

THE CASE OF THE GLOBAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP SUMMER SCHOOL: INCENTIVIZING MULTICULTURALISM FOR SUSTAINABILITY IN AN INTERNATIONAL ENVIRONMENT

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ABSTRACT

This article seeks to inform about global programs such as the Global Entrepreneurship Summer School which expands on social entrepreneurship. It also addresses perceptions and results from the networking and international partnerships found throughout the event. It is about addressing the relationship between the events focused on social entrepreneurship and sustainability to create a multicultural environment. This study aims to share the impact of summer school programs as an incentive for education internationally, including the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goal 4: Quality Education and the Sustainable Development Goal 17: Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development. From this experience and in the light of the international immersion with the contributions of the other participants and the enhancement promoted by the Social Entrepreneurship Akademie (SEA) partnering with LCU - LifeCo UnLtd at the University of Western Cape. For the development of this work, is is first summarize the concepts of sustainability and the idea of consumerism and the Global Goals. Next, the role of the Global Entrepreneurship Summer School is explored and elucidated the types of projects developed within the framework of the program. Finally, the conclusions are presented.

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1. Introduction

Sustainability

The word Sustainability became a concept in 1713 in the book *Sylvicultura Oeconomica oder Naturmässige Anweisung zur Wilden Baum-Zuch*¹ of Hans Carl von Carlowitz, who for 40 years was responsible for the administration of silver mining in Saxony.

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The Modern History of the concept of Sustainability begins in 1966 with the creation of the Club of Rome founded by Aurelio Peccei and Alexander King. Being a group of people who met to discuss matters related to politics, the international economy, the environment and sustainable development. This Club understood that the economic growth entered in route of conflict with Sustainability of the planet. The way in which economic growth and sustainability could be brought into harmony could only be achieved through international cooperation with the help of the State, business and civil society.²

Over the last 50 years, there has been considerable research associated with sustainability related matters. Initial studies of the subject were typically directed towards understanding environmental sustainability. For instance, Business and Sustainable Development: A Global Guide (1992) stated that “sustainability for a business enterprise means adopting business strategies and activities that meet the needs of the enterprise and stakeholders today, while protecting, sustaining and enhancing the human and natural resources that will be needed in the future”. The most familiar sustainability definition was presented in the Brundtland World Commission report (1987). The term was defined as “the development that meets the needs of the present generation without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs”.³

As we continually understand what sustainability represents as a concept, the more it makes sense to bring up a generation that is aware of their environment and desires to develop such a culture. Sustainability is also the seedbed for different analysis, one could even say that such programs and exchanges as the Global Entrepreneurship Summer School could have only happened because of this concept. The interest in researching the topic came as a natural desire to best understand the correlation of topics.

¹ Carlowitz, Hans Carl Von. *Sylvicultura oeconomica*. Charleston: Andesite Press, 2017.

² BOSSELMANN, Klaus. *O princípio da sustentabilidade: Transformando direito e governança*. São Paulo: Revista dos Tribunais, 2015. Original Title: The principle of sustainability: transform mind law and governance. p. 45

³ Kotob, Fadi & MPM, & BComm/BIS, & ADipIT, & DipIT,. (2011). What Is Sustainability?

Seeking the furthering of the sciences in General, the current text is intended to introduce the general concepts and it is limited as to identifying all the different programs worldwide related to the topic of sustainability. It also stands as an invite to foreign researchers to research deeper into the topic. Special thanks to Levi HULSE, and Joel Cezar BONIN for furthering the cause of scientific research in the Alto Vale do Rio do Peixe University.

2. Consumerism

The mismatch between future demand and supply is crystallizing into one of the most complex and urgent issues policymakers will face in the 21st Century. Despite the challenges arising from these scarcities, they can be seen as opportunities when confronted in a comprehensive and proactive manner. There are a number of issues to consider when examining the issues of consumption and consumerism.

The production of commodities often requires the extraction and use of natural resources, such as wood, ore, fossil fuels, and water. To feed our growing world population, global food consumption consequently affects the environment through food-related energy consumption and waste, which is a large issue when talking about consumption. Still, recycling and reusing products is rare since most products simply end up in landfills or get burned. This will also lead us to talk about fair trade and the impact of a consumerist culture on our local economies,

Finally, with the consumption of goods and services comes the formation of gentrification processes as well which can severely affect poor communities for the benefits of the wealthiest social class.

With a growing population, there will be also a rising amount of goods that need to be produced to cover the demand of the 9.6 billion people that are expected to live on this planet by 2050. This will also increase the demand for already constrained natural resources. If we don't change our consumption and production patterns, we will cause irreversible damage to our environment⁴. When it comes to consumers, households consume 29 percent of the global energy and contribute to 21 percent of CO2 emissions⁵.

Although the use of modern renewable energy, especially in high-income countries has grown in the past years⁶, due to the population growth, the use of natural resources are not enough to supply the need of the enormously growing world population (especially in low income countries) in times of drastic resource scarcity.

⁴ United Nations in Ghana. Goal 12: ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns. Available in: <http://gh.one.un.org/content/unct/ghana/en/home/global-agenda-in-ghana/sustainable-development-goals/sdg-12-responsible-consumption-production.html> Access on: oct./02/2018.

⁵ World Meet Summit. Ensuring sustainable consumption and production patterns. Available in: <https://worldmeetsummit.com/ensuring-sustainable-consumption-and-production-patterns/> Access on: oct./02/2018.

⁶ World Bank - Data. Renewable energy consumption (% of total final energy consumption). Available in: <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/eg.fec.rnew.zs> Access on: oct./02/ 2018.

Agriculture and the textile industry are a major part of the climate problem. The agriculture sector alone currently generates 19–29 percent of total GHG emissions. Without action, that percentage could rise substantially⁷.

Environmentalists often consider population, technology and consumption as the three key drivers responsible for environmental pollution. However, consumption seems to get the least attention. One reason is that it may be the most difficult one to change; our consumption pattern is part of our everyday lives and changing it would require a massive cultural overhaul, not to mention severe economic dislocation⁸.

Experiences from the last years have shown that the strategies to implement sustainable products and efficient energies are only slowly generating change in society. Consumption and consumerism are deeply integrated in cultural habits. Consumption habits also show the state of a nation. For example, the rising amount of middle-class citizens in Mexico believe that obesity is a symbol of good health and higher socioeconomic status⁹.

In China, which experienced a booming economy in the past years, consumption and abundance are a symbol of status. Chinese consumers represent 5.29 percent of the world consumer market and to offer guests extensive amounts of food is a sign of wealth. Thus, it is not surprising that China generates 17-18 million tons of food waste each year – enough to feed 30-50 million people¹⁰.

Germany's economy has been doing consistently well for many years and therefore, there is a trend to minimalism and sustainability. Many Germans recycle and their goal is to shut down all nuclear power plants and switch to green energy by 2022. At the same time, precisely through its strong economy, Germany is

producing enormous amounts of trash (between 325 and 350 million tons each year) and Germans have their fair share in polluting the environment, e.g. through their love to cars¹¹.

The gap between rich and poor in South Africa is the highest worldwide. This is also reflected in the culture of consumerism. While the rich expect shops and services to be

⁷ United Nations - Statistics Division. Goal 7: ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all. Available in: <https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/report/2016/goal-07/> Access on: oct./02/2018.

⁸ Global Issues. Effects of consumerism. Available in: <http://www.globalissues.org/article/238/effects-of-consumerism> Access on: oct./02/2018.

⁹ Hindawi - International journal of population research. Risk factors for overweight and obesity among mexican children in New York. Available in: <https://www.hindawi.com/journals/ijpr/2016/2420167/> Access on: oct/02/2018.

¹⁰ Future Directions International. The wasteful dragon: food loss and waste in China. Available in <http://www.futuredirections.org.au/publication/wasteful-dragon-food-loss-waste-china/> Access on: oct./02/2018.

¹¹ The Washington Post. Germans love their cars. They also love the environment. A diesel ban is forcing them to choose. Available in: https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/europe/germans-love-their-cars-they-also-love-the-environment-a-diesel-ban-is-forcing-them-to-choose/2018/04/18/6868777c-3bfc-11e8-955b-7d2e19b79966_story.html?noredirect=on&utm_term=.68e55244dc49 Access on: may/16/2019.

available anytime, the poor try to up cycle or even just secure electricity and water supplies for their townships¹².

Culture is deeply intertwined with our consumption patterns, which means it would require a massive cultural overhaul in order to change ingrained practices.

3. SDGs – Sustainable Development Goals

The Sustainable Development Goals, also known as the Global Goals, The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development or SDGs, are a series of actions adopted by all United Nations Member States in 2015 as a universal call to action to end poverty, protect the planet and ensure that all people enjoy peace and prosperity by 2030. They address the global challenges we face, including those related to poverty, inequality, climate change, environmental degradation, peace, and justice, etc.

There are 17 goals, they are namely: Goal 1: No poverty; Goal 2: Zero hunger; Goal 3: Good health and well-being for people; Goal 4: Quality education; Goal 5: Gender equality; Goal 6: Clean water and sanitation; Goal 7: Affordable and clean energy; Goal 8: Decent work and economic growth; Goal 9: Industry, Innovation, and Infrastructure; Goal 10: Reducing inequalities; Goal 11: Sustainable cities and communities; Goal 12: Responsible consumption and production; Goal 13: Climate action; Goal 14: Life below water; Goal 15: Life on land; Goal 16: Peace, justice and strong institutions; and Goal 17: Partnerships for the goals.

Goal 4 is “Quality education”, since 2000, there has been enormous progress in achieving the target of universal primary education. There has also been a dramatic increase in literacy rates, and many more girls are in school than ever before.

The goal also includes the target:

By 2030, ensure that all learners acquire the knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development, including, among others, through education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence, global citizenship and appreciation of cultural diversity and of culture's contribution to sustainable development¹³

Goal 17 is to "Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development." In the U.N. website, we can read: The world

¹² BBC NEWS. South Africa elections: is the gap between rich and poor widening?. Available in: <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-48023890> Access on: may/16/2019.

¹³ UNPD. Goal 4 – Quality Education. Available in: https://www.undp.org/content/seoul_policy_center/en/home/sustainable-development-goals/goal-4-quality-education.html#targets Access on: jan/31/2020.

is more interconnected than ever. Improving access to technology and knowledge in a meaningful way to share ideas and foster innovation. Coordinating policies to help developing countries manage their debt, as well as promoting investment for the least developed, is vital for sustainable growth and development.¹⁴

The focus of the current paper is to analyze the target 17.16, which states:

17.16 - Enhance the global partnership for sustainable development complemented by multi-stakeholder partnerships that mobilize and share knowledge, expertise, technologies and financial resources to support the achievement of sustainable development goals in all countries, particularly developing countries.¹⁵

In this respect, the role of international education and government programs is observed to check if they are reaching the target as they share knowledge and others. More specifically, international educational cooperation programs and government grants help strengthen the aspects associated with the 'global engagement' sub-indicator. In fact, by awarding scholarships to international students, the host country projects the image of a supportive country that cooperates for international development. First-hand contact with the host country's culture allows international students to understand it better and break cultural stereotypes, and thus promoting multiculturalism.

4. GESS - Global Entrepreneurship Summer School

A summer school is a program generally sponsored by a school or a private company, that provides lessons and activities during the summer vacation. Participation in summer schools has been shown to have substantial beneficial effects on educational progress. The concept of summer schools has spread fast throughout the globe and now high impact students are bringing forth changemaking as a result of their participation in such programs.

The Global Entrepreneurship Summer School (GESS) is a seven-day program where 140 university students come together in Munich, Mexico City, Shanghai, and Cape Town to develop entrepreneurial solutions that meet the world's biggest challenges. In the spirit of promoting "billion-dollar projects to foster societal change", GESS works on the UN Sustainable Development Goals aiming to empower students to become young responsible leaders who create positive change in our society.

¹⁴ UNPD. Goal 17 – Partnership for the goals. Available in: https://www.undp.org/content/seoul_policy_center/en/home/sustainable-development-goals/goal-17-partnerships-for-the-goals.html Access on: jan/31/2020.

¹⁵ UNPD. Goal 17 – Partnership for the goals. Available in: https://www.undp.org/content/seoul_policy_center/en/home/sustainable-development-goals/goal-17-partnerships-for-the-goals.html Access on: jan/31/2020.

The vision of the Global Entrepreneurship Summer School is based on the idea of “Billion Dollar Projects to Foster Societal Change”: the program encourages and connects top students from all over the world to challenge society’s biggest problems with even bigger ideas - and an entrepreneurial approach.

The Global Entrepreneurship Summer School (GESS) is a program of the Social Entrepreneurship Akademie based in Munich, Germany, organized in cooperation with six leading university-based entrepreneurship centers in Munich, Shanghai, Mexico City and Cape Town.

Since 2008 SEA’s Summer School program was known as EIISS (Entrepreneurial Impact International Summer School), in the 5th year of existence it was rebranded to Global Entrepreneurship Summer School. The Global Entrepreneurship Summer School is part of the UN Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (DESD). The goals of the Decade are to provide opportunities for refining and promoting the vision of and transition to sustainable development through all forms of education. The Global Entrepreneurship Summer School fosters the important role of education in sustainable development and connects ambitious, entrepreneurial students from all over the world.

In 2018 for the first time, GESS has taken place on four continents in four different cities. Mexico City, Cape Town, Shanghai and Munich hosted this year’s edition about consumption. Sustainable consumption and production are some of the major challenges of our time. Entrepreneurial solutions from innovative, creative and enthusiastic students like you are needed to solve the issues surrounding the challenges of consumerism in a rapidly growing society. During the course of one week, students from all over the world worked on the following topics: Environment, Culture, Production, Global Food Consumption and Waste.

Gathering people from different parts of the planet has benefits shown by research findings, for example, that country of origin influences the work behavior of second generation immigrants and the organization of multinational corporations’ local plants, but are a more direct test of the role that culture plays in economic choices, and also about how one endeavors in entrepreneurship.

This gathering promotes the so-called multiculturalism. A phenomenon that represents the presence of many cultures, of ethnocultural diversity, in society. It signifies a process of differentiation in the development in society and is a sign of development. The phenomenon is mostly mentioned when talks about a country where people live together in peace, such are the cases of Canada and Azerbaijan, for example, but it is visible that a collaborative international environment also clearly shows such environment. Multiculturalism envisages the coexistence of diverse ethnocultural groups and the development of tolerance, even mutual respect among them.¹⁶

¹⁶ Kamal Abdulla, Etibar Najafov. Baku International Multiculturalism Centre. **Azerbaijani Multiculturalism Textbook for Higher Education** - ISBN 978-9952-34-367-0

4.1 - GESS Cape Town

Our host in CapeTown was LifeCo UnLtd, which is a social enterprise, established over 2 decades ago during the times of segregation and marginalization in South Africa. The enterprise focuses on 2 key elements: entrepreneurial education for youth, and entrepreneur development. It finds, funds and invests in emerging social entrepreneurs to expand their impact and access to market.

It facilitates programs focused on critical thinking, capital and entrepreneurial practice to schools and universities and is an active advocate for social impact – the organization is strategically placed to guide policy direction in South Africa and is a global influencer in the sector. LifeCo UnLtd is also a global advocate for impact enterprise and impact investment and a founding member of the Global Social Entrepreneurship Network (GSEN). The partnership with LifeCo bundles and introduces eight South African Universities to the GESS initiative – significantly increasing GESS's University presence. This year, GESS Cape Town was located at the University of the Western Cape.

The University of the Western Cape has a history of creative struggle against oppression, discrimination and disadvantage. Among academic institutions it has been in the vanguard of South Africa's historic change, playing a distinctive academic role in helping to build an equitable and dynamic nation. UWC's key concerns with access, equity and quality in higher education arise from extensive practical engagement in helping the historically marginalized participate fully in the life of the nation. Established in 1959, since well before the end of apartheid in South

Africa in 1994, it has been an integrated and multiracial institution. Nowadays the institution has an estimate of 22,000 students.

There were about 35 students from about 10 different countries. The acceptance rate of the 2018 program in Cape Town was 4,68%. The group analyzed in this article had participants from 4 different nations: China, Switzerland, Germany and South Africa.

4.2 - Culture team and the Seed of Change project

Professor Stephen Chan said “There is too much short-term thinking in Africa”¹⁷, along with that statement and a field research in the townships of Khayelitsha and Philippi in the city of Cape Town leads us to believe that this issue could be addressed within the communities by helping the locals to see clearly the benefits of a long-term thinking.

¹⁷ The Zimbabwe Situation. There's too much short-term thinking in Africa – Prof. Chan. Available in: https://www.zimbabwesituation.com/old/apr11_2005.html#link29 Access on: apr./18/2019.

“Seed for Change” is trying to shift short-term thinking in South Africa by working with school children and giving them a stevia plant to grow.

The plant is currently not commercially grown in Southern Africa, with the main international producers being China and India. South Africa also has experienced growing obesity, the sugar sweetened beverages are targeted as the main cause of this problem. Tax on sugary drinks was signed into law. Since 2 April 2018, South Africans are paying approximately 10% of a can of Coca Cola in 'sugar tax', for example.

The idea is to implant a plant that can be harvested continuously and is also a healthier option to sugar. The children learn patience and long-term thinking by harvesting at particular times, and particular amounts, in order to keep the plant growing and producing.

The accompanying teaching app helps the teacher see the process through by guiding harvesting time and incorporating little tutorials on long-term thinking. The tendency to consume quantity over quality will be subverted by realizing just a little stevia has a lot of sweetness. And a little bit of patience has a big long-term reward.

5. Conclusion

It was noted that the necessity for sustainability led to the creation of a new mindset and even new legislation, following that a new need in the educational scenario incentivizing different studies in the Academia, including the necessity for short immersive programs allowing peoples of the world to gather together and to think about solutions. As different nationalities gather and an international and multicultural background is brought it seems easier to bring about ideas for world solutions from different perspectives. The Global Entrepreneurship Summer School showed to be an answer to the concerns of young entrepreneurs.

In the crossroads where sustainability and international education meet it is well noticed that events such as summer schools do increase a desire of the participants to continue engaging on educational activities that allow a student exchange. Multiculturalism is the way to reach the Global Goals allowing strategic partnerships and quality education.

The author assumes no responsibility or liability for any errors or omissions in the content as the text is a compile of his personal experiences along with scientific research. The information contained in this article is provided on a research basis with no guarantees of completeness, accuracy or timeliness. Making such material available to advance understanding of multiculturalism, sustainability and efforts to further research on the subject.

Disclosure statement

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