and development. All the while honing important skills for enterprising

behaviour to consciously shape their lives such as finding opportunities, planning and learning by doing (all competencies present in the ECF).

The slide above illustrates the cross over between life wide learning and experiential learning.

This approach is fundamental when considering inclusivity in the context of enterprise education as traditionally the formal curriculum is not well placed to facilitate this conversation as its focus is often on the curriculum. This approach allows a holistic view of the person that embraces all forms of knowledge production, contexts for learning and personal growth. This is also important as a means to combat imposter syndrome and a space of belonging.

Evaluating Impact

At the start and end of the project students were asked to use the EntreComp Framework pre and post activity to measure their capabilities and what they thought was most relevant for their future ambitions.

It is worth noting that 'working with others' shifts firmly into the top spot, whilst 'thinking ethically' moves down. 'Creativity' and 'planning' stay within the top 6 whilst 'believing in yourself', 'taking initiative' and 'staying motivated' appear as a new cluster of essentials. Thinking ethically and sustainably may have moved down as it was now 'a given' and embedded in their thinking.

The EFC offered students terms of reference and a 'shopping list' of competencies to develop over time. Whilst the business model canvas rooted abstract aspirations into something tangible. The Ikigai visualises the intrinsic motivation and connections behind this in a self defined way. These tools act as a powerful combination and a strong foundation for students to action plan their future with agency and autonomy.

Summary

This report found that overall students' entrepreneurial competencies had grown in a number of categories as defined in the EntreComp Framework and that the programme had positively influenced students' confidence, self belief and motivation.

The students' networks and capacity for conscious contribution grew as they were encouraged to value, speak and listen to each other non-judgmentally; with many finding a sense of direction and purpose as they connected their lived experiences and intrinsic values and motivations with a curiosity about social enterprise, community development and career ambition.

As we transition out of total online learning into blended modes it is important to recognise both the potential as well as the challenges this period has revealed. Student feedback suggests that extra-curricular projects may be more accessible if part delivered online, cutting costs to transport and offering a 'energy efficient' option to those juggling responsibilities where ambition is high but time is always precious.

Although a pilot programme, this project has proven to have provided a meaningful, inspiring and supportive introduction to the core aspects of social entrepreneurship that has left participants feeling connected, and able to take the next steps for taking their enterprise ideas to the next level.

Acronym Key:

LSBU = London South Bank University

KJ = Kerri Jefferis

ECF = EntreComp Framework

UAL = University of the Arts London

CAF = Creative Attributes Framework

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Appendix 1: Literature Review

Enterprise Education and Research Project Fund: LSBU and UAL

Literature Review: Harnessing personal values and motivations to increase the effectiveness and inclusiveness of social enterprise education.

Tessa Read, University of the Arts London, May 2021.

The following paper provides background research and current thinking, examining the common challenges and opportunities experienced by entrepreneurs from underrepresented groups. This is intended as a guiding document to inform a joint project led by University of the Arts London (UAL) and London South Bank University (LSBU), funded by EEUK, which explores how harnessing personal values and motivations can be used to increase the inclusiveness of enterprise education.

Although the project examines the experience of those from underrepresented groups (taking the definition used by the OfS) much of the literature reviewed considers the experience of those from ethnic minority groups and the challenges of intersectional disadvantage. However, when referencing the term 'BAME' and 'ethnic minority groups' we need to acknowledge that 'ethnic groups are never homogenous and have become super-diverse through evolving patterns of migration' (Ram et al, 2012). As researchers we therefore need to be aware of the reductive nature of grouping people as 'minority ethnic', as the term 'unhelpfully blends ethnicity, geography, nationality and in doing so erases identity and reduces people to an "other" (incarts, 2020).

Unemployment, Opportunity, and Entrepreneurship

Current statistics suggest that racial inequality in the labour market continues to persist in the UK with higher levels of unemployment and over-representation in low-paid sectors and differentiating graduate outcomes for those from BAME communities (McGregor-Smith, 2020).

According to The Race Disparity Audit (2017), despite improvements in employment outcomes over the last two decades there remains an 11.8% employment gap between people who identify as white British and other ethnic minority groups living in the UK. Furthermore, a report by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation (2015) indicates that 41% of black African graduates, 39% of Bangladeshi graduates and 36% of Pakistani graduates are more likely to be overqualified for their roles, compared with 25% of white graduates.

In recent decades entrepreneurship has frequently been identified as playing a critical role

in economic and societal development, with researchers exploring the correlation between unemployment and increased levels of entrepreneurship amongst ethnic minority groups.

Scholars have argued that barriers within the labour market can act as a catalyst to motivate people to initiate business startups. Entrepreneurship therefore enables individuals who experience economic disadvantage to access self initiated employment and forge their own opportunities (Smallbone, D. & Welter, F, 2003, Wishart, 2020; Roberts, et al, 2020).

Challenges to Accessing Financial Capital and Business Support

Despite Ethnic Minority Business (EMB) contributing £25 billion to the UK economy (Roberts et al, 2020) research from the Global Entrepreneurship Monitor (2019/20), which provides insights into the different stages of individuals' entrepreneurial journey, indicates that those from a BAME background reported a high rate of entrepreneurial intention which does not appear to convert into subsequent entrepreneurial activity.

Although there have been several Government related initiatives set up to support entrepreneurship (O'Brien & Cooney, 2019), research indicates that business support agencies such as enterprise agencies have failed to engage with BAME groups (Bates, 1995; Collins, 2003; Deakins, Ram, & Smallbone, 2003; Fadahunsi, Smallbone, & Supri, 2000; Kloosterman, 2003; Ram & Jones, 2008; Ram & Smallbone, 2003 Cited in: O'Brien & Cooney, 2019).

Research also suggests poor engagement with business services have been attributed to cultural and language differences, an absence or low level of trust in officialdom, particularly by new immigrant groups, and a limited experience of engagement with mainstream services (Blackburn et al, 2008).

In the UK, a recent study identifying the opportunities, challenges and support needs of disabled and ethnic minority innovators found that only 32% of the employees surveyed stated that they had the confidence to start their own business and 58% found the idea too daunting. The report highlighted that the top 4 barriers to building a business were: lack of a steady income (79%); lack of money (75%); fear of getting into debt (73%); and fear of leaving a steady job (73%). Whilst, 56 percent of BAME business owners identified a lack of financial capital as a barrier to innovating (Vorley et al, 2019).

Barriers to accessing financial capital and the impact this has on EMBs has been unpacked in a recent report by Natwest (2020). Findings from the report indicate that many individuals within BAME communities experience disadvantage when it comes to financial security.

Compared to white people, BAME individuals encounter higher barriers when accessing credit, experience a higher level of financial instability and have a lower understanding of financial products and services. Financial insecurity is compounded by a lack of savings with research suggesting that at least 60% of the BAME community have no savings compared to only 33% of white people. 'Discouragement', a situation where a business does not apply for finance due to a fear of rejection, was found to be highest amongst ethnic minority owned businesses.

Research also suggests that women from ethnic minority groups face additional disadvantage and discrimination in terms of entrepreneurial resources (Azmat, 2013). A study by Carter & Rosa (1998) on the financing of male and female owned businesses uncovered significant differences in the amount of start-up capital available, with men in the business start-up process entering business with considerably more capital than women. This places women at a disadvantage as lack of sufficient startup capital can detrimentally affect business growth and expansion. Fielden & Dawe's (2004) study also found that female entrepreneurs from socially excluded backgrounds did not feel comfortable accessing mainstream business advice and support, particularly when the provision was centrally located rather than community based.

Social Capital and Entrepreneurship

A lack of social capital within economically disadvantaged communities has often been cited as a common barrier to entrepreneurship (Birch & Whittam, 2008; Dodd & Keles, 2014; OECD, 2017; Williams, Huggins, & Thompson, 2017 Cited in: Deakins & Ishaq, 2003). Social capital is defined as 'features of social life networks, norms and trust that enable participants to act together more effectively to pursue shared objectives' (Claridge, 2020). Community members' participation in community affairs, or 'civic engagement', is a key aspect of social capital because their participation leads to various forms of collective action. Putnam (2000) differentiates between 'bridging' social capital which refers to relationships and networks of trust and cooperation between different groups and communities, which is outward looking. Putnam contrasts this with 'bonding' social capital - which refers to relationships and networks of trust and cooperation that reinforce bonds and connections within groups, which is inward looking.

Goulbourne & Solomos, (2003) argue both social capital and ethnicity share an affinity with each other because both concepts focus on the collective and the social as opposed to the individual and autonomous. Similarly, both concepts reinforce notions of 'collective rights, responsibilities or obligations' that can be 'mobilised towards collective social action'. Peer

support (bonding capital) is perceived as a valuable means of learning from one another, through sharing experiences, knowledge, and contacts (Vorley et al, 2019). An example of bonding capital with respect to entrepreneurship is the way in which the younger generation's 'exposure to successful entrepreneurs from their parents' generation, and within their ethnic enclave, increases the likelihood of young ethnic people starting their own businesses' (Fairchild, 2010: Cited in Wishart, 2020).

It has been argued that strong local ties form both a class and ethnic resource that serves to support EMBs and overcome challenges to accessing resources. Evidence suggests that 'grass-roots' initiatives within communities offer advantages compared with conventional approaches, in terms of identifying needs and delivering support (Blackburn et al, 2008). O'Brien & Conney (2019) argue that ethnic minority entrepreneurs are likely to be important in supporting a post COVID-19 recovery programme. They argue that 'the powerful social connections generated by EMBs in many localities can help generate inclusive and creative strategies for economic recovery.'

However Deakins et. al (2003) argues that strong bonding social capital is not always positive for ethnic minorities entrepreneurs. Access to social capital and new markets can become limited by business networks that are not representative of wider society. Whilst strong ties within the family and informal networks (bonding social capital) can be beneficial in the start-up phase, 'this can act as a constraint for later entrepreneurial development where the aspirations of second and third generation EMB owners differ from their elder relatives'.

The Role of the 'Civic University'

Although there is little research on how universities might support inclusive entrepreneurship initiatives, O'Brien & Conney (2019) argue that HEIs are uniquely positioned to support the development of enterprising behavior in under-represented communities. The concept of the entrepreneurial civic HEI can encompass the mission and culture of a HEI that supports under-represented communities in entrepreneurship (Goddard, 2009).

According to Nesta (2009) broader access to HEI entrepreneurial ecosystems can support the development of both human and social capital in underrepresented communities. The concept of the 'civic university' focuses on the ways in which an institution can connect to its local city area and local community and how this in turn can contribute to the economic, social and cultural developments of the communities. This also relates to the placemaking and local growth agenda as set out in universities Knowledge Exchange strategies.

The importance of engendering more inclusive entrepreneurship and facilitating the development of enterprise capabilities has become more pressing in the Covid era, where 18–24 year olds are more impacted by unemployment and self-employment and start-up is on the rise (The BBC, 2020). A recent survey conducted by the Resolution Foundation (2020) indicates that 19% of 18– 24-year olds who were furloughed during lockdown were unemployed in September, and that this percentage increased to 22% amongst BAME people compared to 9% for the general population.

A recent study by Vorley et al (2019), indicates that 59% of BAME employees are interested in finding innovative solutions to disadvantages faced by minority ethnic groups in the UK, and significantly more BAME business owners cited ‘making a difference to their community / society’ as a reason for starting their own business, compared with the control group.

In view of this there arguably exists an opportunity to bring together the endeavors of the civic university and placemaking strategies with the expertise of EMBs to implement community and economic development activities, particularly in low-wealth communities. This could also include utilising the skills and experience of underrepresented students who have a unique insight, expertise and knowledge of the issues faced in minority communities and the often-polarising effect of economic growth and neighbourhood transition. If this were to be executed well, HEIs could play a formative role in nurturing successful entrepreneurial models - generating new opportunities for individuals who often feel left behind.

This mapping exercise has outlined both the challenges and opportunities people from underrepresented backgrounds face regarding entrepreneurial output. The themes discussed not only reinforce the importance of this project in order to support the future generation of entrepreneurs, but they also highlight the limitations of more traditional approaches to entrepreneurial engagement which has alienated under represented groups. This paper underlines the need for HE institutions to consider more inclusive pedagogical approaches to entrepreneurial support which recognise and value individual’s lived experiences and unique social capital.

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