Danish University Colleges

Wonder-Driven Entrepreneurship Teaching
When Working with the Ethical and Existential Dimension in Professional Bachelor Education
Hansen, Finn Thorbjørn; Herholdt-Lomholdt, Sine Maria

Published in:
Journal of International Business Research and Marketing

DOI:
10.18775/jibrm.1849-8558.2015.41.3002

Publication date:
2018

Document Version
Publisher's PDF, also known as Version of record with the publisher's layout.

Link to publication

Citation for published version (APA):
Hansen, F. T., & Herholdt-Lomholdt, S. M. (2018). Wonder-Driven Entrepreneurship Teaching: When Working with the Ethical and Existential Dimension in Professional Bachelor Education. Journal of International Business Research and Marketing, 4(1), 19-23. https://doi.org/10.18775/jibrm.1849-8558.2015.41.3002

General rights
Copyright and moral rights for the publications made accessible in the public portal are retained by the authors and/or other copyright owners and it is a condition of accessing publications that users recognise and abide by the legal requirements associated with these rights.

• Users may download and print one copy of any publication from the public portal for the purpose of private study or research.
• You may not further distribute the material or use it for any profit-making activity or commercial gain
• You may freely distribute the URL identifying the publication in the public portal

Download policy
If you believe that this document breaches copyright please contact us providing details, and we will remove access to the work immediately and investigate your claim.

Download date: 21. jun., 2020
Wonder-Driven Entrepreneurship Teaching - When Working with the Ethical and Existential Dimension in Professional Bachelor Education

1 Finn Thorbjørn Hansen, 2 Sine Maria Herholdt-Lomholdt
1 Professor, Ph.D. Aalborg University, Denmark
2 Senior Lecturer, Ph.D. Candidate, VIA University College, Denmark

ABSTRACT

For a decade or more research on innovation and entrepreneurship have been based on social constructive, pragmatic and socio-cultural approaches. Lately a more existential and philosophical – hermeneutic approach to processes of innovation and entrepreneurship have been suggested, eg. By Verganti & Öberg and C.O. Scharmer. In these approaches, the idea is, in different ways, to anchor innovation and entrepreneurship in human meaningfulness. This paper continues in this line by suggesting a philosophical and wonder-based approach and by focusing on the educational consequences of such an approach. The empirical departure is a three-year phenomenological action research project in two different professional bachelor educations in Denmark (Nursing and pedagogy). In an overall and outlining way, this paper introduces to a wonder-based approach to innovation- and entrepreneurship teaching. Further, we describe why and how phenomenology of wonder can become doorways for understanding existential and ontological dimensions of innovation- and entrepreneurship teaching.

1. Introduction

Contemporary research on creativity, innovation, and entrepreneurship have now for a decade or more focused on social constructive, pragmatic, socio-cultural and socio-material dimensions of creative and innovative processes (Bager et al. 2010, Brinkmann & Tangaard 2010, 2012; Ledwith & Bessant, 2009; Sarasvathy, 2008; Bason 2012). New and innovative ideas are, following these approaches, understood as something individuals or professional communities of practices create in relation with specific others through product-, user- and design-driven innovation and different processes of ideation.

Lately, a more existential and philosophical-hermeneutic approach to innovation has been suggested. Verganti & Öberg (2013) talks about a change from user to meaning-driven innovation. Madsbjerg & Rasmussen (2014) write about ‘moments of clarity’ transcending what can be captured by the socio-cultural and constructive approach. Scharmer and Kaufer (2014) talks about pre-sensing as a place for “hearing the call” from an emerging future. Hansen (2014, 2018) suggest an existential and wonder-driven approach to design-, innovation- and entrepreneurship and Herholdt-Lomholdt suggest a philosophical aesthetic and beauty-oriented approach to innovative processes (Herholdt-Lomholdt 2019). We want to continue in line with this new framework of meaning and wonder-driven innovation by focusing on the possible educational consequences of such an approach.

Our empirical departure is a three-year phenomenological action research project named: ‘Wonder-based Entrepreneurship Teaching in Professional bachelor Education’. Ten senior lecturers in nursing and pedagogy from VIA University College, Denmark participated as co-inquirers. The purpose was to investigate whether and how Socratic and philosophical dialogues and different forms of phenomenological and existential reflections in so-called ‘Wonder Labs’ could contribute to existing innovation- and entrepreneurship education. Specifically our interests aimed at two kinds of contribution: To deeply and existential root students in their profession and values and to bring students on the edge of their knowledge into a field of “not knowing but being.”

2. The Phenomenology of Wonder

Philosophical wonder is different from curiosity, systematic analyzing inquiry, and critical reflection. The philosophical wonder is, as Hansen (2008, 2010b, 2012, 2014, 2015a)
describes it, not as much an act or an effort of the subject as an ontological event and reaction that calls on us while living our lives (Gadamer 2006; Rubenstein 2008; Vasalou 2012 ). We experience the philosophical wonder when life meets us with severe beauty, goodness or truth and we - on behalf of this experience - stop and rethink understandings we often take for granted. Philosophical wonderment can be described as a special kind of thoughtfulness, restored to life from touching life-situations (see also Van Manen 2014).

Wonder can also grow from any kind of aesthetic experience, if we understand the aesthetic experience in a philosophical way, as an existential and ontological experience (Jørgensen 2006, 2008, 2011, 2014). If we follow Jørgensen, aesthetic experience can be characterized, by the meeting of something greater than oneself - and sensing of meaning or truth given to us by life. Jørgensen name such experiences, experiences of “immanent transcendence.” In that sense, the phenomenology of wonder could be understood as a dance between poetic dwelling and Socratic dialectics (Hansen 2012). While being in wonder, we are under the impression of both ‘something’ evocative that speaks to us and a philosophical questioning, which ask for what the analytical concepts cannot in logical and argumentative ways capture. Through aesthetical, philosophical, dialectical and playful dialogue, which Socrates was so good at, we open ourselves for an ontological and silent dimension in our lives and professional practices. Thus, the phenomenology of wonder is a phenomenology of both sensuous openness and philosophical presence.

In professional bachelor educations in Denmark, students mostly learn problem-identification and problem-solving skills. Such skills are indeed needed qualifications, but at the same time limits, the extent of the students view. Great deals of the ongoing innovation and entrepreneurship-teaching, also take such departure from “irritations” and disharmonies (e.g., Bager et al. 2010, Blenker et al. 2011, Digman et al. 2012).

With phenomenology of wonder as an underlying tone and a wonder-based approach to innovation and entrepreneurship teaching, we try to take on another view. We do not think innovation and entrepreneurship from a “meaning-making-paradigm,” but from a “meaning-receiving-paradigm” (Hansen, 2014, 2018) and instead of disharmonies we take our departure from experiences of harmony.

3. A Wonder-Based Approach to Innovation and Entrepreneurship
In a former research-project, Hansen (2010a) introduced a model of “four voices” in higher education. This model has been further developed by Hansen (2014) to include four different views of innovation and entrepreneurship.

![Figure 1: Model of “four voices” in pedagogic of higher education.](image)

At its basis, the model points out how different voices make different kinds of educational rooms as well.

In the first room, we see the voice of the System. This voice is a voice of both law and practice telling students about right, wrong and what a good professional is. The reality is taken for granted in this room, and society and market set the agenda for what the professionals are supposed to do.

Next, we see the voice of the Profession, expressing theory and empirical knowledge foundations of the profession. This voice makes a room of the already known.

The third voice is a Personal voice engaged in questions of “who am I” and “what do I think of the voices of the system and the profession?” Through this voice, students develop personal touch and style in their profession.

At last, there is also a voice of the Subject Matter. This voice is connected to a ‘call’ and a sense of meaningfulness or dialogue with a phenomenon that comes to presence in life. This room is a place where artists or philosophers often breathe, as they listen and step aside for the matter, phenomena or materials self to speak.

In professional bachelor education, the Professional voice and the voice of the System so easily take over and stand in the way, so the ontological voice of being or the phenomena itself are not able to ‘speak’. Even the Personal voice, if it is too self-absorbed, can weaken our sense of the Subject matter.

As the model shows, the four voices can open up different rooms for innovation and entrepreneurship.

In room number 3, we see a commercial and problem-solving understanding of innovation and entrepreneurship. In this understanding, the driver for innovation and the innovation-management comes from outside the profession, e.g., the user,
In this paper, we concentrate on the educational consequences of developing a model for wonder-based entrepreneurship education. We have done four different teaching experiments in 2014, which we called “wonder-labs” (see Hansen, 2014, 2015a). We have now experienced a very inspiring springboard for new and deeper questioning.

In this project (see also Darsø 2011), we have worked in so-called “wonder-labs” (see Hansen, 2014, 2015a). We have done four different pedagogical movements through dialogues and in some cases through music and drawings: 1. The phenomenological turn and wonder 2. The Hermeneutic turn 3. The Socratic and dialectic turn 4. The existential and phronetic return to our ordinary living

The fourth phase (the phronetic and existential return) is present as a kind of bridge to the project, where the three first three turns are settled in the project.

The phenomenological turn is a turning towards a touching situation in practice. All students are asked to tell a real-life situation connected to their profession. A situation that made an impression on them. The story has to be open-ended in the sense that it is forbidden to identify problems, do problem-solving or to have any point telling the story beforehand. The students are also asked to listen with an open heart and mind to the stories of each other. By telling these stories, we often see the vulnerability of the students and at the same time their

---

1 For an in-depth description of these movements in the Wonder Lab, see Hansen 2015a.
proudness - and values. From these often remarkable, phenomenological stories we try to open the students and ourselves as teachers for genuine wonderment and stepping into communities of wonder. As mentioned above, wonder is characterized by questioning our pre-understandings and the “taken for granted” - by a silent listening for the meaningfulness of life. When wonder happens, we take a step into the open and thereby experience the possibility of enlarging our horizon or even sense a radical break through. Philosophical and aesthetical wonderment then can be a doorway into the fourth room of innovation and is grounded both existential and ontological.

But, to enlarge horizons, we need a dialogue with something or someone outside our subjective and cultural views. Therefore the hermeneutic turn is of importance by letting personal wonder meet humanity’s Grand Stories about themes and questions that came up within the personal stories. Great stories refer to philosophy, arts, music and other kinds of artistic comprehensions of life, that are well-known by the majority. In dialogue around these great stories, we do have the opportunity to discover and even break through some of our historical and cultural pre-understandings.

The Socratic and dialectic turn refers to the way dialogues take form in communities of wonder. As Hansen (2008) with reference to the German philosopher, Hannah Arendt, points out, we can learn from the Socratic way of thinking and questioning. What Socrates did, was to ask human beings to think by themselves instead of downloading the thoughts of others. As educators in the project, we ask for the student’s independent and original thoughts and beliefs in a friendly and playful atmosphere. At the same time, we tease, provoke and search for the limitations of these thoughts.

In truth – but also surprisingly – it seems to be a great challenge for students of today, to think by themselves. Students in professional bachelor education have for several years learned to replicate the knowledge and research of their profession. To think for themselves seems to be both difficult and way out of comfort zone. The project ends up defining a newly qualified longing and often, also a new but deeper wonderment. This longing, a longing for a fulfillment of life, will be an important leading star of the project and is now ready to meet reality for further qualification, ideation and realization.

In the project, students develop and connect their values and thinking to processes of innovation and entrepreneurship, which makes us talk of it as an existential turn in entrepreneurship-education. At the same time, the students also listen to something experienced as a wondrous “call” from practice. This can be described as an ontological turn in entrepreneurship education.

5. A Vision
Existential and ontological turns in entrepreneurship education have implications of importance. In professional bachelor education, phronetic judgment and ethical dimensions are at stake all the time. We do not connect the Aristotelian concept of phronesis to a practical cleverness in getting things done as quick and effective as possible intuitively. Instead, we follow Gadamer (1986, 2006) when he connects the Aristotelian concept of phronesis to our existential and ethical awareness of being-in-the-world, meaning having an ontological musicality for the voice of being, or voice of what the situation, relation or phenomena is calling us the professional to do. This demands a readiness to stand in “openness”.

Every time a nurse meets a patient, every time a pedagogue meets a child, she has to make decisions and create unique solutions, and these decisions draw on her values and ability to judge. With a meaning-receiving paradigm instead of a meaning-making paradigm – and with a wonder-driven entrepreneurship education in professional bachelor education - these solutions might tend to draw on ontological-based meaningfulness given to us by life itself, rather on an epistemology of practice and the “functionality”, that the system, profession or pragmatic and problem-solving practice calls us to do.

To get a musicality for the voice of being or Subject matter, so to say, requires training to meet other people and situations with a special kind of ontological attentiveness and wonderment. If the phronetic judgment is a key competence in professional bachelor educations, and we think it is, this would mean, that entrepreneurship education would not only be for the few enterprising students starting up a business - but for all of them. However, then we have to think differently than most of the contemporary approaches concerned with entrepreneurship-teaching. We have to think about how to bring existential and ontological dimensions into entrepreneurship-teaching. That is: To see the wonder in daily life and profession as a new source for radical innovation- and entrepreneurship teaching.

References
- Bager, L.T., Blenker, P., Rasmussen P. & Thrane C., 2010, Entrepreneurshabsundervisning – proces, refleksion og handling. Aarhus: Aarhus entrepreneurship Centre.
- Bason, C. 2012, Public managers as designers. In: Ledelse og erhvervsøkonomi vol. 76 No. 4 p. 47-69.
- Blenker, P., Steffen, K., Neergaard, H. & Thrane C. 2011, The questions we care about: Paradigms and progression in entrepreneurship Education. Industry & Higher Education, 25 (6), p. 417-427 Crossref
- Brinkmann, S. & Tanggaard, L. 2010. Toward an epistemology of the hand. Studies in Philosophy and Education, Vol. 29, No. 3, p. 243-257. Crossref
• Brinkmann, S & Tanggaard, L. 2012. Hvad vi taler om, når vi tale rom kreativiteten. *Nordiske Udkast*, Vol. 40, No. 2, p. 3-15.

• Darso, L. 2011, *Innovationspædagogik. Kunsten at fremleske innovationskompetence*. Forlaget samfunds litteratur.

• Dignung, A., Jensen, K.E, Jensen, J.P. 2012, *Vi er på vej. Offentlig innovation 2.0*. København: Gyldendal business.

• Gadamer, H.-G. 1986, *The Idea of the Good in Platonic-Aristotelian Philosophy*. New Haven, Yale University Press.

• Gadamer, H.-G. 2000. *Truth and method*. London: Continuum.

• Hansen, F.T. 2008, *At stå i det åbne. Dannelse gennem filosofisk undren og nærvær*. København: Hans Reitzels forlag.

• Hansen, F.T. 2010a. *Filosofisk vejledning og praktisk kundskab i professionsuddannelser. Forskningsrapport (365 sider)*. DPU, Aarhus Universitet. Download på https://app.box.com/s/s92t2hlb91z1esh1hn6

• Hansen, F.T. 2010b. *The Phenomenology of Wonder in Higher Education*. In: Malt Brinkmann (ed.), *Erziehung. Phänomenologische Perspektiven*. Würzburg: Königshausen & Neumann. (p. 161-178).

• Hansen, F.T. 2012. "One Step Further: The Dance between Poetic Dwelling and Socratic Wonder in Phenomenological Research.* Indo-Pacific Journal of Phenomenology, Vol. 12 (July, Special Edition), p. 1-20.

• Hansen, F.T. 2014, *Kan man undre sig uden ord? Design- og universitetspædagogik på kreative uddannelser – med Designskolen i Kolding som case*. Aalborg: Aalborg Universitetsforlag.

• Hansen, F.T. 2015a, *The Call and Practice of Wonder: How to evoke a Socratic Community of Wonder in Professional settings*. In: Michael Noah Weiss (ed.), *The Socratic Handbook*. Vienna: LIT Verlag. p. 217-244.

• Hansen, F.T. 2015b, *The Philosophical Practitioner as a Co-Researcher*. In: L. Amir & A. Fatic (eds.). *Practicing Philosophy*. Cambridge, Cambridge Scholars Press, p. 22-41.

• Hansen, F.T. 2018, *At møde verden med undren. Dannelse, innovation og organisatorisk udvikling i et verensfilosofisk perspektiv*. København: Hans Reitzels Forlag.

• Herholdt-Lomholdt, S.M. 2013, *Skønne øjeblikke i sygeplejen – en kilde til innovation? En fænomenologisk undersøgelse af æstetiske øjeblikke og disse øjeblikkes forhold til sygeplejefaglig innovation*. (Ph.d. projektbeskrivelse).

• Herholdt-Lomholdt, S.M. 2019, *Skønne øjeblikke i sygeplejen – en kilde til innovation. En fænomenologisk og dialogisk aktionsforskningundersøgelse af skønne øjeblikkes natur og mulige forbindelser til en sygeplejefaglig udviklings- og innovationspraksis*. Ph.d. Thesis. Aalborg Universitetsforlag.

• Jørgensen, D. 2006, *Skønhed. En engel gik forbi*. Aarhus: Aarhus Universitetsforlag

• Jørgensen, D. 2008, *Aglaias dans. På vej mod en æstetisk tænkning*. Aarhus: Aarhus Universitetsforlag.

• Jørgensen, D. 2011, “The experience of immanent Transcendence”. *Nordisk tidsskrift for kunst og kristendom* 2010-11. p. 35-52

• Jørgensen, D. 2014, *Den skønne tænkning. Veje til erfaringsmetafysik religiøsfilosofisk udmondet*. Aarhus Universitetsforlag.

• Ledwith, A. & Bessant, J. 2009. *Managing Innovation in SME’s*. Cambridge: Cambridge Scholar Publishers

• Madsbjerg, M. & Rasmussen, C. 2014, *The Moment of Clarity. Using the Human Sciences to Solve Your Toughest Business Problems*. Harvard Business Review Press.

• Rubenstein, M.-J. 2008, *Strange Wonder: The closure of metaphysics and the opening of awe*. New York: Columbia University Press.

• Sarasvathy, S. 2008. *Effectuation: Elements of Entrepreneurial Expertise*. (New Horizons in Entrepreneurship Series). Edward Elgar Publishing. Crossref

• Scharmer, C.O 2009, *Theory U. Leading from the Future as It Emerges*. San Francisco: Berret-Loehler Publisher.

• Scharmer, O. & Kaufer, K. 2014, *Ledelse fra den spirende fremtid. Fra ego-system til øko-system økonomier*. Randers, Forlaget Ankerhus. Translated from *Leading from the emerging future. From Ego-system to Eco-system economies*.

• Van Manen, M. 2014, *The Phenomenology of Practice*. Walnut Creek, California: Left Coast Press.

• Verganti, R. & Öberg, Å. 2013, *Interpreting and envisioning – A hermeneutic framework to look at radical innovation of meanings*. In: *Industrial Marketing Management vol. 42*, pp. 86-92. Crossref

• Vasalou, S. (ed.) 2014, *Practices of wonder: Cross-disciplinary perspectives*. Eugene, Oregon, Pickwick Publications.