6-6-2009

THE DYNAMICS OF EDUCATIONAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP IN PUBLIC SECTOR SCHOOLS (INTERACTIVE PAPER)

Ruty Keren Moskovitz  
The Ministry of Education, Tel-Aviv, Israel

Miri Lerner  
The Academic College of Tel-Aviv-Yaffo, Israel, lernerm@post.tau.ac.il

Recommended Citation
Available at: http://digitalknowledge.babson.edu/fer/vol29/iss19/8

This Interactive Paper is brought to you for free and open access by the Entrepreneurship at Babson at Digital Knowledge at Babson. It has been accepted for inclusion in Frontiers of Entrepreneurship Research by an authorized administrator of Digital Knowledge at Babson. For more information, please contact digitalknowledge@babson.edu.
INTERACTIVE PAPER

THE DYNAMICS OF EDUCATIONAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP IN PUBLIC SECTOR SCHOOLS

Ruty Keren Moskovitz, The Ministry of Education, Tel-Aviv, Israel
Miri Lerner, The Academic College of Tel- Aviv-Yaffo, Israel

Principal Topic

Research into the dynamics of entrepreneurial processes as they materialize in existing organizations in the public sector, especially in educational organizations has rarely been conducted. This paper aims to contribute, within the corporate entrepreneurship literature to the dynamics of educational entrepreneurship in public sector schools. The research poses the following three questions, based on the assumption that similarities may be found with entrepreneurial processes as they appear in other public organizations (Perlman and Cornwall, 1990; Brown and Cornwall, 2000): (1) How are entrepreneurial ideas (initiatives) incorporated by teachers into practice in schools? (2) What factors influence the institutionalization of initiatives in school? (3) To what extent do schools differ in the entrepreneurial processes evolving within their walls and what factors explain those differences?

Method

An ethnographic field study was conducted in three Junior High Schools in Israel over a two-year period (2001-2003). A multiple case study approach enabled construction of process models by tracing a chronological narrative of the events involved in each of the three case studies. Data were collected by means of face-to-face in-depth interviews with 44 entrepreneurial teachers (who were identified based on their presentation of 69 initiatives), three principals and two administrators in the Ministry of Education. Two categories of triangulation were used: within-method and between-method. Analysis involved a five-stage inductive search of connections and structures in the data, as guided by application of "grounded theory".

Results and Implications

Our findings show that the dynamics of educational entrepreneurship in public sector schools is usually a bottom-up process that includes nine factors: (1) Idea development - opportunity recognition; (2) Locating alternatives for solving the educational problem identified (primarily administrative or pedagogic); (3) Enlisting internal and external partners; (4) Acquiring legitimacy; (5) Obtaining resources; (6) Implementation; (7) Self-evaluation; (8) Dissemination: adoption of the initiatives by other teachers; and (9) Institutionalization: Initiative repeated in the following year.

The principal's priorities and support of the initiative and school culture were factors contributing to entrepreneurship and its institutionalization. Consistency between how teachers and their principals perceived initiatives in schools reflected the overt and covert psychological contract between managers and their employees. Some practical implications are provided.

CONTACT: Miri Lerner; lernerm@post.tau.ac.il; (T): 972(0)9540253; (F): 972(0)9587992; Antokolski 4, Tel-Aviv 61161.