Comparative Analysis in The Field of Entrepreneurship Education in High School in Colombia And Ecuador

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Abstract

The purpose of this paper is to present a comparative study about the processes in the field of entrepreneurship education in high school in Colombia and Ecuador. It seeks to understand the actions which have been carried out in both countries, contrasting ways of implementation of the entrepreneurship class and identify legal aspects that support the training.

This research in comparative education was based on documentary analysis of legislation, curriculum and guidelines, which allowed an approach to two countries with similar profiles in the educational, social and economic sphere, but with different realities. Among the findings obtained in this study, it could be mentioned, the existence of specific laws about the incorporation of entrepreneurship in schools, in addition to its mandatory implementation at certain levels of high school, besides the need for a unified curriculum standard.

Key words: Entrepreneurship education, high school education, education system in Colombia, education system in Ecuador.

Introduction

Educational development in the field of education for work and entrepreneurship has emerged as an alternative to defeat unemployment and lack of opportunities. The concern of governments to improve economic and social development, is the starting point to propose changes in educational policies. This is the case of the transfer of educational knowledge in Latin America. As Beech discussed at Cowen (2009) "The transfer of educational knowledge is now considered as one of the main tasks of UNESCO, the World Bank and the OECD." (P.345). Those transfers have promoted reforms in the context of educational policy in Colombia an Ecuador, adopting changes in the character of education towards working environment. These changes encourage the entrepreneurship education through the enactment of laws, adoption of programs and curriculum reorganization, with the aim of increasing the relationship between education and productivity. The picture in the field of entrepreneurship education from the experience in Colombia, is not the only one, which evidently, shows difficulties and challenges ahead. In Ecuador the current situation presents different nuances, these ones reflect the state policies in high school and the processes of change which are valuable to analyze. In two Latin American countries such as Colombia and Ecuador, it is important to identify actions to incorporate entrepreneurship within the educational process in high school education, in order to build an entrepreneurial profile from school, besides to offer a theoretical contribution

in terms of portray the implementation of current policies and programs in entrepreneurship education based on the findings, offering new perspectives to the governments of other countries with comparable profiles.

This paper shows a study done through the documentary analysis about policies, curriculums and educational organization related to the implementation of entrepreneurship education in high school in two countries. Besides tries to do a brief review about general concepts applied to the comparison such as: Entrepreneur and entrepreneurship education, transfer of policies, Neo-institutional theory, Isomorphism in education and finally, wants to illustrate the laws which were adopted in both countries. All of these elements answering a main research question that intends to recognize: Which actions were done by the governments, in order to implement the entrepreneurship class in Colombia and Ecuador?

Definition of entrepreneur as an introduction to the comparison

To frame the development of this document, it is a priority to know the term entrepreneurship to understand this global phenomena in education, which has arrived to Latin American institutions. The approaches about the laws and educational programs in entrepreneurship, in Colombia and Ecuador in addition to the process of incorporation of entrepreneurship in high school in both countries are based on the entrepreneur character. To address the concept of entrepreneurship, it is important to conceptualize who is an entrepreneur. Fillion (1997) cited in Kliewe, Meerman and Baaken (2013), collected the history of the term that comes from the Latin "inprendere", this word means to undertake and from the ancient Greece was related to commercial activities. The word entrepreneur has its roots from the French army in the seventeenth century, being originally used to refer the leader in charge of military expeditions.

According to the authors, the word was first defined, in an economic sense, by the French writer Richard Cantillon (1755) "Who considers as entrepreneurs, those who obtain the raw material at a set price, for resale in the future an uncertain price" (p.312). A definition that reflects the commercial spirit of the time. One century later Jean-Baptiste, established the difference between entrepreneur and capitalist, being the first one, an enterprising agent of change and innovation. For the authors, Joseph Schumpeter was the first in the nineteenth century to recognize entrepreneurship as a discipline. From the economic field, the different researches were focused on characterizing the behavior of the entrepreneur, supported in psychology, anthropology and sociology. These studies led by Max Weber in the early twentieth century gave the entrepreneur, an innovative and independent profile.

Considering Cunningham & Lischeron (1991), there are six approaches for describing entrepreneurship: The great person school, which describes the intuition of the person, the psychological characteristic one, the classical, the management, the leadership and the intrapreneurship school, that depicts the entrepreneurial skills in organizations. Those schools, provide different angles of the entrepreneur in a wide range of situations, which it is useful to determinate the interest of education according to the needs. In the same view, Rusque (2000), considers the concepts of entrepreneur and businessman from historical definitions, have been mixed away from its real meaning, being adapted to our contexts. As a result, there is the idea of business, as a definition of entrepreneurship, thus, many of the academic programs in education in this field, have been focused on business plans.

Education in entrepreneurship

According to Katz (2003) Kirby & Ibrahim (2011) in Kliewe et al. (2013), the first course in entrepreneurship began in 1947 at Harvard University in the United States. This course was offered as part of the complementary training in management careers. In 1970 approximately 16 institutions offered entrepreneurship courses and in 1995, according to Vesper and Gartner (1997) in Kliewe et al (2013), were more than 400. Ibicioglu et al. (2008) in Kliewe et al (2013) claim that United States has the greatest tradition in education in entrepreneurship. In the United Kingdom and Central Europe the first courses date back to the early 80s. Karimi et al. (2010) in Kliewe et al. (2013) concluded that it is now possible to find education in entrepreneurship in Eastern Europe, Asia and Latin America, in countries like Colombia, Argentina, Mexico, Honduras, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Peru and Brazil. This expansion of entrepreneurship education around the world, has allowed to recognize different perspectives about its main interest, besides the level of education which wants to impact.

It is possible to find a variety of definitions of entrepreneurship education, such as the posed by Alberti, Sciascia & Poli (2004), "Entrepreneurship education is considered as the structured formal conveyance of entrepreneurial competencies (Fiet, 2001), which in turn refer to the concepts, skills and mental awareness used by individuals during the process of starting and developing their growth-oriented ventures". (p.5). This definition is based on the competences and the proposal to create a productive project, definitely aligned to university students and business people. On the other hand there is another definition, which goes farther and fits on the profile high school students, it is suggested by Raposo & Do Paço (2011) which "Seeks to propose people, especially young people, to be responsible, as well as enterprising individuals who became entrepreneurs or entrepreneurial thinkers who contribute to economic development and sustainable communities" (p.454). In this point of view, the entrepreneurship education seeks to strength certain aspects in young people, not only with the essential purpose to create their own business but also to help the community.

This revision, through the history of education in entrepreneurship, depicts its origin in the United States, its business nature and its tendency towards training in business management and production. Additionally, shows definitions which are oriented to adult or young people, according to the interest of the specific field of education. From this review, it is possible to recognize the transfer of models brought from the American university, to the Latin American culture and the desire of governments to begin a new era of education in entrepreneurship with neo institutionalism trends; hence a qualitative research with a comparative education study, provides tools for a wide analysis.

Methodology of the study

According to the objective to recognize the actions developed by the governments in Colombia and Ecuador, in order to incorporate the entrepreneurship class, this research had a qualitative nature. Considering Denzin (2005) "Qualitative research is a situated activity that locates the observer in the world. It consists of a set of interpretive, materials, practices that make the world visible". (p.3). In this sense the compilation of documents, policies and programs in both countries, was necessary to make visible the

situation of two countries. Countries which nowadays are pursuing a common objective: To implement the entrepreneurship in the educational field. Regarding the comparison, this study was setting around a comparative method, in concordance with Glaser (1965). "The constant comparative method is concerned with generating and plausibly suggesting (but not provisionally testing) many categories, properties, and hypotheses about general problems. (p.437). In this case categories related to the actions, policies and reforms in entrepreneurship education.

The need to understand the changes that have occurred in educational institutions, to incorporate entrepreneurship as a specific class in high school, showed the importance to identify the adjustments which were done in the structure of the curricular contents, besides the policies which regulate its incorporation. Bearing in mind the perspective of Simons (2011), referring to the use of documents in the scope of the guidelines proposed to educational institutions, "In cases like these, it may be necessary to analyze the relevant political documents of the larger unit, to help us understand the reasons and context of the policy and how it is implemented in practice ". (p.63). The similar context of these countries, allowed to establish a framework to the comparison, additionally it granted the creation of categories of analysis about the policies they were adopting. It was crucial for the study to do an approach to the existing relationships between the policies, the external influences and the economic interests through a documentary analysis.

The Transfer of educational policies: Colombia and Ecuador towards entrepreneurship in high school

From the perspective of Beech (2006), the transfer of educational policies emerged from various studies in comparative education, as a need to address the pressures caused by internal problems of each country. In the case of entrepreneurship in education, this was originated from university education in the United States and its arrival in Latin America was presented as an alternative to foster innovation and business opportunities.

In Colombia, the transfer of the culture of entrepreneurship promoted reforms in the context of education policy, adopting changes in the character of education for the working environment. These changes encouraged the training in entrepreneurship through the law 1014 of 2006, which establishes the creation of a mandatory course for schools, in addition to the creation of strategic alliances with the National Learning Service (SENA) in Spanish. SENA, is an educational institution, responsible for the training of technicians and technologists in different areas in Colombia. This entity is responsible for supporting and/or advising schools on issues of entrepreneurship training and education for working.

In the case of educational policies in Ecuador, the government launched the organic law of intercultural education in 2011. This law in its article 3 seeks to qualify people in order to develop productive actions, individually or collectively and to strengthen a culture of entrepreneurship. According to Rovayo (2009), the law was supported by the data presented by Lasio, Caicedo, Ordeñana and Villa (2014) on the report of the Global Entrepreneurship Monitor (GME) each year. This organization performs several analyzes of entrepreneurial activity around the world. The data shows that the Total Early-Stage Entrepreneurial

Activity (TEA) in Ecuador is 32.1% in 2013 vs. 57, 4% US and 66% in Finland (p.22), these countries with an outstanding educational systems in international tests.

As a result of international reports and data of growth, governments adopted entrepreneurship in education by establishing laws in each country, which encourage the entrepreneurship training from pre-school, primary education and high school. In this way, the transferring of the American university model is being implemented to the particular context of the countries. Hence, not only universities have the responsibility for giving education in entrepreneurship, but also this area would be strengthened from schools.

Neo-institutional theory: Present in entrepreneurship education in Colombia and

Ecuador

The neo institutionalist conception which Meyer and Ramirez (2000) describe, begins by outlining the need of nations to achieve a standardized social and economic development. This development depends on several aspects, including education as "fundamental and causal part of the cultural model of modern society". (P.94). Therefore just as the economic and social spheres are under pressure of standardization, now education is part of this group, by virtue of being a component of a state. As long as the modern society walks towards globalization, the education, at the same time, follows the standards which rule the global movement.

The concern of the nations to be part of specific communities, such as the case of Colombia, and its intention to belong to the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development OECD, forces that the educational policies being adjusted, in order to be part of its members. Within the policy adjustments, can be mentioned, the inclusion of entrepreneurship education in high school. The Colombian government relies on the experience of SENA in this issue, being the pioneers of training for work and productivity. Hence the National Learning Service SENA, is presented as a benchmark for implementing entrepreneurship in schools. SENA is part of an integration process with the secretaries of education in Colombia, Diaz, and Celis (2011) comment about this process, that "Consists of a developing an immersion process, in the productive world of youth from ninth grade, so they develop skills to continue their learning process or to join to the working force" (p. 377).

On the other hand, the entry of Ecuador to the Programme for International Student Assessment: PISA, has shown that the Ministry of Education with the National Institute of Educational Evaluation; focus their efforts as Rovayo (2009) mentions, on the goal where all people can have "Access to education, as a tool to achieve economic, social and human development" (p.98). Consequently the government has undertaken the responsibility of implementing the Unified General Baccalaureate (BGU) in Spanish, as a way to strengthen business creation and to stimulate early innovation in high school students.

The Unified General Baccalaureate, in Spanish (BGU), as a study program created by the Ministry of Education of Ecuador, has as main goals, to prepare students for life and participation in a society with democracy, to prepare them for the world of work or entrepreneurship and to continue their university studies. These objectives fight for the inclusion to the work environment and the initiative to create productive initiatives, all from the unification of the high schools objectives throughout the country.

The interest of promoting entrepreneurship from schools, as a business creation engine, enables all regions to adopt the same guidelines for high schools, with a perspective in entrepreneurship training. From this view, it is the responsibility of the state to generate policies on entrepreneurship training, based on international guidelines; these ones lead directly to an educational isomorphism in Colombia and Ecuador.

Isomorphism in education in high school in Colombia and Ecuador

In the field of education, international organizations promote the dissemination of educational models that influence the teaching practices in the classroom. From the view of Meyer and Ramirez (2000) "The professionalization and higher scientific education greatly accelerates communication and global standardization" (p.97). Hence, to be part of a global community, it is necessary to adopt new models imposed by some countries, which are ahead of economic and social development. The ways to reach levels of scientific development in education are ruled by the standardization of educational practices. According to the authors, the paths of education in the world are directed towards equality of structure, function and order in many nations, in general as an emerging educational isomorphism.

The tendency to have equal models has brought the implementation of policies, both in Colombia and Ecuador, where there are laws which regulate the incorporation of entrepreneurship in educational institutions. In Colombia the "Law 1014 of 2006 for the divulgation of entrepreneurship culture" which aims to promote, strengthen and establish linkages with the productive sector within an entrepreneurial culture in educational institutions. In contrast, in Ecuador, the "Organic Law of intercultural education 2011" which incorporates within the aims of education and state obligations, plans and programs towards the encouragement of a culture of entrepreneurship.

To achieve the adoption of the law 1014 of 2006, in Colombia was created the handbook: "*Encouragement of entrepreneurship culture. Guidance for educational institutions*". This material was developed by the Ministry of National Education (M.E.N) in Spanish, which aims to provide guidelines for the adoption of entrepreneurship in schools. In Ecuador under the same initiative to carry out the law, in this case the law of 2011, the material created by the Ministry of Education in Colombia, was adopted literally with the same purpose in schools. This finding shows an attempt to homogenize practices within the educational process, in two countries with deep desires to establish the entrepreneurship from high school.

It is essential to remark the entrepreneurship culture in these two countries, according to the M.E.N handbook:

"It is encouraged gradually: in preschool and primary, from citizenship skills, it is possible to develop the notions and elementary processes of entrepreneurship; and in high school there is a strengthening of skills for encouraging entrepreneurship, the opportunities are consolidated for the students in order to materialize their entrepreneurial attitudes through the development of activities and projects with the objective of business creation or business units with a sustainable development perspective" (p. 10).

Thus in Colombia and Ecuador, they want to implement the bases of entrepreneurship, with the same guidelines to encourage the creation of projects related to the productivity in schools. This reality means equal work and educational isomorphism in all practices in both countries.

The law 1014 of 2006: Engine of entrepreneurship in preschool and high school in

Colombia

The 1014 law of 2006 promoting entrepreneurship culture is a fundamental part of the legislation proposed by the government to implement education in this area. In its Article 2 of the paragraph it was well established to

"Create a connecting link of the education and the national production system through training in basic skills, job skills, citizenship skills and business skills through a cross curricula entrepreneurship class; understood as, the training developed in all programs of an educational institution in preschool education, basic education, basic primary education, basic secondary education and high school, in order to develop the culture of entrepreneurship "(p.2).

This article explains the essence of the law and its interest to educate from preschool in the environment of the entrepreneurship culture, besides of highlighting the importance of the link between educational institutions and business. The entrepreneurship class, which is a specific class with specific content, is seen as the way to impact directly the entire school population. This class provides skills development and a cross curricula implementation, essentially the deep soul of the law.

In the article 13 of the law, the entrepreneurship class is: "Defined as a specific area of training for entrepreneurship and generating companies, which should be incorporated into the educational plans and develop throughout the general curricula" (p. 7). This guideline refers to the adoption of entrepreneurship within the subjects taught in schools, and requires educational institutions changes about their work schedules in order to follow the regulations.

The same article in its item two orders "To transmit at all school levels the knowledge, to form favorable attitude towards entrepreneurship, innovation and creativity and to develop skills to generate business. "The implications of the law about the performance of schools result in mandatory changes in curricula and operational work, by incorporating a new class in the structure of the subjects that currently exist within the curricula. Thus the elements presented in the law, establish a gear with the objective of addressing efforts, at schools with the community and businesses in order to transform the entrepreneurship class in a stepping stone to boost future business creation.

Ecuador legislation: Organic Law of Intercultural Education 2011

It is a law that organizes all aspects concerning the educational process, its implications, its actors and everything related to the educational community, except the higher education, which has its own rules. Hence Article 1 explains:

"This law guarantees the right to education, determines the general principles and purposes that guide the Ecuadorian education under the Good Life, multiculturalism and multi-nationality; and the relationships between its actors. Develops and deepens the rights, obligations and constitutional guarantees in education and establishes the basic regulations for the structure, levels and modalities, model management, financing and participation of actors in the national education system" (p.8).

This is the guide to follow for educational establishments in the country. It proposes within the aims of education, fundamental aspects of entrepreneurship and focuses on the development of productive initiatives in school education. There stands out in its Article 3 paragraph r:

"The strengthening of the productive capacities of the country according to geographical diversity, regional, provincial, cantonal, parochial and cultural through curriculum diversification; training people to implement their individual or associative productive initiatives; and strengthening a culture of entrepreneurship " (p.11).

This article emphasizes on the approximation of all territories of the country towards entrepreneurship and productive initiatives, also the article 6 refers to the state's obligations in its section X: "Guarantee that plans and education programs in the initial, basic and high school, expressed in the curriculum, promote the development of skills and capacity to create knowledge and promote the integration of citizens into the world of work " (p.13). The state supports training in entrepreneurship and undertakes to ensure conditions of service delivery as a means to link the new generations into employment.

In Article 43, the objectives of secondary education are explained: "To Develop in the students permanent learning skills and citizenship skills, and prepares them for work, entrepreneurship, and access to higher education" (p.23), especially secondary education, is chosen to strengthen entrepreneurship in schools, from the perspective of Ecuadorian law.

In the same article, paragraph b, refers about "Technical high school: in addition to the subjects of the common core, it will provide additional training in techniques, crafts, sports or artistic areas that enable the students to be part of the labor market and to initiate social or economic activities of enterprise" (p.23), this kind of school is one of the options offered in secondary education and it emphasis training people with skills in technical areas that can be creators of business or can be joined directly to the productive environment.

The Organic Law of Intercultural Education in Ecuador, establishes state obligations in the field of education for entrepreneurship, also is presented as operating shaft in the educational institutions, for that reason in the country the organization of a unified curricula was motivated in order to follow with this policy. Thus the curricular organization was born as a General Unified Baccalaureate: BGU, which establishes the subjects of the second year, with the inclusion of the entrepreneurship class and management two hours a week. In addition the creation of a "*Teacher BGU Guide*" which provides guidelines to impart the class in all educational establishments around the country, motivate the organization of the educational practices.

Elements that make a difference between Colombia and Ecuador in the adoption of entrepreneurship in high school

In Colombia despite the obligation to provide the entrepreneurship class in all levels of education, the schools have not implemented totally, because the freedom in the curricula organization. In high school, some schools have implemented it thanks to the intervention of SENA, which is linked to the processes of entrepreneurship throughout the country. Another fundamental aspect is that despite the existence of the

guide "*Promoting entrepreneurship culture. Guidance for educational establishments*" that provides basic guidelines about entrepreneurship at school, there is no standard that addresses the class or curricula guides for teachers. Additionally, there are some limitations in the adoption of the entrepreneurship class among Diaz and Celis (2011) mention:

"First: The school is only able to provide poorly training for learning skills necessary for the formation of ventures. Second: To comply with the Law 1014 it has formed the subject entirely separate from the areas of science and technology" (375 p.).

These aspects denote difficulty in incorporating the entrepreneurship class in high school in Colombia and how the class loses its crosscutting suggested by law.

On the other hand in Ecuador, in the second and third year of the BGU, all establishments must teach entrepreneurship and management as one of the subjects of the common core, two hours per week. This is a clear guideline of how schools should adjust their schedules and their operation, in order for the entrepreneurship class to be well recognized.

However, one of the difficulties facing education in Ecuador is in the eyes of Rovayo (2009) "Low country's investment in Research and Development (R & D)". (P.100), this problem affects not only the area of entrepreneurship but in general all areas. The National Council for Graduate Entrepreneurship (NCGE) made public the need to set a training scheme in which the pillar is not the creation of enterprise, but the development of values and skills to be an entrepreneur.

Results

Through the analysis of categories, was possible to identify specific situations in both countries which exhibit needs in the field of entrepreneurship in high school. In both Colombia and Ecuador, the efforts of educational institutions were focus on innovative ideas in the incorporation of entrepreneurship class. The training offered by SENA in Colombia, and the incorporation of the specific classes inside the curriculum of BGU in Ecuador, motivated the culture of entrepreneurship within the school. In the research done by Lobo, Rincón y Palomino (2008) "Training path for entrepreneurship in basic education, primary, secondary and technical media in Colombia", it is shown that there are initiatives to create curricular guidelines, but there are not fully implemented to all schools around the nation. In Ecuador, the proposal to implement mandatory classes in the BGU, modules and whole careers in entrepreneurship, points towards the strengthening of the entrepreneurship and its relationship with the needs of the country.

According to the points of comparison in terms of school management perspective, in Colombia, schools have not yet implemented the culture of entrepreneurship in all institutions, according to Guarnizo, Velasquez, Jiménez y Álzate (2017) "The success in the implementation of an educational policy, not only depends on its promulgation, but above all the accompaniment that is done in educational institutions for its interpretation and implementation" (p.241). Only the ones which have agreements with SENA.

On the other side, in Ecuador, with the implementation of the BGU, all establishments must "prepare students: (a) for life and participation in a democratic society, (b) for the world of work or entrepreneurship, and c) to continue with his university studies." (Ministry of Education. Ecuador). This allows to recognize that in Ecuador the unification of the baccalaureate contributes in the application of management strategies

to incorporate entrepreneurship in educational establishments, meanwhile in Colombia the law 1014 has not arrived to all schools as a direct intervention of the curriculum, because each one has different alternatives to implement the entrepreneurship class in high school, despite the efforts to create curricular guidelines.

Like the experience of Shabani (2013) who considers: "Entrepreneurship is one of the most attractive disciplines in developing countries like Iran. Entrepreneurship education has along history in the world, but in developing countries it is in its embryonic stage". (p.784), it is substantial to consider the different aspects which are related to the entrepreneurship education in developing countries for instance models to implement it, conceptual models to introduce the topic additionally to the contribution of this research, about the profile of the development of the entrepreneurship in high school in two countries in Latin America. Moreover, studies like the Salamzadeh, Azimi & Kirby (2013), showed that in developing countries it is possible to implement different types of entrepreneurship for example the social entrepreneurship, in spite of these researches are located especially in higher education.

This study gave a brief panorama about the entrepreneurship class in high school in two developing countries. For this reason, it is relevant from the perspective of comparative education, further studies in this field, besides to explore its origins and implementation in primary and high school around the world and especially in the developing countries like the studies of Shabani (2013), and Salamzadeh, Azimi & Kirby (2013). Although it is valuable to go deeper into the primary and high school education as a remarkable space to conquer in educational research. Entrepreneurship education is still a field to explore which requires support at the academy, as an essential part of progress around the world.

Conclusions

From the revision done in this study, about the history of education in entrepreneurship and its origin in the United States, it is possible to recognize the transfer of models brought from the American university education to the Latin American high school. According to the findings, these transfers as a product of the American culture in Colombia and Ecuador, have promoted reforms in the context of educational policies, in order to implement laws targeted exclusively to incorporate the entrepreneurship in high school.

In both countries there are regulations ruling the incorporation of entrepreneurship in high school, in educational establishments through the Law 1014 of 2006 in Colombia and the Organic Law of intercultural education in Ecuador 2011. The law in Colombia encouraged the creation of the guide "Promoting entrepreneurship culture. *Guidance for educational establishments*", this material was developed by the M.E.N and adopted by the government of Ecuador, this was an attempt to regulate practices within the educational processes in the two countries.

In Ecuador unifying baccalaureate contributes to the implementation of the strategies of executive management to incorporate entrepreneurship in educational establishments. In Colombia it is necessary to develop a unified curriculum which addresses the work of entrepreneurship class in all educational institutions.

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