**Learning from within in Enterprise Education – The Role of a Mystagogy Perspective to Self**

**Dr. Deema Refai**

**Department of Strategy and Marketing, University of Huddersfield, Huddersfield, UK**

**Dr. David Higgins**

**Organisational Management Subject Group, University of Liverpool, Liverpool, UK**

Objectives: Understanding how individuals learn can significantly improve educators’ philosophical stance in designing and delivering courses. This paper provides a philosophical conceptualisation of how learners, undergoing Entrepreneurship Education (EE), learn from within, thus, highlighting what possibly makes one learner and/or didactical design better than another.

Prior Work: In their discussion of the learning frameworks of EE, Klapper and Neergaard (2012) highlighted the dimension of ‘withness’; i.e. from within (Shotter, 2006). Despite being discussed in the field of education (Korthagen et al., 2013; Evelein and Korthagen, 2015), there is hardly any literature discussing learning from within in EE. In fact, Fayolle (2013) highlighted the lack of research investigating how learners learn as well as research investigating the rationale behind ‘effective didactical design’, where most EE research, so far, has focused on contents and methods. Fayolle (2013) also stressed the lack of knowledge in addressing the vast differences among audiences in EE, where such understanding could significantly improve educators’ ‘philosophical posture and role’ in the field (Fayolle, 2013).

Approach: This paper adopts a postmodernist perspective to understand the role of the self in EE. The paper draws on the Learning Onion Model for learning from within (Korthagen et al., 2013, p.32), thus, linking entrepreneurship literature to key literature in education to offer a better philosophical understanding of the ‘withness’ dimension to learning in EE.

Practical Implications: The paper considers the value of Mystagogy as means to offer insights into learning from within in EE. Thus, highlighting Mystagogy as a foundation for effective heutagogical and andragogical learning in EE.

Value: Besides the importance of contents and methods in EE, the paper adds an inspirational dimension to EE that highlights the value of understanding inner identities and missions of students, consequently, proposing the latter as important aspects to effective didactical design.

**Introduction**

The significance of entrepreneurial education has now gained universal acceptance in terms of its value to business growth and economic prosperity, educators and policy makers view the development of entrepreneurial intentions and skills as the central driving force of future economic strength. However, some serious questions have been raised on the current methods of entrepreneurial development and education and what should be the most appropriate approach to how we develop and educate this community. One particular concern relates to Hindle (2007) who refers to entrepreneurial development and education as a field of study that lacks legitimacy as a source of true value. At present, scholars and researchers in the field are currently challenging one another to question what the most effective approach to educating the entrepreneur is.

Traditionally the concept of entrepreneurship has been taught in business schools to business studies students, with a focus towards the functional aspect of creating the business plan, drawing up the forecasted accounts and ultimately how the business idea would be marketed. This, however, is in contrast to the view that entrepreneurship is about creativity, being innovative in one’s thinking and practise. There exists a strong belief that entrepreneurship is most suitably taught and delivered outside of such business schools (simply because of the narrow context which they had to offer in comparison to the boarder context of what one considers to the entrepreneurship). However, the impact upon how HEI’s are currently delivering entrepreneurial programs is influencing entrepreneurial growth and coming under increasing pressure, especially when government sectors are having to report on the investment in policies and expenditure to support such incentives (Thorpe *et al*., 2009). There exists a need for HEI to both recognise and develop a more focused pedagogy towards entrepreneurial education in order to respond to current criticism by shifting attention away from the traditional means of delivery towards facilitating learning through alternative methods (Zhang and Hamilton, 2010). As such, this calls for a broader scope in terms of how and to whom entrepreneurship is taught, and the values which are sought.

As university student populations grow, the demands on entrepreneurial scholars, researchers and students alike to find new forms of engagement, which create action and applied experience within the entrepreneurial student body, requires significant consideration in terms of pedagogical practice (Biggs and Tang, 2007). The need for experiential learning practices which resonate with the view of “being” an entrepreneur must now become the central focus of how educators engage with the student body.

The past decade has witnessed a significant growth in Enterprise Education (EE), where such growth has been argued to potentially impact the practices introduced by its stakeholders (Jones et al., 2014). The subject of how entrepreneurs learn has developed a considerable body of literature in recent years. In particular, focus has been placed on the role that education plays within entrepreneurship and, in particular, the suitability, relevance and effectiveness of passive and experiential learning strategies that are employed. This focus has given rise to the debate surrounding the question of do entrepreneurs find greater effectiveness from learning through strategies of action and reflection, or do the traditional and more passive methods of education remain the only sources of learning? Learning in the context of the entrepreneur has been described in terms of the varying skills that are required in order to effectively draw in new information and attribute meaning and context. This suggests that the creation of knowledge involves both procedural and contextual elements; procedural knowledge involves the process of knowing how to take data and develop this into information, while contextual knowledge bears attention to the environmental domains and awareness of the entrepreneur, of their influence on the environment and the issues that arise from it. The main growth in EE research has been particularly with regard to its contents and methods. For example, several authors have investigated EE through reflection (e.g. Cope, 2003; Daudelin, 1996), learning by doing, collaborative approaches and experiential learning (e.g. Cope and Watts, 2000; Pittaway and Cope, 2006; Rae, 2003), and learning from failure (e.g. Cope, 2010; Neergard *et al*., 2014).

Furthermore, there has been great interest in business plans as means to support the functional knowledge of new business starters (Honig, 2004). Yet, this focus on the content and methods of EE has disregarded, at many instances, the needs of the learners, where learners are regarded as the central players in the learning process (Blenker *et al*., 2006). Fayolle (2013) proposed a generic teaching model that aimed to present what is known and what needs to be known in entrepreneurship education by addressing the questions of why? What? How? For whom? And for which results. In his discussion, Fayolle (2013) highlighted the need for a better understanding of the vast differences among learners in EE, where such understanding could significantly improve educators’ ‘philosophical posture and role’ in the field.

Korthagen (2008) also highlighted the need for focusing on the inner personal needs of students, which are key to their personal growth, but, yet, are often inadequately attended to in professional development. Furthermore, building on Wegner’s (2009) social theory of learning, Klapper and Refai (2015) developed a multi-perspective Gestalt view of learning model, where a more holistic perspective to learning that considers the learner, the educator and their context was adopted. Among the different dimensions addressed in their model, Klapper and Refai (2015) highlighted the need to address the dimension of ‘learning as becoming’, which relates to the identity of the learner by addressing questions of who is the learner? Why they learn? And when? Addressing such issues calls upon the “entrepreneurial” scholarly community to “be” experimental and inventive in the creation of new learning spaces.

In this paper we seek to explore the questions of: how do learners engage in the learning process in EE? And what role does the inner need play? where such understanding is likely to impact educators’ choices in the development of more effective didactical designs. In this regard, Jones and Matlay (2011) highlighted the need for appreciating and reflecting on collective practices in learning. In this paper, however, the authors contend that students need to go beyond reflection on collective practices to reach core reflection on their core qualities, needs and inspirations. Focusing on learning from within by building on the learning onion model (Dilts, 1990; Korthagen, 2004), this paper is proposed to both inform and challenge the audience. The paper relates the main layers of the learning onion model to perspectives of philosophical approaches to learning including Pedagogy, Andragogy (Knowles, 1970), Heutagogy (Hase and Kenyon, 2000) and Mystagogy. In doing so, the paper highlights the significance of the inner core qualities of students in EE.

In order to explore learning from within in EE, it is necessary to define enterprise and entrepreneurship education. Enterprise education has been defined as ‘*the processes or series of activities that aim to enable an individual to assimilate and develop the knowledge, skills, and values required to become enterprising’* (Broad, 2007, p.5). Similarly, the QAA defined entrepreneurship education as the process of equipping *‘...students with the additional knowledge, attributes and capabilities required to apply abilities in the context of setting up a new venture or business*’(2). Both definitions are relevant to our discussion in this paper, which explores how learners engage in the learning process and develop various entrepreneurial and enterprise skills whereby they become entrepreneurial and enterprising. In this context, the authors agree with Jones et al.’s (2014) view, which sees enterprise education as a foundation for entrepreneurship education. Therefore, this paper addresses both types of education in the text and the model presented at the end of this paper, where the term EE refers to both types of enterprise and entrepreneurship education.

**Learning from within**

Learning from within explores the meaning of bringing out the potential in people, ‘*it is about connecting human hearts and spirits with how we see ourselves, and others in our daily practice ... Envisioning the expansion of our capacities and potential through strengthening that connection*’ (Greene, Younghee and Korthagen, 2013:4). Unlike experiential and reflective learning, which focus on learning by doing through reflecting on experiences and interactions with others, learning from within is essentially based on the concept of core reflection, which focuses on people’s strengths as a platform for their development, while focusing on the significant role of authenticity for the personal growth of the ‘whole person’ (Greene et al., 2013). Furthermore, it has been argued that common reflection strategies applied experiential learning, as opposed to core reflection strategies applied in learning from within, do not significantly impact future actions, and, thus, are not regarded as sufficient to support professional development (Hoekstra, 2007; Manvelder-Longayroux, Beijaard and Verloop, 2007).

The notion of emphasising authenticity of learners adopted in learning from within goes in line with the postmodernist school of thought. This school of thought emerged in the 1950s to oppose cultural modernism, but, yet, gained wider recognition in the 1980s to include other practices. Postmodernism came as a critiques to the Enlightenment theory of knowledge, where the latter supported the Cartasian school of thought (Foucault, 1988). The Enlightment theory argued for a universal truth and ‘the idea of a unitary end of history and of a subject’ (PC, ‘Answering the Question: What is Postmodernism?’ p. 73). Postmodernism, however, supported the notions of rationality, universalism and materialism, thus, attacking stability of the self and value (Waugh, 1998). Postmodernism supported plurality of the self, which is essentially seen as a result of plurality of reality (Firat, Shultz II and Clifford, 1997). Therefore, this postmodernist approach was deemed conducive to our discussion on learning from within, particularly that the latter emphasises the inner identity and mission of learners as pillars for the learning process as explained next.

Dilts (1990) and Korthagen (2004) agreed that learning from within happens in a multi-level learning process. For that, they proposed the learning Onion Model, which places the inner core of a person in the centre. The onion model, shown in Figure 1, comprises six main components including the environment, behaviour, competencies, beliefs, identity and mission. As shown in Figure 1, the environment involves all elements that students encounter outside their own selves; e.g. tutors, colleagues, classrooms and the culture of the institution. The behaviour involves the acts that students do in order to cope with their environmental challenges; e.g. preparing business plans. Competencies are what students are competent at, which might be, for example, competency in their preparation of business plans. Korthagen (2013) carried on to explain that these three layers of the environment, behaviour and competencies are not enough, by themselves, to promote learning from within as learning can be inhibited by consequent learning levels. Beliefs refer to often unconscious assumptions that students have about the external world, which are essential as they become ‘*a self-fulfilling prophecy*’ (Korthagen, 2013:32); e.g. believing that it is very hard to have a good business plan. The assumptions that students have about themselves are, however, reflected in the identity layer, which resemble the students’ self-concepts; e.g. when a person believes that he/she cannot prepare a good business plan. The final core level is the mission, which reflects sources of inspiration that add value and meaning to students’ work and initiatives. The religious sense of individuals can play a major role in adding meaning to the mission layer (Korthagen, 2013); e.g. a mission to be a better person or making the world a better place. Korthagen (2013) referred to reflection on inner layers of learning as core reflection, and highlighted the importance of alignment between the layers in order for learning to flow smoothly and take place.

**Figure 1: The Learning Onion Model**



Source: Reproduced from Korthagen (2013), p.32

**Discussing the learning frameworks in EE in relation to perspectives of philosophical approaches to learning**

Three general frameworks for learning in EE were introduced including education ‘about’, ‘for’ and ‘into’ enterprise (Gibb, 1999). A fourth framework was later introduced by Klapper and Neergaard (2012), which included the ‘withness’ thinking dimension (Shotter, 2006). Three general methods for EE were also proposed by Gibson et al. (2009), which vary in their extent and objectives of developing enterprise skills. These methods included lectures, the actual running of a new venture during undertaking entrepreneurial learning and experiential or reflective learning. These three teaching methods align with the three learning approaches for the development of enterprise skills described by Guirdham and Tyler (1992), including cognitive, behaviourist and experiential learning, respectively. In this section, the learning frameworks in EE will be discussed in relation to perspectives of philosophical approaches to learning, namely pedagogy, andragogy (Knowles, 1970), heutagogy (Hase and Kenyon, 2000) and mystagogy.

As shown in Figure 2, the three general frameworks for learning in EE (about, for and into), align with the three general methods for EE (lectures, actual running of a business and experiential/reflective learning), and also with the three learning approaches for the development of enterprise skills (cognitive, behaviourist and experiential). Lectures, the first method of teaching in EE proposed by Gibson et al. (2009) are clearly related to cognitive learning, which focuses on active processing of information and giving it meaning and relevance according to perceptual processes, mainly introduced through rehearsal. Lecturing was highlighted in The Survey of Entrepreneurship in HEIs in Europe (2008) as the most commonly used teaching method in EE in HEIs. It can be argued that this type of cognitive learning is associated with learning ‘about’ enterprise, which mainly comprises a theoretical approach to develop students’ awareness of the concepts of enterprise and entrepreneurship, while not significantly contributing to improving their creativity or ability to act strategically in changing environments (Kirby, 2002). Education ‘for’ enterprise is related to the second method of teaching proposed by Gibson et al. (2009), which involves the actual running of new ventures. This aligns with behaviourist learning where individuals learn to associate certain behaviours with certain stimuli and is emphasised though repetition and reinforcement (Guirdham and Tyler, 1992). The third method of teaching identified by Gibson et al. (2009) through experiential or reflective learning, also referred to as ‘involvement learning’, basically means learning from experiences including testing new ideas, analysing findings, resolving problems, reflecting on experiences, giving feedback and others. Therefore, experiential learning is related to education ‘into’ enterprise, which is based on student-centred learning approaches that involve common reflection techniques as central to the learning process.

**Figure 2: Learning frameworks in EE in relation to perspectives of philosophical approaches to learning**

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Figure 2 also points out the perspectives of philosophical approaches to learning, including pedagogy, andragogy and heutagogy, with regard to the three frameworks of EE. Due to the dominating cognitive approach applied in learning ‘about’ enterprise, the latter has been described to fall under pedagogical approaches by Jones *et al*. (2014). Yet, according to McAuliffe and Winter (2013) andragogy is similar to pedagogy in terms that learning is controlled by an educator who decides what is taught, when and how. However, unlike pedagogy, andragogy is usually used in relation to adults learning who engage in the learning process as they are regarded as being more motivated and self-directed learners. Therefore, despite having connections with pedagogical approaches, education ‘about’ enterprise is proposed here as an andragogical approach since adults’ engagement in the learning process in EE cannot be neglected. For similar reasons, andragogical approaches can, arguably, be related to education ‘for’ enterprise, which aligns with Jones et al.’s (2014) argument that education ‘for’ enterprise encourages students’ active engagement, at cognitive and emotional levels, when assessing situations and opportunities, and, therefore, proposed it as an andragogical tool to EE. While acknowledging educators’ role in guiding the learning process in education ‘for’ enterprise, the student-centred approach to learning here cannot be neglected (Rae, 2003, Hytti and O’Gorman, 2004), which suggests the connection between education ‘for’ enterprise and heutagogical approaches. Heutagogy emphasises students being self-driven in learning how to learn; i.e. independent of formal learning (Parslow, 2010), and has been defined as an approach that ‘*recognises the need to be flexible in the learning where the teacher provides resources but the learner designs the actual course he or she might take by negotiating the learning*’ (Hase and Kenyon, 2000:online). Therefore, more student involvement in EE is pointed out in Figure 2 moving on from pedagogy to andragogy and then heutagogy as learning shifts from learning ‘about’ to ‘for’ to ‘into’ enterprise.

Based on this, heutagogy is shown in Figure 2 as a philosophical approach to learning that also relates to education ‘into’ enterprise. Reflexivity and reflectivity have been well established under learning ‘into’ enterprise, whereby more creative and innovative learning approaches have been argued as experiential learning, opportunity-centred learning, work-based learning and others. Consequently, the authors agree with Jones et al.’s (2014) proposition that education ‘into’ enterprise aligns with a heutagogical approach to learning (Hase and Kenyon, 2000) as it sees the learner as independent and capable of self-directing the learning process through communication with other people and learning resources required (Luckin *et al.*, 2010).

Now that perspectives to philosophical approaches to learning related to education ‘about’, ‘for’ and ‘into’ enterprise have been discussed, it becomes essential to highlight the lack of research investigating the methods, learning approaches and philosophical perspectives to learning related to ‘withness’, the fourth framework to EE (Klapper and Neergaard, 2012). In this paper, the authors propose mystagogy as a perspective to the philosophical learning approach in ‘withness’ learning as highlighted in Figure 2. Alongside the ‘withness’ framework, the authors also propose core reflection as a general method to EE, and core reflective techniques as learning approaches for developing enterprise skills as shown in Figure 2.

*A mystagogical approach to EE*

Mystagogy word comes from the Greek root of ‘agogy’, and is defined as a ‘*process of leading (or training) into the mystery... initiation into that which is not yet fully revealed*’ (Wagner, 2014), and as ‘*a person or thing that leads or incites to action*’ (Collins English Dictionary, 1991). This term is mostly used in Catholic and Orthodox Christian religious contexts as the term was first introduced to reflect a ‘mystagogue’, someone who guides people into temple secrets.

This concept of mystagogy was deemed relevant to EE as the latter is centrally based on unleashing inner talents, and driving students to excel and act as ‘change agents’ (Kirby, 2002:511). Furthermore, definitions of entrepreneurs and enterprising people highlight those peoples’ abilities to perceive opportunities and accordingly undertake experiences for which the results might not be fully revealed, as in Bolton and Thompson’s (2000) definition of an entrepreneur as ‘*a person who habitually creates and innovates to build something of recognised value around perceived opportunities*’ (p.5). The Davies Report (2002), which included an evaluation of 17 schools providing EE at various levels, also proposed a definition of enterprise skills that highlighted the uncertainty and risk taking elements embedded in enterprise, where they defined them as ‘*the ability to handle uncertainty and respond positively to change, to create and implement new ideas and new ways of doing things, to make reasonable risk/reward assessments and act upon them in one’s personal and working life*’ (Davies, 2002, p.17).

To apply a mystagogical approach in EE, we agree with Klapper and Refai (2015) about the interconnectedness between the ‘who?’ of the educator and that of the learner in EE. A view that was also supported by Greene *et al.* (2013) who contended that the growing interest in content and pedagogies is not sufficient, by itself, to engage students in deep learning. Rather, Greene *et al.* (2013) saw that in order for students to engage in deep learning, educators, themselves, should also engage with their own inner needs so they connect with their passion for teaching and their inner qualities (Korthagen, 2004), acknowledge what is purposeful and meaningful to them (Intrator & Kunzman, 2006), while also connecting with their own authenticity (Palmer, 1998). This engagement is essential in order for students to reach the basic concept upon which learning from within is based, and that is core reflection.

Core reflection is proposed in Figure 2 as a general method of EE in relation to the ‘withness’ framework. Core reflection focuses on people’s strengths as a platform for their development, while emphasising the significant role of authenticity for the personal growth of the ‘whole person’ (Greene *et al*., 2013). By ‘whole person’, Greene *et al*. (2013) referred to integrating all inner dimensions, including thoughts, feelings, desires and ideals in order to nurture the full power of that ‘wholeness’. This notion of ‘wholeness’, therefore, possibly supports the significance of aligning personal dimensions with professional practice of both educators and learners. For that, Figure 2 proposes core reflective techniques as learning approaches for developing enterprise skills through ‘withness’, where meditation and yoga, for instance, can be proposed as effective approaches in this regard, particularly that the value of these approaches in understanding one’s self and bringing more midndfulness into daily activities has been argued in literature (e.g. Balog *et al*., 2014; Herriott *et al*., 2009).

**Discussing the philosophical perspectives of the learning frameworks in EE in relation to the learning onion model**

This section will relate the philosophical perspectives of the learning frameworks in EE (including pedagogy, andragogy, heutagogy and mystagogy) to the learning onion model and learning from within. In the previous discussion, the frameworks of learning in EE have been related to philosophical approaches moving on from pedagogy to andragogy and then heutagogy as students’ involvement in the learning process increases from learning ‘about’ to learning ‘for’ and then learning ‘into’ enterprise, respectively. Then, mystagogy was proposed to support the ‘withness’ dimension of the learning frameworks in EE.

The first framework of learning ‘about’ enterprise has been discussed in relation to pedagogical and andragogical approaches. It can be argued that the value of the learning onion model, which supports learning from within, is largely diminished when students are learning only ‘about’ enterprise. This is due to the fact that this type of learning emphasises educators’ skills in shaping students’ learning into the same curriculum (Matlay, 2009), which made education ‘about’ enterprise subject to many criticisms, particularly as the need for students in EE to be reflective and reflexive has been well established (Pepin, 2012).

Adnragogical and heutagogical approaches have been discussed in relation to education ‘for’ and ‘into’ enterprise. In relation to the onion model, it can be argued that these andragogical and heutagogical approaches are connected to the environment, behaviour, competencies and beliefs layers of the Model. We argue that the environment layer of the onion model comprises andragogical approaches as it supports students’ engagement with tutors, colleagues, learning classrooms and cultures in such ways that involve internal and external aspects to the learner in the learning process, thereby supporting andragogical learning through interaction between students and these external elements. The behaviour, competencies and beliefs layers of the onion model, however, support heutagogical approaches as they support student-centred learning that allows students to engage in the learning process based on their personal behaviour, competencies and beliefs in relation to the external environment, thereby supporting a heutagogical approach to learning.

Yet, as argued by Korthagen (2013), it is not enough to consider the layers of the environment, behaviour, competencies and beliefs alone since the absence of triggers to inner levels of learning, will consequently inhibit the progress of learning through these outer layers. Therefore, and despite acknowledging the need for andragogical and heutagogical approaches in EE, the authors in this paper argue the need for a deeper approach that supports students in recognising their inner core qualities and sources of inspiration. The authors contend that such an approach is necessary to allow learning to ‘flow’, and, consequently, allow the learner to ‘evolve’, rather than trying to ‘create’ a type of learner. For that, the authors propose the mystagogical approach in EE, which has been discussed in relation to the ‘withness’ framework, to go in line with the inner layers of identity and mission in the learning onion model. The identity and mission layers of the onion model reflect beliefs about the self and inspirational factors that drive learning from within, thereby allowing learners to connect with their inner core qualities. This is shown in Figure 3, which highlights the significance of a mystagogical approach in supporting learners to ‘evolve’ in EE, thereby supporting the ‘withness’ learning framework. This mystagogy approach is also shown in Figure 3 as essential for supporting heutagogical and andragogical approaches, that subsequently support the learning ‘into’, ‘for’ and ‘about’ enterprise.

**Figure 3: Allowing learners to ‘evolve’ through a mystagogical approach to EE**



The core qualities that a person gets in touch with during learning from within are strongly related to personal ideals (Korthagen, 2013), and support the notion that everyone has an ‘inner diamond’ (Almaas, 1987) or ‘psychological capital’, which is a source of great potential. These core qualities are likely to be affected by leaners’ habitus (Bourdieu, 1986), which Bourdieu saw as ‘a system of dispositions’; i.e. thoughts and actions, which, consequently, shape who learners are and what they want. For that, Bourdieu (1996) saw the need for alignment between ‘*social structures and mental structures, between the objective divisions of the social world... and the principles of vision and division that agents apply to them*’ (Bourdieu, 1996, quoted in Lizardo, 2004:376). Therefore, it is essential for educators to believe in this inner potential of their students and search for it in order to allow learning to happen smoothly and ‘flow’ (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990), where such ‘flow’ happens when students engage in a comfortable experience when facing a challenge, and swift and organic learning takes place (Korthagen 2008).

Based on this discussion, the authors propose a definition for a mystagogical approach to EE as an approach that allows students to nourish their learning by engaging with their inner self concepts and sources of inspiration in such ways that allow them to reflect on what really adds value and meaning to their work and initiatives, and consequently allows them to effectively engage with their external environments and recognise what they are capable of doing best.

This idea of unleashing core qualities through a mystagogical approach support the notion that each leaner is different, and that the social world is constructed by students who hold free will and who can and will behave in spontaneous ways not anticipated by the scientific methods. Learners are led by different mystagogies that lead their inspirational drives, and these are essentially relevant to the identity and mission layers of the onion model. This goes in line with Schutz (1967) who argued that when faced with the problem of understanding social existence, consideration needs to be given to the motives, the means and ends, the shared relationships and the plans and expectations of human actors.

**Conclusion**

In this call for a mystagogical approach in EE, the authors do not undermine the value of andargogical and heutagogical approaches, which are necessary for students to interact with their contexts and socially construct their knowledge. Yet, we agree with Polanyi (1962) that knowledge is both held by the individual and socially constructed, thus, viewing personal knowledge as something that is not entirely subjective and, yet, not fully objective. Consequently, we acknowledge the value of andragogical and heutagogical approaches, but while also emphasising a mystagogical approach that considers the inner identity and mission layers in students. This, possibly, goes in line with Tsoukas (1996) who saw that the knowledge embodied in an agent emerges from the interaction between the agent’s tacit knowledge and explicit knowledge – it is inter-subjective- and is inherently unpredictable and continually evolving. Yet, while acknowledging this, we argue that without a mystagogical approach that triggers students’ inner identity and mission layers, other layers of learning are unlikely to be triggered and ‘flow’ in the learning experience cannot be achieved.

Acknowledging this need for a mystagogical approach in EE emphasises the focus on the learner, while acknowledging the vast differences among the audiences. Having said that, the authors support the notion that EE cannot, and should not, be presented as a standalone business subject. This is due to our argument that learning in EE evolves from the inner beliefs and needs of individuals, and, therefore, cannot be restricted within the boundaries of a curriculum, a view also supported by Jones et al. (2014). Acknowledging the mystagogical approach also goes beyond that to harness the value of these differences among students in ways that allow each of them to grow and evolve in his/her own unique manner, which aligns with their inner beliefs and inspirations.

The mystagogical approach to EE proposed in this paper can help us understand more clearly why one entrepreneurship student, or even entrepreneur, can perform better than another, and why the benefits of EE are not identical across the audience; questions that have been raised by Fayolle (2013). We argue that the more the enterprise learner is supported to nourish his/her inner mission and identity, the more their learning will flourish. This goes in line with the viewpoint of Markwell (2006) that ‘*mystagogy must be an individualised process that permits different students to progress at different rates*’ (p. 324). So far, this issue has been addressed from the perspectives of the various and multiple forms of experiential learning applied in EE and the multiple contextual factors impacting the EE process (e.g. Jones, 2011; Refai, Klapper and Thompson, 2015). Yet, so far, these perspectives have largely overlooked the impact of the various inner core qualities of learners that inspire them and drive their learning. Thus, we support the notion that there is no best unanimous way to teach EE, and agree with Jones et al. (2014) that it is the philosophical basis that makes EE distinct from others. We propose that scholarship in EE rests in inspirational learning that aligns with the inner identities and missions of students, without which other levels of learning cannot be triggered.

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