

# **Clarifying the Domain of Educational Entrepreneurship: Implications for Studying Leadership, Innovation and Change**

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## **Abstract**

There is a rising interest in the phenomenon of entrepreneurship in the context of education. It is drawing the attention of various practitioners in education at different levels and from different backgrounds. Also, an increasingly number of practices, activities, or even the whole institutions in the education sector are described as “entrepreneurial”. The reasons why entrepreneurship exists in the education sector can be attributed to the existence of market opportunities in the education sector, the presence of individuals who are talented and motivated to innovate, as well as a number of structural changes in the education sector in recent decades.

While it is often associated to the themes of leadership, innovation and changes, the concept of educational entrepreneurship is not very clearly defined because of different purposes, forms and activities involved. Therefore, the purpose of this paper is, firstly, to clarify the concept of educational entrepreneurship by defining its own domain and its relationship with other domains. Through an extensive review of the literature, it is found that educational entrepreneurship has its unique domain as an institution-based activities but it also intersects with business entrepreneurship and social entrepreneurship. Secondly, with a focus on institution-based educational entrepreneurship, a conceptual framework is developed with reference to the concept of corporate entrepreneurship (CE). This framework consists of three major components, including: 1) the antecedents as different environmental, organisational and individual factors; 2) the process as an interaction between different forms of entrepreneurial activities, strategic leader, and entrepreneurial orientation; and 3) various educational, organisational, financial outcomes as well as economic benefits.

There are two key implications from this conceptual development. First, with a clarified domain of educational entrepreneurship, differentiating the purposes of different educational entrepreneurship activities is a fundamental issue so that appropriate paradigms can be applied for researching into this field. Second, the application of CE for studying educational entrepreneurship helps to conceptualize the phenomena of leadership, innovation and change within educational institutions under a systemic approach. Subsequently, a number of possible research areas are proposed. Also, with further refinement and operationization for the construct of educational entrepreneurship, empirical studies can be conducted.