

Summer Entrepreneur an Activity for Stimulating Entrepreneurship Among Youths: A Case Study in a Swedish County

Håkan Karlsson

Mid Sweden University, Härnösand, Sweden

This paper aims to outline findings from a research project that has investigated an initiative to stimulate youths to become more entrepreneurial. The concept of summer entrepreneur has been developed in the last decade in a Swedish county. It was developed out of the idea that youths should have a possibility to run their own companies as alternative to traditional summer vacation employments. The study of the summer entrepreneur activity was conducted as a case study. The main findings showed that the concept developed as a project now needs an organization that can take the development further. It also shows that the participating youths express that they have archived the expected abilities from the activity, but any long time effects of changed attitudes towards entrepreneurship is hard to establish.

Keywords: entrepreneurship education, summer entrepreneurs, project

Introduction

Entrepreneurship education and training has been on the European political agenda for over three decades (Mahieu, 2009) and entrepreneurship is today defined as a key competence that should be developed in European education (European Union, 2007). At the same time, entrepreneurship education and training has become the object of study for different scientific fields (Audretsch, 2000; Kyrö, 2000; Landström & Sexton, 2000).

In Sweden as in many European countries, there have been ongoing efforts at regional and local level to stimulate youth's attitudes toward entrepreneurship and train their entrepreneurial abilities (Skolverket, 2010). For example, Cervantes (2005) argued that there is a strong belief at regional and local levels that entrepreneurship education is a key factor for development of the local labour market and that it also is viewed to be important for the change of young people's attitudes towards entrepreneurship so that they will consider small business ownership as an alternative to employment. At the same time, a long term study from Mid Sweden University (Olofsson, 2009) showed that local efforts to change attitudes and identity only have temporary effects. This study also gave an example of how a specific local Canadian concept for entrepreneurship education has been imported to Sweden and developed in a new local context (Holmgren, 2009).

This paper aims to outline findings from a research and evaluation project that investigated activities

Håkan Karlsson, Ph. D. candidate, Department of Education, Mid Sweden University.

aiming at stimulating entrepreneurship among youths in a Swedish county¹. Two different educational initiatives were studied in the project, summer entrepreneur and young enterprise. This paper mainly reports the findings from summer entrepreneur. The activity summer entrepreneur has some of its origins from Canada and was developed in a Swedish county and the concept has then been distributed in Sweden and abroad. The main research questions were how the concept had developed since 2005 and if there would be any visible effects from the program.

The concept of summer entrepreneur can be understood from a statement by Jansson (2008) that entrepreneurship is a multifaceted and paradoxical concept. One consequence of the scientific development has led to a broadened view of the entrepreneurship concept. Many of the researchers have the view that entrepreneurship education is about the form of the education and not the only the contents. For example, Gibb (2004) advocated for a learner-centred education based on learning by doing with different pedagogical methods that stimulates central qualifications necessary to deal with a complex future. In Sweden, this broader view of entrepreneurship as ability to be creative and prepared for change has been developed by Johannison, Madsén, and Wallentin (2000) and Leffler (2006). Johannison (2009) argued that the school has a problem to adapt this broader view of entrepreneurship and that the education should be developed so that it can stimulate the young people's natural ability for entrepreneurship. The learning process should be a problem-based with different issues that leave many possible answers open for the student. The responsibility for learning should be placed with the student in a dialogical environment (Johannison, Madsén, & Wallentin, 2000). The summer entrepreneur activity can also be understood from a project view. Holmgren, Lundström, Olofsson, and Viklands (2005) described a problem that they name "projectification" with the meaning that knowledge generated in local initiatives of entrepreneurship education never reaches the national level and thereby do not have the possibility to be developed on this level. Another problem with "projectification" appears when the projects are small and very few young people get the chance to participate in them.

Design and Methods

The study was designed as a case study with a focus on the activities of summer entrepreneur in the county, called the e-county. Data were collected through semi-structured interviews, conversations, observations, documents and a questionnaire. Two of the municipalities in the e-county had summer entrepreneurs activities during summer 2009, they will be called Inland town and coast town.

Interviews were conducted with two politicians, two civil servants, three representatives of summer entrepreneur, three teachers and three school leaders. The sample was made to get as much information as possible about the case, a purposeful sample. The semi-structured interview guide contained general question about entrepreneurial activities in e-county as well as questions about summer entrepreneur, the activity, effects and outcomes. The interviews were recorded on a voice recorder and later partly transcribed. The length of the interviews varied from 60 to 90 minutes. More informal conversations were described in field notes. Observations were carried out on summer entrepreneur activities in coast town during summer 2009 and described in field notes. The questionnaire was distributed to young people who participated in the activity of summer entrepreneur, at the final meeting for the summer to $N = 37$ with a response rate of 84%. It contained

¹ This study is a part of a larger project with the goal to stimulate entrepreneurship and business in the county. The project named e-county, is financed by the European regional development fund, the county board, the municipalities in the county and Mid Sweden University.

questions about the young persons' family backgrounds, views of themselves, views of entrepreneurship, their future career and the experience attending the activity.

Analysis

The analysis was conducted according to the logic of both intrinsic case studies and instrumental case studies (Stake, 1995). In some parts, the descriptions and analysis focused on the information from the case and in some parts, it was focused on questions generated from earlier investigations on entrepreneurial activities in the e-county. Data from this study were compared with descriptions of Holmgren (2009) from an earlier study on these activities to understand what had changed and developed over time. In this analysis, Bernstein's (2000) concepts of "classification" and "framing" were used. Classification deals with the power relations in education and framing with the control of the selection of communication, its sequencing, its pacing, the criteria and the social base within an educational context. A more developed explanation of classification and framing can be found in Olofsson's (2009) study. The interpretation from the study on summer entrepreneur was based on an investigation of differences and similarities expressed in statements from the interviews and also compared with the information from observations and documents.

Local Context

The e-county has about 245,000 inhabitants in an area of 21,700 square kilometres. It consists of seven municipalities where the largest municipality have about 95,000 residents and the smallest about 10,000 residents. The population has diminished since 1970 by about 10% and the proportions of elderly in the population is higher than the national average. Base industries, such as forestry, pulp, paper and hydropower still retain a strong position in the E-county, but they provide fewer jobs than that in the past (The E-county Administration Board, 2009). According to Nutek (2009), the proportion of young people that has a positive attitude towards starting business is among the highest in the nation. This positive attitude has developed in the region during a couple of years on the other hand the portion of business start-ups is among the lowest in the country and has been so for over a decade. In the 1990s, the county administration board recognized a decline in the amount of business start-ups, combined few regional high growth companies and initiated projects to develop entrepreneurship in the e-county (Holmgren et al., 2005).

Since 1996, the county administration board and the local municipalities have been working together to change attitudes towards entrepreneurship in a positive direction and stimulate citizens to start new business. In these efforts, OFB (open for business) has been one tool for the work with young people's attitudes and knowledge when it comes to entrepreneurship. Summer entrepreneur is one of the activities, which has been developed by managers of OFB.

OFB and the Development of Summer Entrepreneur

OFB is a concept developed by CEED (Centre for Entrepreneurship Education and Development) and was imported to Sweden in year 2000. The initiative to this cooperation was taken by Nutek² and some regional and municipality administration boards. This project started in three counties and was financed as projects by the European regional structure funds, county administrations board and local municipalities. The concept manager of OFB in the e-county identifies the county administration board work as essential for development

² Nutek was at the time the national agency responsible for economic and regional growth in Sweden.

of this project.

In the early 2000, three OFB-offices, called “sites”, opened in the e-county as one of the pilot projects in Sweden. On these sites, the staff worked not only with students from compulsory and high schools but also with youths that dropped in by free will. The sites were decorated in the same way, with clear shining colours on walls and furniture, and the design was also very apparent on folders and other materials in the sites. This strong environmental profile was described as essential to the activity and other premises were avoided. The activities were also strongly regulated by instruction for the staff, managers and inspirers working at the sites. This strong classification and framing were apparent in the design of workshops as well as in the instructions of how the staff should meet young people attending the activities³.

At the end of 2007, all three sites were closed, but the activity is still ongoing in two of the municipalities with variation in the degree of activities. The decline in activities in the county was explained by the civil servants and the personal working with summer entrepreneur as an effect of that the project time ended and thereby the financing. In Inland town, there are only summer entrepreneur activities during the summer but in Coast town, the activities have been integrated in the municipalities’ regular activities. The development of the overall OFB-concept is also still ongoing and parts of it have been spread as well in Sweden as abroad. Today, the concept has four parts: rockets, business for a day, summer entrepreneur and future entrepreneur.

The “rockets” consists of a number of well planned workshops that can be put together in programs to fit different demands. The workshops can, for example, be about entrepreneurship, brain storming and development of ideas or fundamental accountancy. “Business for a day” is a program in which youths participate in workshops to prepare a business, and then run it for one day. These two parts come with the original concept from Canada and have been adapted to Swedish conditions.

Summer entrepreneur was developed out of a coincidence in 1999 in inland town of the e-county, when a couple of small business entrepreneurs decided to help some youths to start and run companies during the summer vacation. The main thought was that youths out of own ideas would develop their own summer vacation jobs. This was then developed in the context of OFB to a program that could be used by any organizer that gets a license after a three-day course of local advisors. At this course, the advisors receive a well structured manual that contains the program design, basic principles, exercises and examples. The license is rented about 600 € for a year plus 30 € per participant in the programs. The program is directed towards youths in high school aged 15 to 19.

In 2008, the summer entrepreneur program was spread to 44 municipalities in Sweden, and during 2009, further 25 more licenses was issued. The licenses are not only issued to individual municipalities but also to partnerships between local and regional organizations. During 2008 and 2009, people responsible for the program have educated and issued licenses to head organizations in Jordan, Lebanon, Israel and Turkey. This was made through an international EU (European Union) project. During 2009, the summer entrepreneur program has been developed to future entrepreneurs with a focus on older young people who is unemployed.

Summer Entrepreneur in the E-county

The development of summer entrepreneur was based on ideas that youths should have a possibility to create their own summer vacation jobs. In Sweden, many municipalities offer such jobs for youths in high school age. For example, in coast town, youths get an opportunity to work during three weeks, 30 hours a week

³ For a more developed description of OFB see Holmgren 2009.

at the city garden department or the department for culture, tourism and recreation or other departments of the municipality administration. In summer of 2009, the salary was about 500 € for this work. An alternative in both inland town and coast town for these youths might be summer entrepreneur.

In coast town, the summer entrepreneur activity is located in a central youth recreation centre sorting under the local board of culture, leisure and tourism. At this youth recreation centre, two recreation leaders are responsible for OFB-activities, such as rockets, business for a day and summer entrepreneurs. These leaders are cooperating with local compulsory schools and high schools when it comes to rockets, business for a day and other entrepreneurial activities. They also have a close collaboration with the administrators in the municipality who deals with entrepreneurial and enterprising activities, such as the Swedish federation of business owners, the local department of enterprise and youth enterprise. In inland town, the summer entrepreneur activity is the only remaining OFB activity with one man working with it during the summer. In the interview, he said that he was hopeful about the activity for summer 2010, but it was troublesome that he was the only supervisor in the municipality and the financing not was solved.

It was not possible to establish exactly how many youths that had participated in summer entrepreneur for the first years, but since 1999, there have been over 300 participants in the e-county. According to the program manual for summer entrepreneurs, there have been 1,250 participants totally in Sweden between year 1999 and 2008 with 600 participants in 2008. In interviews with the concept manager, civil servants of the e-county administration board and concept advisors, there is a great coherence about the summer entrepreneur program. It is described as a program that stimulates the youth's creativity and entrepreneurship abilities and it gives them tools to deal with their future. According to the respondents, the main point with summer entrepreneur is not that the youths per definition should become business owners but it prepares them for the future and empowers them to be "doers" in the future. They have a common expression for it and the youths should develop "Getting things done-ship" (the author's translation). These respondents also hold common views that the program mediates abilities to organize and take responsibility for their own activities and it helps the youths to develop a problem-solving approach. The program is supposed to wake the sleeping entrepreneur in the youths. "There are sleeping bears (read entrepreneurs) in many places" as one of the respondents put it. They also looked upon summer entrepreneur as a complement to youth enterprise. Most of the interviewees agreed that summer entrepreneur has impact, however, this effect is hard to establish but the belief that the youths become more entrepreneurial is very strong.

Summer Entrepreneurs' Who Are They

In the summer of 2009, 37 youths participated in summer entrepreneur, 23 women and 14 men, and 31 of them responded the questionnaire. There were 20 participants in inland town and 17 participants in coast town. They were between 16 and 20 years old, four of them would start their high school education in the autumn and two of them had graduated from high school. Eleven different high school programs were represented and most common high school programs were aesthetic program (8), social science program (5) and technical program (5). Compared to the amount grown-ups in Sweden with pre high school education (38%), these youths had well educated parents and 65% of them had parents with university education.

Why did they want to attend summer entrepreneur then? The most common motivation to attend was inspiration from recreation leaders at the youth recreation centres. Almost all of them answered that they wanted to earn money in an interesting and fun way. "I wanted to earn some money and have some fun this

summer” (the author’s translation). The recreation leaders have in this case been successful at inspiring these youths to participate.

One question in the questionnaire was about what they would be doing in 10 years. Twenty-two of them answered that they would be employed, seven of them answered that they would own a business and four of them stated both as an alternative (see Table 1).

Table 1

The Youths Thoughts About Their Future

What do you think you are doing in ten years?	<i>N</i>
Be employed	22
Be a business owner without employees	3
Be a business owner with employees	4
Something else	2
Answered both be employed and own a business	4

No relations were found between their parents’ occupation and the youths’ answers about what they would be doing in ten years. Almost 40% of the participants had parents that owned a company, but that had no relation with how the youths looked upon their future and neither had the parents’ occupations. Connected to the question about the future, there were a number of questions asking the participants to grade, from one to six, the relevance of ten factors⁴ of motivation. The youths saw the high school education as the most important motivation factor, 24 (77%) of them answered five or six on the six grade scale. The distribution of answers on the other factors gave no clear picture of motivation, not even summer entrepreneur.

Introduction Week

Observations were made in coast town during the introduction week of summer entrepreneur and at the last meeting in the summer. The two youth recreation leaders worked as advisors during the summer and lead the introduction and the final meeting between that they are available as mentors. They both have long experience of these activities, one of them was earlier manager at the OFB-site and the other has worked as an inspirer at the site. They are also responsible for all of the OFB activities at the youth canter. They both know the concept very well and genuinely believe that it has positive effects for the young people who participate.

The advisors manual of summer entrepreneur contains descriptions of the corner stones for the concept, such as the entrepreneurship pyramid and the entrepreneurial roads. It also contains a description of the advisors mission in the concept and the programs basic pedagogic models, such as experimental education, learning by doing and lateral thinking of Holmgren’s (2009) descriptions on OFB. There are also examples on workshops and examples for the disposition of the introduction week and a time schedule for the whole summer. The concept is outlined in a very structured way, but at the same time there are advices like “Be flexible with your disposition” and that it is important as an advisor not to be controlled by the time schedule. Beside the introduction week, the participants get a starting fee of about 200 € an insurance, supervision during the summer by advisors and one day at the end for summing up the experience.

The chosen environment for the introduction week was at a local replica of an Iron Age village. The village contains a couple of houses built as houses from the time, among them, there is one large house where

⁴ The ten factors were; Primary school, high school, individual teachers, young enterprise, OFB, summer entrepreneur, family, relatives, friends and finally others. The factors were graded from one (No relevance) to six (Great relevance).

they lived and had their livestock and there are also some smaller houses, such as a blacksmith's workshop and a café. The place was chosen because it was supposed to be a creative environment and quite different from a school environment and "to get outside the school walls" that is important in the concept. There are also other activities ongoing at this place, there are other leaders and youths working at the village with different activities, some of them are dressed in clothes from the Iron Age and they are acting as inhabitants. The village is sort of a museum with people living in it, and it is open for tourists during the whole summer.

Day One: Monday

The day started at nine o'clock in the café and the two advisors informed the nine youths who participated this day about the concept and the program during the week. The participants presented themselves and their businesses. All of them had some ideas about what sort of business they would create and work with during the summer. The most common idea was to run a café, for example, three boys should run the café in the Iron Age village and three girls should start a café in a marina north of coast town. Others had an idea that they should create simpler jewellery and art to sell in the village. One boy had decided to make and sell shields typical for the Iron Age and he also planned to do role plays with sword fights in a middle age style, the idea was to give a surplus value to the Iron Age village and create an interest for his products. One girl wanted to bake and sell bread and pastry for people with diabetes.

After the introduction, the activity continued with a creativity activity. The advisor started to talk about creativity and do new things out of pencils or plastic cups. The youths then got the group mission to go out in the village environment and collect at least five things that would be possible to sell. The time limit for this mission was 15 minutes and the participants came back with sticks, stones, flowers and mushrooms. They had a lot of ideas what these things could be used as, the larger sticks could be fishing rods and the smaller one could be used in spillikins and the stones could be used to play boules. The advisor then moved the collected things among the groups and they were told to write down ten products or services based on the collected things. Through the whole process the advisor asked questions like "How did it go?", "What was most difficult?" and he also continually gave the participants positive responses like "Great idea!", "Good" and "Well done". This brain storm activity was described in the summer entrepreneur manual and followed the same pattern as Holmgren's (2009) description of the OFB-site. After the lunch, the participants continued to plan their summer businesses through a SWOT⁵-analysis. This analysis is supposed to make the participants aware of their company, its strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and treats. The participants were rather active this afternoon and they discussed their businesses with engagement supported by positive responses from the advisor. The structure of the day followed the example from the program manual.

Day Two: Tuesday

The second day, seven youths participated in the activity. The day started with summing up the experience from yesterday and then continued with marketing. The participants discussed their market and their conceivable customers with each other and the advisors. The structure of this day was not quite as structured as the first day and the participants were already in different phases of their plans. Some of them had already decided that they do the marketing by posters and by putting send outs in local residents' mail boxes. Some of them planned to use their parents to inform their fellow workers about their café. The advisors did also start a discussion about the importance of keeping track of their economy in the business. Some of the participants

⁵ SWOT analysis is a method to evaluate strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats in a business venture.

started to write a simple business plan while others worked with the marketing.

They also started to prepare questions to an entrepreneur who should visit them for one and a half day. This was a man who had worked as a welder for many years and then decided to start his own business as a black smith. This is one important part of the concept, to give the participants a possibility to meet people who make good examples as entrepreneurs. The black smith told them his story that he had started the business in a small scale and then developed it over the years as a welder. He had one smithy at home and a mobile one that he used in different market places. The mobile one made it possible to show his work and at the same time sell his products. Sometimes, he used to work in the Iron Age village to show people how things were made at that time and still is made. The participants seemed very interested and asked questions like “How did you get the idea?” on that he answered “It was sort of a natural development, this is the original way to weld, and it made it possible for me to develop something that I was interested of”. After lunch, the participants could try to make their own hooks for clothes in iron. Some of the participants continued their plans and some of them spent the afternoon with the black smith. During the day, the participants also got information about the insurance income taxes, social fees and VAT (value added tax).

Day Three: Wednesday

This morning, eight youths participated but two more joined during the day. The black smith participated this day and two of the youths spent a lot of time with him forging iron. They came up with the idea that they could make objects in iron and sell together with paintings and trinket. The smith also showed them more of his products and objects of art that he had created, such as an eagle made in iron. In the café, the activity kept on and the youths worked with their marketing and business plans. To their help to write the business plan, they used 5Ws (what, who, why, where and when) and 2Hs (how and how much). This way of writing a business plan is described in the program manual and is supposed to help the participants to structure what their product is, who the potential customers are and so on. The advisors took a very active part in this work and acted as the manual prescribes with support and positive responses. The message that it was important “to keep track of the money in the business” was repeated several times and the participants were encouraged to create a budget. Two of the boys who had planned to run the café in the village made experiment with different flavours on coffee drinks and actually made their first money selling some coffee. During the afternoon, the activities became more and more on an individual basis while the participants developed their plans. Some of the youths also left early this day. The structure of this day was much looser than the first day. No observations were conducted on Thursday.

Day Five: Friday

On Friday, the activity had clearly decreased. There was one advisor and five youths at the Iron Age village and two of them were going to run the café in the village. Two of the youths had not attended any other day during the week but had instead planned the company on their own. It was their third time as summer entrepreneur and they had the plan to run a service company and mainly needed some help with marketing.

The Introduction Week a Summary

During the week, the café was the centre of all activities and at the same time, it was used by others in the Iron Age village. This made it, sometimes, a bit crowded and less controllable compared with the OFB-site. The whole environment was very different from the OFB-site, no clear colours and totally different furnishing. The furnishing consisted of heavy wood tables and benches and it had a counter separating the kitchen from the coffee room. The activities were less controlled by the advisors than at the OFB-site, and besides, a few clear

workshops the activity mostly were based on the participants' own work with development of the business. The whole area of the Iron Age village was also larger than the OFB-site and gave the youth's larger spatial freedom. Thought it was 17 youths that should participate, there was not one day during the week that more than ten attended the activity. Compared with the program observed at the OFB-site, this activity was less controlled and managed. In Bernstein's terms, at least the framing is weaker in this educational setting. It gave the youths more possibilities to have control of the selection of communication, its sequencing, its pacing, the criteria and the social base in the educational context. Described according to the broader view of entrepreneurship education, it gave the youths more freedom to take more responsibilities for their learning.

Last Meeting for the Summer

An observation was made in coast town at the last meeting for the summer 2009, 12 youths attended. The youths presented what they had done during the summer, their idea, goals, plan, implementation, achieved goals and what they had learnt. They were told by the advisor to present it as they should have presented it to a customer. Overall, the attending youths seemed satisfied with their experiences during the summer exemplified by this quote, "It was a great summer experience and I learnt a lot". Most of them said that they had developed abilities to take responsibility, organize and solve problems and that corresponds to what is viewed as major aims of the program. For example, the boys that had been running a café in the Iron Age village had the goals to make some money, have a nice job and get practice on a service job. They said that they had achieved those goals and they had been good at keeping order in the café and on their economy. Their most important experience was that they learnt that "Preparedness for solving problems is necessary". Their profit for the summer was about 430 €each and they felt satisfied by that. One who did not make so much money during the summer was the boy who had sold shields and demonstrated battle in role plays in the Iron Age village. In spite of this, he was very satisfied with the summer, because he had enjoyed the meeting with different people so much. He also had developed some ideas about selling printed t-shirts on the Internet. He thought that he had developed the strength to be open for possibilities and news. Only one of the summer entrepreneurs did not succeed in starting a company. It was the girl that who decided she would bake bread for people with diabetes. She had not found any places to sell her bread and she stated that the market already was covered in local shops and bakeries. During their stories, the advisor asked them questions and gave feedbacks with positive reinforcement according to the program manual. At the end of the day, the ones that had run the café in the Iron Age village received a scholarship of 100 €for most successful company.

There were eight companies in coast town and town 11 companies in inland during the summer of 2009. During the summer, the youths in both towns spent three to ten weeks on their companies and most of them spent three to five weeks on it. The total time spent varied from six to 210 hours with a mean of 91 hours and the standard deviation of 60 hours. When the towns were compared, there were no larger group differences between how many weeks they spent as an entrepreneur. There was though a clear difference between the groups when it comes to hours spent, in coast town, the mean time spent was 116 hours compared with inland town 72 hours where the individual differences were much larger. The most common branches for the companies were service and commerce and the most common business were to run a café followed by "all service" companies that, for example, took on jobs as painting and grass cutting.

Future of the Summer Entrepreneur Activity

The interviews showed that there are three important factors for the development of summer entrepreneur,

the support from the e-county administration board, local municipality boards and individual social entrepreneurs, such as the concept manager and people managing the activity. Today, the concept manager is only working 50% with the OFB-concept and it has been established in the coast town. The success of establishment in coast town can be explained out of a strong support from local politicians, administrators and businessmen, e.g., the local municipal commissioner shows in the interview a strong support for the activity. She said “We have tried this activity for a time and it works, we must maintain and develop such efforts for the best of the municipality”. The fact that it has not established in the other municipalities is explained in the interviews as depending of two things, a weaker local funding support and that people running the activities have got other assignments today. In coast town, they had a positive view on the future and they have built up a stable activity in a network with other actors. But, the interviewees claimed that it is a problem that the OFB-activities including summer entrepreneur are dependent on two managers/advisors.

The people representing the e-county administration board were somewhat pessimistic about the future concerning the efforts to stimulate young people’s entrepreneurial spirits. They meant that there is a risk that other projects and efforts would be in focus instead. Since it has been harder to get funding for youths’ activities and there still is too much of sector thinking and meaning, national and local administrations stimulates and treats business entrepreneurship and educational entrepreneurship as two separate activities.

The concept manager also said that the future for summer entrepreneur are somewhat unclear, “The Summer Entrepreneur concept is at a cross road and the financing is the crux, either it could become nothing or actually in five years be established in half of the Swedish municipalities and in five to six other European countries”. She had the clear opinion that the concept needs a larger organization or partnership that says “This shall become our baby!”. According to her, the concept needs this to develop and spread, because it could not be and should not be a pure commercial activity. If the concept becomes a program where youths have to buy a place, it will not last for long, and the author definitely do not want to be a part of it. She also pointed out that the main obstacle to overcome is to find an organization that is prepared to spend money to develop activities in other regions or countries.

Conclusions

The youths expressed that the experience of summer entrepreneur has made them aware of the importance of taking responsibility for their own actions. They also said that they had become more aware of the importance of keeping order and they had become more able to solve problems. In this case, the program has showed some positive effects that are important according to the creators and managers of the program. If this effect has any long term, implication is hard to tell. The people involved in the program show a strong belief that there are positive effects of the program but these effects, such as youths becoming more entrepreneurial is very difficult to establish. One evident conclusion out of this study is that the most important factor for what the youths believe about their future is their high school education. This could be an effect depending of time, and the high school education lasts for three years and summer entrepreneur only a few weeks.

The fact that the summer entrepreneur concept has spread in Sweden and abroad could be explained by that it is a well structured concept and a clear trademark. This in combination with enthusiastic people working with it could be a possibility for future development and further spread in Sweden and abroad. The concept has showed sustainability over time, despite of the uncertain funding and an uncertain long term responsible authority.

What becomes clear is that to survive, this type of projects need to be integrated in other activities or made

permanent with an evident responsible organization. In the case of summer entrepreneur, if it is going to have any future, there is a need for a developing organization and regional and/or local organization that can take responsibility for the daily practice. Otherwise, there is an obvious risk for “projektification”, a risk that it will not reach so many youths.

References

- Audretsch, D. (2000). Entrepreneurship in German. In H. Landström, & D. L. Sexton (Eds.), *Handbook of entrepreneurship* (pp. 107-127). Oxford: Blackwell Publishers.
- Bernstein, B. (2000). *Pedagogy, symbolic control and identity; Theory, research and critique*. Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield.
- Cervantes, S. (2005). Attitudes towards starting small business: Youth and local authorities in a changing labour market (Doctoral thesis, Luleå University of Technology).
- European Union. (2007). *Key competences for lifelong learning*. Retrieved from <http://ec.europa.eu>
- Gibb, A. (2004). Creative destruction, new values, new ways of doing things and new combination of knowledge: In pursuit of a new “enterprise” and “entrepreneurship” paradigm for learning. Paper presented at *the Annual IntEnt-conference*. Napoli, July 4-7, 2004.
- Hjort, D. (2008). Citizens as consumers? About entrepreneurisation of the public. In I. A. Lundström, & E. Sundin (Eds.), *Perspectives of innovation and entrepreneurship in the public sector* (Perspektiv på förnyelse och entreprenörskap i offentlig verksamhet). FSF 2008:1.
- Holmgren, C. (2009). Open for business? In I. A. Olofsson (Ed.), *Entrepreneurship Education in the school and society—Formation of a new Pedagogical Identity*(pp. 112-139). *Educational studies, 1*. Härnösand: Mid Sweden University, Departement of Education.
- Holmgren, C., Lundström, A., Olofsson, A., & Viklands, I. (2005). Interrelated effects of entrepreneurship education programs supported by local regional and/or national authorities. Paper presented at *International Entrepreneurship Conference*. Guildford, July 10-13, 2005.
- Jansson, E. (2008). Entrepreneurship as a Paradox: A romantic ironic history about a deviant entrepreneurship. Doktorsavhandling. Stockholms universitet Företagsekonomiska institutionen.
- Johannisen, B. (2009). The agonies towards the challenge of entrepreneurship in the Swedish schools. In I. K. Skogen, & J. Sjøvoll (Eds), *Pedagogical entrepreneurship: Innovation and creativity in the Nordic schools* (pp. 91-105). Trondheim: Tapir akademisk forlag.
- Johannisson, B., Madsén, T., & Wallentin, C. (2000). *Aha! Enterprizing learning: A school for learning*. Örebro: Ljungaföretagen Tryckeri AB
- Kyrö, P. (2000). *Entrepreneurship paradigm building—towards a discipline?* Retrieved from http://www.uta.fi/entretet/hankerekisteri/hanke2_paradigm.htm
- Landström, H., & Sexton, D. (2000). Introduction. In H. Landström, & D. Sexton (Eds.), *Handbook of entrepreneurship* (pp. xix-xixiv). Oxford: Blackwell Publishers Ltd..
- Leffler, E. (2006). *Enterprizing students: Discourses about entrepreneurship in the school*. Doktorsavhandling i pedagogiskt arbete nr8. Institutionen för svenska och samhällsvetenskap Umeå universitet.
- Nutek. (2009). Yearbook 09 (Årsbok 09). Stockholm: Nutek.
- Olofsson, A. (2009). Entrepreneurship education in the school and society—Formation of a new pedagogical identity. In I. A. Olofsson (Ed.), *Entrepreneurship education in the school and society—Formation of a new pedagogical identity* (pp. 16-39). *Educational Studies, 1*. Härnösand: Mid Sweden University, Department of Education.
- Skolverket (2010). *Create and dare: On entrepreneurship in the school*. Stockholm: Davidssons tryckeri AB.
- Stake, E. (1995). *The art of case study research*. Thousand Oaks: Sage.
- The E-county Administration Board. (2009). *Facts about the e-county*. Luleå: Printing GTC.