ENTREPRENEURSHIP EDUCATION IN AUSTRALIA- A PRELIMINARY STUDY

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Abstract
At the 2004 The Students in Free Enterprise (SIFE) World Cup, an Australian SIFE team won the SIFE World Championship. Hence, it prompted my interest to study the entrepreneurship education in Australia. The purpose of this paper is twofold: firstly, to identify the entrepreneurship undergraduate and postgraduate programs by coursework in Australia, and secondly, to analysis the entrepreneurship education in Australia using the PEST technique. Finally, through this preliminary study it could throw lights on the future research direction in entrepreneurship education in Australia.

1. Introduction

The need for entrepreneurship and small business education has been documented for some time in the United States (White & Shank 1999). Brush, Griffin & Smith (1995) report in their studies of entrepreneurship course that a single pedagogy may not adequately serve male and female students; and thus instructors should include various pedagogical techniques to provide an effective learning experience for diverse groups of students. The Students in Free Enterprise (SIFE) program encourages formation of a class for credit to be offered at the collegiate level and students' understanding of economic issues (Stephenson 1997; Wyckoff et al. 1997). Changing economic environment presents a challenge for the development and imposes a reform in the business education in Puerto Rico oriented towards entrepreneurship education (Garcia 1999). In Scotland, Mayfield and Weaver (1997) suggest that entrepreneurship can be taught through the utilization of Social Learning Theory. The setting up of a consortium of three Scottish universities is to address the challenge of instilling an

entrepreneurial philosophy into the mindset of Scotland's undergraduate and postgraduate population (Williams & Turnbull 1997). Levie (1999) conducts a survey on entrepreneurship education in Higher Education in England. Loucks, Menzies and Laval (2000) report that there have been several studies of Canadian university course offerings in Entrepreneurship.

The studies of entrepreneurship education in North America and the United Kingdom have been documented. SIFE started in 1975 in the United States, and by now it has already been thirty years. In Australia, SIFE program only started in 2000 and is at its infancy stage of only 5 years. Yet in 2004 an Australian SIFE team won the SIFE World Championship. It prompted my interest in studying the entrepreneurship education in Australia. Entrepreneurship is worthy of study by managers of education institutions not only because of the new focus of requiring the generation of commercial funds. The traditional values of educational institutions, aligned with modern learning demands and technology, can be enhanced by stimulating entrepreneurial processes (Sadler 2001). Hence in this paper, I firstly identify the entrepreneurship undergraduate and postgraduate degree programs by coursework in Australia. However, due to the limitation of time and resources, this study is only at its preliminary stage. Secondly I will analysis the entrepreneurship education in Australia using the PEST technique.

2. Methodology and Scope

In this paper, I made use of a survey of Australian university web sites to obtain the data (for web-based survey techniques, refer to Comley 1996; Smith 1997; MacElroy 1999 and Grover 2000). Based on the list provided by the Australian Vice-Chancellor's Committee[1] (AVCC 2005), I used "entrepreneurship" as a key word in the search of thirty eight Australian university web sites. I have restricted the search of entrepreneurship units/programs to those where information is available on-line. A list of the universities surveyed is listed in Appendix 1.

To avoid the confusion, I define the terms 'unit' and 'program' used in this paper:
- A 'unit' in this paper is the smallest object which contributes to a program – it cannot be further divided. The term 'course' adopted in North American universities, and the term 'subject' or 'module' used in some Australian universities are equivalent to the term 'unit' I have used here;
- The term 'program' I use in this paper refer to the gathering of several study units into a complete qualification, e.g. the

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[1] The Australian Vice-Chancellors Committee (AVCC) is the council of Australia university presidents. It is funded by annual contributions from the 38 member universities.

program of a Bachelor's degree, a Graduate Diploma or a Master's degree etc.

The following example illustrates the use of these terms:

ENTR5028 Entrepreneurship and Innovation is a core *unit* for the *program* (degree) of Master of Entrepreneurship.

Entrepreneurship programs ranged from half day workshops targeted for business professionals to three to ten years PhD program. The short courses are offered by TAFE[2], the private sector, or universities. Since the majority of the short courses are *ad hoc* and dynamic in terms of content, they were difficult to include in this survey. The Masters by research and PhD courses are, of course, specifically designed or tailored made by supervisors and students for the particular students' needs – and I have therefore excluded them from this study as well. Hence the scope of this study is confined to undergraduate and postgraduate (by course work) degrees in entrepreneurship of thirty eight universities in Australia and where information is available on their university web sites.

3. Initial results and discussions

The University of Newcastle (2005) explains Entrepreneurship as

> *Entrepreneurship is a growing field of study in Australia that mainly involves the creation of new businesses, and the growth and development of small or large existing businesses to serve specific needs and to create financial gain.*

A brief history of entrepreneurship education in Australia is described in the program description of RMIT as

> *The origins of the Bachelor of Business (Entrepreneurship) date back to the mid 1990s and the Report from the Industry Task Force on Leadership and Management Skills (the Karpin Report) in which strong recommendations were made that Australia needs to become more enterprising and entrepreneurial. There is also growing acceptance worldwide that there is a set of theoretic principles that underpin entrepreneurship. Peter Drucker made the following statement in 1985. "…the time has now come to do for entrepreneurship and innovation what we first did for management in general some 30 years ago: to develop*

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[2] TAFE - Australia's Tertiary and Further Education vocational training sector

the principles, the practice, and the discipline" [3]. (RMIT 2004)

University of Canberra (2004) suggests that a growing number of Australian universities are offering Entrepreneurship as part of undergraduate and postgraduate programs as

> *Entrepreneurship is not just about making money. It is about acting creatively and commercialising new ideas. Thousands of start-up companies are emerging in Australia providing many new employment opportunities for university graduates. As a result, a growing number of universities are offering Entrepreneurship as part of undergraduate and postgraduate programs across disciplines as diverse as science, arts, education, information technology, engineering and commerce.*

3.1 Entrepreneurship education in Australian universities

In this paper, I divide the entrepreneurship education in Australian into four categories. The first one is simply that universities do not offer any units or programs in entrepreneurship. The next category covers universities which only offer entrepreneurship units as part of the bachelor or masters programs. The third category is those which either offer entrepreneurship bachelor programs or with specialization/major/minor in entrepreneurship. Last of all is those universities which offer the postgraduate programs in entrepreneurship including postgraduate diploma/certificate and masters degree. Table 1 summarise the numbers of the entrepreneurship programs being offered at the time the data were collected.

Categories	*Number of universities*
Not offering any entrepreneurship units	7
Offering entrepreneurship units in bachelor and masters programs	13
Bachelor programs in entrepreneurship and specialization/major/minor in entrepreneurship	8
Postgraduate programs (graduate certificate/diploma and masters in entrepreneurship)	11

Table 1 Australian Universities offer Entrepreneurship education

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[3] Drucker, P.F. 1985, *Innovation and Entrepreneurship*, Butterworth Heineman, p.16.

Among these thirty eight Australian universities, seven universities (or 18.4%) do not offer any units related to entrepreneurship. In contrary to these seven universities, the only university which offers entrepreneurship education in both their bachelor and postgraduate programs is Curtin University of Technology. This university was the 2004 SIFE World Championship, and offers Graduate Certificate/Diploma in Entrepreneurship. Besides, they have Entrepreneurship Specialisation in Master of Commerce as well as Small Business and Entrepreneurship Specialisation in Master of Business Administration. For the bachelor degrees, it offers Entrepreneurship and Marketing double major and Entrepreneurship minor.

There are thirteen universities (or 34.2%) which offer some units in entrepreneurship. These units are either core units or elective units for Bachelors/Masters of Commerce, Management, Business or Business Administration.

Among the eleven universities (or 28.9%) which offer graduate programs in Entrepreneurship, it is worth mentioning that Queensland University of Technology offers Graduate Certificate/Diploma in Entrepreneurship and Innovation as well as Master of Entrepreneurship and Innovation. Unfortunately she will discontinue these offerings in 2005. A further study on the reasons of such discontinuation of programs should be investigated.

3.2 Demographic data

Entrepreneurship offerings in Australian higher education are distributed in different states and listed in Table 2 below.

State	No. of universities offering Entrepreneurship programs[4]	No. of universities offering Entrepreneurship units[5]
Australian Capital Territory	2	0
New South Wales	2	8
Northern Territory	0	0
Queensland	5	2
South Australia	2	0
Tasmania	1	0
Victoria	2	3

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[4] Entrepreneurship programs refer to bachelors, graduate diplomas/ certificates and master in entrepreneurship major/minor/specialization.
[5] These universities offer some entrepreneurship units which are the components of bachelor and masters programs.

Western Australia	3	0
Total	*17*	*13*

Table 2 Entrepreneurship Education in different states in Australia

The above figures indicate that Queensland's universities are more eager to offer entrepreneurship programs than other states. However, in terms of percentage, Australian Capital Territory (ACT) comes first. Two out of two universities (or 100%) offer entrepreneurship programs in ACT. These two ACT universities are: University of Canberra which offer Bachelor in Business Administration (Minor in Entrepreneurship) and Australian National University which offers Master of Entrepreneurship Management. It is apparent that they are complimenting each other rather than competing against one another. In Western Australia, 3 out of 4 universities (or 75%) offer entrepreneurship programs. Edith Cowan University is the only university in Western Australia which does not offer any entrepreneurship teaching.

The author has conducted a similar survey in eBusiness/eCommerce programs and IS/IT programs in Australia in 2001. We found that 25 out of 38 Australian universities (65.8%) offered eCommerce/eBusiness programs in 2001 (Chan & Swatman 2001). However, Keen (2001) stated that 36 universities (94.7%) offered IS/IT teaching in Australia. This discrepancy may be due to the longer history of Information Systems academic programs compared with eCommerce/eBusiness education. The eCommerce/eBusiness programs were very popular in around 1998 to 2000 in Australia. Some Australian universities started to offer eCommerce/eBusiness programs within a short time at that period (Swatman and Chan 2001). Here, coming to this study of entrepreneurship education in Australia in 2005, comparing the 17 (or 44.7%) which offer entrepreneur programs to 25 (or 65.8%) offering eCommerce/eBusiness programs in 2001, I found that universities offering entrepreneur programs in 2005 are not as aggressive as those which offered eCommerce/eBusiness programs as around the year 2000.

3.3 What are taught in entrepreneurship education in Australian universities

Based on the program and unit descriptions of universities posted on their web sites, entrepreneurship teachings are similar to other business or commerce programs: theories, applications and understanding the business communities. Entrepreneurship programs mainly study the theories and models on marketing,

finance, management; creating real business plans which have been learned in the classroom (applications) and gaining access and insight from leaders in the entrepreneurial business community.

Teaching units commonly contributed to the entrepreneurship programs are:

- *Entrepreneurial Ventures* involve meeting of students with entrepreneurs, examining, discussing and presenting on actual entrepreneurial and entrepreneurial case studies.

- *Innovation and Creativity* introduces students to the processes used in creativity, innovation and entrepreneurship as applications of the elements of the core philosophy of this unit. Innovation is a process that takes an idea to a stage where there is an improvement in the issue that generated the need for a new idea. Creativity is a self-initiated problem solving skill and focuses on the use of creative problem solving techniques in management.

- *New Business Ventures* focus in particular on small business start-ups with a technological or new product focus in the context of small business development. Topics covered include: government support for new ventures; attracting and working with venture capital; legal issues for small business start-ups; recruiting and staffing start-ups and new ventures; and presenting and communicating new business ideas.

- *Entrepreneurship Market* requires analytical skills needed by marketing managers and entrepreneurs. It includes advanced industry and competitor analysis, opportunity search and evaluation and financial statement analysis from a marketing standpoint.

- *Leadership and Managing enterprise* trains how leaders should manage small-and medium-size companies in the area of entrepreneurship nature. This unit provides an overview of managing small enterprises, covering such topics as startup or purchase decision; entrepreneurial characteristics, importance of small enterprise to the economy and society; sources of finance; legal requirements; management; marketing; operations management; human resource management; family business; and avoiding failure.

Entrepreneurial graduates are expected to be equipped with the knowledge and applied analytic skills needed to plan new high-growth businesses and manage new and existing businesses for growth. Particular emphasis will be placed on the role of technology as a basis for new businesses, and as a means to develop and support the infrastructure of growing businesses.

4. PEST analysis of entrepreneur education in Australia

PEST is an acronym for Political, Economic, Social and Technological environment. PEST Analysis is a simple yet widely-used tool for understanding market (Mind Tools 2005, Chapman 2005). In this paper, I use this technique to analysis entrepreneur education in Australia and the result is listed in the following Table 3.

PEST analysis of entrepreneur education in Australia	
Political • current legislation on higher education - particularly legislation on international students • future legislation – e.g. particularly migration legislation for entrepreneur graduates • government term and change on higher education policy • regulatory bodies and processes, professional recognition of the entrepreneur programs • funding, grants for universities and initiatives by the Commonwealth Government • home market – whether entrepreneur programs are in demand. • International pressure group – whether entrepreneur programs are influenced by North America and Europe.	**Economic** • home economy situation – affect students to pay the costly program fee. • home economy trends – are there in need of entrepreneur expertise or professional • overseas economies and trends - affect international students to pay for the very expensive entrepreneur program fee. • general taxation issues – income tax and goods and services tax which affect the 'personal budget' • interest and exchange rates – particularly affect the international students • market and trade cycles – is there a need for higher degrees after a student has obtained a first degree. • market routes and distribution trends – whether the programs are delivered online so that the busy full-time business students do not need to physically attend the classes. • customer/end-user drivers – are the entrepreneur programs really interesting
Social • lifestyle trends – education has moved to a lifelong style • demographics e.g. Queensland and Western Australia tends more universities offer entrepreneur education than other states	**Technological** • the duration of the program • competing technology development – what facilities are providing for the entrepreneur teachings • maturity of technology – are teaching facilities mature

• Brand image – university's and its program's brand name • consumer attitudes and opinions – word-of-mouth from entrepreneur graduates • media views – for example the winner SIFE competition which affect the view of entrepreneur education • law changes affecting social factors – whether there is a compulsory qualification for entrepreneur professional. For example, as qualified accountants, they must pass certain examinations. • consumer buying patterns – do students prefer an entrepreneur master degree or they prefer a Master of Business Administration specialization in entrepreneurship. Or do they prefer a graduate diploma or certificate. • advertising and publicity of the entrepreneur programs – how do the universities promote them?	enough for offering entrepreneur programs • research funding – where does the funding from for the entrepreneur research • information and communications • innovation potential – are the entrepreneur program innovative? How do they differ from other business or marketing program? • technology access, licensing – do entrepreneur students need any computer facilities? How about the license for the software for students • intellectual property issues – the outcome of students' work or research, belongs to the student, university or the organisation?

Table 3 PEST Analysis of Entrepreneur Education in Australia

The above analysis gives some preliminary but essential ideas to program developers for developing successful entrepreneur programs. It is well understood that some of the factors are not under the control by the program developers or universities. These include the government policies, commonwealth government funding and the market trend of the entrepreneur programs. But some of these aspects can be improved in the offering of entrepreneur programs in Australia, but unfortunately, they are not current found in the existing entrepreneur programs. The universities should address to the advertising and publicity of the program – advertisement on local newspaper or radio may increase the enrolment, for example. The program design has been moving to the innovative manner. Theories and practical elements in curricula are to be equally important. Technologies and facilities for

entrepreneur programs are required which should distinguish themselves from other programs.

5. Conclusions and future research

In this paper, I have attempted to conduct a preliminary study of entrepreneur education in Australia. From the data gathered from the university web sites, the study finds that most of the current entrepreneur programs do not distinguish themselves from other academic programs in terms of teaching delivery methods, curricula, facilities, advertising and promotion. The Australian Government will provide $2 million for a new initiative that will encourage young Australians to take an enterprising approach to their learning in secondary schools and the Australian Government is committed to building an enterprising culture within Australia (DEST 2005). With the support by the government and the need established through social trend, there will be huge potential markets for entrepreneurship education. A further detailed investigation of entrepreneur programs is hence encouraged. Further research on entrepreneur programs may be carried out by multiple case studies with team work, which is similar to what the Information Systems academic staff are currently doing - a team of more than 15 academics (the author is one of the team members in this study) to carry out case studies of Information Systems programs in Australia. Investigation areas of entrepreneur education should include market demand and promoting, students' skills, invocation in curricula, entrepreneur research and research methodologies, successful entrepreneur cases, strengths and weaknesses of the programs.

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Appendix

Appendix 1 Entrepreneur offerings in Australian universities as in June 2005

University Name	Website	Entrepreneur offerings
The University of Adelaide	www.adelaide.edu.au	Grad Cert./ Master of Entrepreneurship
Australian Catholic University	www.acu.edu.au	Not available
The Australian National University	www.anu.edu.au	Master of Entrepreneurial Management
University of Ballarat	www.ballarat.edu.au	Not available
Bond University	www.bond.edu.au	Bachelor of Business (Entrepreneurship)
University of Canberra	www.canberra.edu.au	Bachelor of Business Administration Minor in Entrepreneurship
Central Queensland University	www.cqu.edu.au	undergraduate unit MRKT19034 - Entrepreneurial Marketing
Charles Darwin University	www.cdu.edu.au	Not available
Charles Sturt University	www.csu.edu.au	Master of Business (Entrepreneurship specialisation)
Curtin University of Technology	www.curtin.edu.au	Master of Commerce (Entrepreneurship Specialisation) undergraduate Entrepreneurship minor MBA (Small Business and Entrepreneurship Specialisation) Entrepreneurship and Marketing Double Major Graduate Certificate in Entrepreneurship

		Graduate Diploma in Entrepreneurship
Deakin University	www.deakin.edu.au	Not available
Edith Cowan University	www.ecu.edu.au	Not available
Flinders University	www.flinders.edu.au	Not available
Griffith University	www.griffith.edu.au	Graduate Certificate in Entrepreneur and Venture Development
James Cook University	www.jcu.edu.au	Bachelor Of Information Technology(E-Business Entrepreneur)
La Trobe University	www.latrobe.edu.au	Some units
Macquarie University	www.mq.edu.au	Some units in masters degree
The University of Melbourne	www.unimelb.edu.au	One unit in Master of Information Technology (not offered in 2005)
Monash University	www.monash.edu.au	Some units in masters degree
Murdoch University	www.murdoch.edu.au	Bachelor of Commerce (BCom) in Entrepreneurship and Business Innovation (Pass/Honours)
The University of New England	www.une.edu.au	Some units in Master of Commerce and Master of Economics
The University of New South Wales	www.unsw.edu.au	Some units in Master of Commerce
The University of Newcastle	www.newcastle.edu.au	Bachelor of Management Master of Business (Entrepreneurship)
The University of Queensland	www.uq.edu.au	Master of Business (Entrepreneurship) Master of Business Advanced (Entrepreneurship)

Queensland University of Technology	www.qut.edu.au	Master of Entrepreneurship and Innovation (Discontinued in 2005) Master of Entrepreneurship and Innovation/Master of Business Administration (Discontinued in 2005) Graduate Certificate in Entrepreneurship and Innovation (Discontinued in 2005) Graduate Diploma in Entrepreneurship and Innovation (Discontinued in 2005)
RMIT University	www.rmit.edu.au	Bachelor of Business (Entrepreneurship)
Southern Cross University	www.scu.edu.au	Some units in bachelor and postgraduate programs
University of South Australia	www.unisa.edu.au	MBA (Entrepreneurship) Masters of Innovation and Entrepreneurship
University of Southern Queensland	www.usq.edu.au	Not available
University of the Sunshine Coast	www.usc.edu.au	Some units in Bachelor of Business / Bachelor of Art and MBA
Swinburne University of Technology	www.swin.edu.au	Master of Entrepreneurship and Innovation
The University of Sydney	www.usyd.edu.au	Some units in bachelor and master
University of Tasmania	www.utas.edu.au	Bachelor of Commerce (Entrepreneurship Major)
University of Technology Sydney	www.uts.edu.au	Some units in bachelor and masters programs
Victoria University	www.vu.edu.au	Some units in bachelor and masters programs
The University of Western Australia	www.uwa.edu.au	MBA Specialisation in Entrepreneurship and Innovation

		MBA Advanced(Entrepreneurship and Innovation)
University of Western Sydney	www.uws.edu.au	Some units in bachelor and masters programs
University of Wollongong	www.uow.edu.au	A unit in Master Of Strategic Management