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The Entrepreneurship Educator: Understanding Role Identity

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Entrepreneurship Education and Pedagogy

The Entrepreneurship Educator: Understanding Role Identity

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Abstract:	<p>Significant research explores effectiveness of entrepreneurial curriculum, teaching innovations and programs, but less often studied is the role of entrepreneurship educators. The way that the educator sees his or her role relative to the students is of critical importance because this directly influences pedagogy choices, expectations for students and learning outcomes, as well as job satisfaction. While recent studies propose typologies characterizing pedagogical approaches of educators, few of these are based on the data from entrepreneurship educators. Framed within role identity theory, we conducted 13 in-depth interviews to examine how entrepreneurship educators perceive their role. Using the qualitative data analysis tool (NVivo), we analyzed how the relationship between their perceptions of their role and core value orientation is connected to teaching approaches. Results show that these educators view their roles as teacher-focused, network-focused, or student-focused and that these perspectives are associated with different perceptions of students' role and learning objectives. Further, we find different levels of emphasis on roles, and that personal core values are differentially linked to these roles. Implications and future research directions are discussed.</p>

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The Entrepreneurship Educator: Understanding Role Identity

ABSTRACT

Significant research explores effectiveness of entrepreneurial curriculum, teaching innovations and programs, but less often studied is the role of entrepreneurship educators. The way that the educator sees his or her role relative to the students is of critical importance because this directly influences pedagogy choices, expectations for students and learning outcomes, as well as job satisfaction. While recent studies propose typologies characterizing pedagogical approaches of educators, few of these are based on the data from entrepreneurship educators. Framed within role identity theory, we conducted 13 in-depth interviews to examine how entrepreneurship educators perceive their role. Using the qualitative data analysis tool (NVivo), we analyzed how the relationship between their perceptions of their role and core value orientation is connected to teaching approaches. Results show that these educators view their roles as teacher-focused, network-focused, or student-focused and that these perspectives are associated with different perceptions of students' role and learning objectives. Further, we find different levels of emphasis on roles, and that personal core values are differentially linked to these roles. Implications and future research directions are discussed.

INTRODUCTION

Over the past 20 years, entrepreneurship education has grown dramatically in colleges and universities across the globe. A 2006 study found that over 400,000 students annual take 2,200 courses at 1,600 schools nationwide (Finkle et al., 2006). A recent inventory of programs created by St. Louis University shows 228 schools worldwide offer majors in entrepreneurship or small

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3 business.¹ Schools are making significant investments in programs, courses, facilities (e.g.,
4 incubators and makerspaces) to differentiate and attract students, as well as to produce top
5 programs which can lead to donor funding and improved rankings (Kuratko & Hoskinson, 2014;
6 Nabi et al., 2017). A strong motivation for offering entrepreneurship programs is to enhance
7 student venture creation skills and knowledge, business start-up and overall job creation which in
8 theory should lead to economic growth and development (Bosma & Kelley, 2019; Jones & Matlay,
9 2011; WEF, 2019).

19 Entrepreneurship education is concerned with fostering creative skills that can be applied
20 in practices, education, and environments supporting innovation (Morris & Liguori, 2016; Binks,
21 et al., 2006). Conceptually, the key components of entrepreneurship education are interactive and
22 include educators, community, educational processes and students (Jones & Mataly, 2011). In the
23 past 20 years, entrepreneurship education has been institutionalized within the higher education
24 infrastructure (a university or college) which has structures, reward systems, policies and practices
25 within which faculty work (Morris & Liguori, 2016). Faculty teaching in these programs is central
26 to the hoped-for outcomes of entrepreneurship education, in that changes in student's attitudes and
27 their improved knowledge might lead to venture creation and ultimately economic development.
28 Therefore, entrepreneurship program visibility and success can lead to improved reputational
29 benefits, and student satisfaction might lead to a donor relationship with the school after graduation
30 (Finkle et al., 2006).

47 However, the faculty teaching entrepreneurship are not a homogeneous group, rather;
48 entrepreneurship faculty characterized by different qualifications, roles, and salary structures. A
49 recent report shows that 63% of entrepreneurship faculty were classified as scholarly academics

56 ¹ <https://sites.google.com/a/slu.edu/eweb/list-of-colleges-with-majors-in-entrepreneurship-or-small-business>

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3 and 24% as instructional practitioners, compared to the average across disciplines which was 75%
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5 scholarly academic and 12.6% instructional practitioner (AACSB, 2018-2019²). The variation in
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7 educator backgrounds, business experience and exposure to the practice of teaching influences
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9 their choice of pedagogies, content, learning outcomes achieved in the classroom and their own
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11 job satisfaction (Burke, 2001; Burton et al., 2005; Gibbs & Coffey, 2004).
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15 Research in entrepreneurship education is expanding parallel to the rise in courses,
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17 programs and interest in the topic generally (Brush, 2014; Morris & Liguori, 2016; Neck et al.,
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19 2014; Neck & Corbett, 2018). While recent studies explore on the impact, purpose, and pedagogy
20
21 in entrepreneurship education, the primary focus is on the content or what students learn, and how
22
23 this influences their likelihood of becoming entrepreneurs (Fayolle & Klandt, 2006; Kuratko &
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25 Hoskinson, 2014; Neck & Corbett, 2018; Neck et al., 2014; Nabi et al., 2017; Pittaway & Cope,
26
27 2007). Another stream of research examines student outcomes from courses on topics such as
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29 business plans, entrepreneurial mindset, new ventures creation, and entrepreneurial intentions
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31 (Pittaway & Cope, 2007).
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35 Less research examines the role of the entrepreneurship educator in the learning process,
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37 although there are several debates on the best methods and approaches. For instance, some studies
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39 explore action learning (Leitch & Harrison, 1999), skills-based learning (Ulijn et al., 2004),
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41 experiential learning (Daly, 2001), and development of actual ventures (Haines, 1988), with most
42
43 discussions promoting or arguing for one method over another (Pittaway & Cope, 2007). Other
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45 work developed typologies of educator approaches characterizing instructor role based on research
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47 preoccupations, learning paradigm, and pedagogical approaches (Bécharde & Grégoire, 2007; Nabi
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55 ² This AACSB report surveyed 30,799 faculty and 4,201 deans from 1600 business schools. Scholarly academics have PhD and maintain
56 professional qualifications by conducting scholarly research, whereas Instructional Practitioners are not PhD qualified and maintain qualifications
57 through professional experience and are often adjunct faculty.
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3 et al., 2017). Further, Béchard and Grégoire (2007) in their review of 25 years of entrepreneurship
4 education research, point out that the educator's teaching model, or approach, is a manifestation
5 of his/her knowledge, conceptions, and beliefs about teaching. They posit that there are three basic
6 teaching models: supply model, demand model, and competence model, as well as two hybrids
7 (Béchard & Gregoire, 2007). Extending this work Nabi et al. (2017), in their review of 61 studies,
8 provided a categorization of the type of pedagogical methods and impact of the Bechard and
9 Gregoire (2007) teaching models. One study stands out, in that it presents results of a Delphi study
10 that examines how educators see themselves in the entrepreneurial classroom (Neck & Corbett,
11 2018). This study asks 17 experts about the educator role in teaching entrepreneurship finding that
12 these vary across a spectrum (traditional to progressive) in terms of style, instructional approach,
13 and motivation for students to learn (Neck & Corbett, 2018, p. 31). The authors argued that these
14 models are associated with different teaching goals and student assessment techniques.

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31 Current studies (e.g., Neck & Corbett, 2018) about entrepreneurship educators and teaching
32 approaches are strongly anchored in theory that supports the approaches proposed, but they are
33 derived from aggregate studies rather than in-depth interviews with the entrepreneurship
34 educators. As a result, the perspective of the entrepreneurship educator on his/her role and how
35 this influences their approach to pedagogy and students is not well understood (Henry, 2020). This
36 is an important gap especially given the investment and emphasis that colleges and universities are
37 putting into their entrepreneurship programs, and the expectations that these programs will
38 improve student success and institutional reputation (Finkle et al., 2006; Kuratko & Hoskinson,
39 2014). The entrepreneurship educator is a central actor in this process because they create the
40 courses, develop the pedagogy, and measure student performance. How entrepreneurship
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3 educators see themselves in their role can influence the quality of the student experience, the
4 educator's job satisfaction, and their confidence in the classroom.³
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8 Our study is anchored in identity theory, which explains individuals' role related behaviors
9 within a wider social structure (Stryker, 1980; Hogg et al., 1995). Identity theory connects role
10 identities to outcomes in a way that some identities may have more self-relevance or salience than
11 others depending on the situation which affects behaviors (Stryker & Stratham, 1985). In the
12 context of entrepreneurship education, an educator's identity is linked to the emphasis one has on
13 a particular role, which influences behaviors (Stryker & Stratham, 1985). As noted above,
14 entrepreneurship educators work within a context where expectations maybe different depending
15 on their positions at their institution. Further, personal perceptions of their role are also influenced
16 by past teaching or business experience and personal values. This suggests they may have different
17 perceptions of their role which would influence how they interact with students or their
18 pedagogical approach.
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33 Therefore, we ask, *how do entrepreneurship educators see their role?* Using the lens of
34 identity theory, we conducted 13 in-depth interviews, and analyzed the data using a qualitative
35 data analysis tool (NVivo, v. 12). Results show that educators view their roles as teacher-focused,
36 network-focused, or student-focused, with each of these perspectives associated with different
37 perceptions of students' role and learning objectives. Further, we find varying levels of emphasis
38 linked to these roles, with those emphasizing a teacher-focused role expressing a stronger opinion
39 about it while those emphasizing a network-focused role showing a weaker connection to it. Our
40 analysis of personal core values expressed by educators shows that their values orientation was
41 associated with their perceived role and teaching approach. We make three contributions; first, our
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56 ³ The authors are grateful to Andrew Corbett for his thoughtful comments on this part of the manuscript.
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3 assessment of the entrepreneurship educators' role identity shows that there is variation across the
4 perceptions each has about their role, their view of students, learning objectives and personal
5 values. Second, our findings complement work by Béchar and Grégoire (2007) and Neck and
6 Corbett (2018) showing that there is a continuum of role identities, but we extend this work by
7 providing deeper description of these roles based on the expectations for students, learning
8 objectives, pedagogical approaches, and how these relate to personal values and previous
9 experience. Third, our research utilized a self-narrative approach, which asked educators to
10 "reflect" on their role and their interaction with students. This approach assists educators'
11 reflections on their understanding of the different roles involved in being an entrepreneurship
12 educator, and therefore assists in their identity formation and a stronger role salience towards
13 specific roles.
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28 The following sections provide an overview of the theoretical background and a description
29 of our methodology, followed by results and discussion. We conclude with theoretical discussions,
30 implications, and future research directions.
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38 **THEORETICAL BACKGROUND**

39 *Identity Theory*

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42 Identities are the various meanings that are attached to an individual by the self and by
43 others (Burke & Tully, 1977; Stryker, 1980). Identities can be based on the social roles a person
44 holds, social identities, or personal characteristics that the individual shows, or that others attribute
45 to him or her based on personal identities (Ashforth & Mael, 1989; Gecas, 1982; Ibarra &
46 Barbulescu, 2010). People form identities based on a sense of belonging to a certain social category
47 (e.g., nationality, organization, religion, social group, etc.) and their identity in turn influences
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3 their self-concept and their behavior (Tajfel & Turner, 1979). Identities vary across many
4 dimensions including the importance to the individual, or whether they reflect achievements, or
5 whether they are durable (Stryker & Serpe, 1982). Generally, identities are multiple and socially
6 constructed phenomena (Baumeister, 1998; Ibarra & Barbulescu, 2010).
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12 Two prominent perspectives are social identity theory and identity theory (Hogg, et al.,
13 1995; Stets & Burke, 2000). In social identity theory, a social identity is based on one's knowledge
14 that he or she belongs to a social group or category and is anchored in intergroup social
15 comparisons (Stets & Burke, 2000; Hogg & Abrams, 1988; Turner, 1975). In social identity theory
16 there is a uniformity of perception and action among those who take on a group-based social
17 identity (social categorization) and the associated meanings and expectations associated with this
18 role. On the other hand, identity theory emphasizes the identification one has to a particular role
19 and the incorporation into this view of self, the meanings and expectations associated with that
20 role and its performance (Burke & Reitzes, 1981; Burke & Tully, 1977). Identity theory explains
21 individuals' role related behaviors within a wider social structure (Stryker, 1980; Hogg et al.,
22 1995), and connects role identities to outcomes in a way that some identities may have more self-
23 relevance or salience than others depending on the situation (Stryker & Stratham, 1985). However,
24 people still adopt self-meaning and expectations to accompany the role as it relates to other roles
25 in the group (Stets & Burke, 2000). Thus role-based identity expresses not only the group-based
26 perceptions and behaviors that accompany group-based identity, but also the interconnected
27 uniqueness.
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49 Social identity theory is relevant in the academic environment, given the structure of roles
50 for faculty by rank (e.g., assistant, associate, full professor), and the faculty and student
51 categorization that occurs in the classroom, (Stets & Burke, 2000). For this research, our
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3 exploration is anchored within role identity theory which focuses on an entrepreneurship
4 educator's perception of his/her role and the meanings attached to that role. In other words, how
5 do the entrepreneurship educators conceive of their role, and how does this conception influence
6 their behavior?
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12 Theory suggests that self-conceptions of roles will motivate behavior in two ways - first, a
13 strive for self-confidence or wish to think well of one's self, and second, self-consistency, or the
14 wish to maintain one's self-picture or identity (Burke & Reitzes, 1981). In other words, in order to
15 be (some identity), one must act like (some identity). To be a professor, one must act like a
16 professor and so forth. Within higher education, professors have different roles (teaching, research,
17 service, administration), which may mean that some professors may present their research
18 professor identity over a teaching professor identity (Greenberg et al., 2007). In some situations,
19 contextual demands or reward systems of educational institutions may also influence behavior
20 because of the nature of the institution, departmental structure, or regulatory requirements (Hogg
21 et al., 1995; Bécharde & Grégoire, 2007). Roles are dynamically constructed depending on the
22 context and the requirements for behavior, either formal or informal, and the incentives that
23 motivate that behavior (Simpson & Carroll, 2008).
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40 Stryker (1987) argues that people have many "selves" perceived or related to others, and
41 there is a hierarchy related to role based self-concepts (p. 16), where identities may be ordered in
42 relation to one another (Callero, 1985). Within the hierarchy, some identities may be more
43 prominent, or salient depending on the degree of commitment to and investment in the identity
44 (McCall & Simmons, 1978). Commitment is the "*degree to which the individual's relationship to*
45 *particular others are depending on being a given kind of person*" (Stryker & Stratham, 1985, p.
46 34). The more strongly committed a person is to an identity, the higher the level of identity salience
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3 (Stryker, 1980). Role identity salience is important because it influences our relations with others
4 and our behaviors (Callero, 1985). In the academic environment, faculty may have different levels
5 of emphasis or commitment to a role depending on the personal investment of time, education and
6 learning to move into that role (e.g., in research, teaching or practice) which would ultimately
7 influence behavior.
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15 Further, role identity is also associated with enduring beliefs, values, motives, and
16 experiences that are characteristic of those individuals (Hitlin, 2003). Personal values are what we
17 each hold as important in life (Schwartz, 1992). Values serve as standards or criteria for action,
18 and they are ordered in importance. As such, values lead to conceptions of self and self-
19 descriptions which are in turn enacted in our behaviors and experiences. For example, several
20 studies examine the relationship between personal values and consumer behavior (Barbarossa et
21 al., 2017). More specifically, personal values and self-identification as “green” or environmentally
22 responsible are shown to influence environmental behaviors (Schwartz, 1992). Values are ordered
23 hierarchically, and so some values are more important than others (Hitlin, 2003). In the case of
24 entrepreneurship educators, their values and interpretive frame might influence the ways they set
25 learning goals and interact with students (Greenberg et al., 2007).
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41 Finally, identity theory is also linked to professional role identity which is the self-
42 definition by a member as part of a profession (Ibarra, 1999). Professional identity can be defined
43 as “*the relatively stable and enduring constellation of attributes, beliefs, values, motives, and*
44 *experiences in terms of which people define themselves in a professional role*” (Ibarra, 1999, p.
45 764-765). The role is linked to a specific behavior expected from being in a profession while
46 identity is linked to the individual. In academic environment, the educator, and his or her beliefs,
47 values, motives and experiences are characteristic of those individuals who enact the same
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3 professional role (Ibarra, 1990 as cited in Greenberg et al., 2007). While a part of enacting in the
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5 professional role is described or prescribed by the organization, the individual is still able to make
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7 decisions about “what they do, how they do it, and who they are as they enact that role” (Greenberg
8
9 et al., 2007, p. 440). For instance, the educational institutions set the frame via job descriptions
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11 and through the curriculum, which influence the educators’ pedagogical decisions.
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14 ***Literature Review***

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17 We conducted a non-exhaustive literature search of entrepreneurship education studies,
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19 using the terms, such as “entrepreneur* educator”, and “role” (teaching, lecturer, perception, and
20
21 conception and identity). The search results did not identify any papers which use the combination
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23 of all keywords used in the search terms. However, we did find more general papers related to role
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25 of educators. Table 1 provides a summary of the papers we reviewed.
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33 Our review shows a variety of themes regarding entrepreneurship educators over a broad
34
35 range of topics ranging from self-reflection about skills and perceptions of a subject, to the
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37 development of competencies, and classroom practices. For most studies, the methodology is
38
39 qualitative. Few papers were identified that examine the perceptions of educators, and these focus
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41 on students in training to become educators (e.g., Lepistö & Rönkkö, 2013; Rönkkö & Lepistö,
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43 2015; Seikkula-Leino et al., 2010). In only a few studies does the educator reflect upon his/her
44
45 own teaching and what to change in future courses (Hannon, 2018; Robinson et al., 2016). Hannon
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47 (2018) offers a personal reflection on the transition to becoming an entrepreneurship educator,
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49 while Robinson et al. (2016, p. 675) looks deeper into a professor’s reflection on a single course.
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3 Some studies investigate educators' background (Kabongo & McCaskey, 2011) and their
4 pedagogical modalities (Dominik & Banerji, 2019), while one study discusses key challenges with
5 choosing content and what it means for the future entrepreneurship educator (Henry, 2020). More
6 recently, two studies add insights into the complexity of the role of the entrepreneurship educator
7 in the midst of an educational ecosystem (Wraae & Walmsley, 2020), and how educators can take
8 on the role of entrepreneurial leaders within their own educational institution (Hannon, 2018).
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11 A few literature reviews have developed typologies of faculty roles. Notably, Béchard and
12 Grégoire (2007) proposed three different teaching models based on educators' conceptions about
13 their teaching, their students, and themselves, and assumptions about the knowledge they are
14 teaching. First, the *supply* model focuses on transmission of knowledge, skills, and other abilities
15 from the educator to the learner. The educator is "imparting information" or "telling a story". The
16 goals of this model are to teach students the facts and principles and to provide a role model, while
17 evaluation is summative, focused on retention of knowledge imparted. Second, the *demand* model
18 focuses on answering the learning goals, motives, and needs of students, where teaching is viewed
19 as the construction of an environment to optimize and organize student activities. The teacher is
20 the "facilitator", and goals are to help students develop basic learning and skills as well as personal
21 development and growth. Finally, the *competence* model is designed to help students develop their
22 competencies and knowledge by solving complex problems. Teachers are "coaches and
23 developers" while students construct their knowledge through interactions with the educator and
24 peers, and evaluation is centered on the student's ability to address real life complex problems.
25 The authors acknowledge that there are hybrid forms as well (Béchard & Grégoire, 2007). This
26 framework was further explored in another literature review by Nabi et al. (2017), who focused on
27 validating the earlier teaching models and exploring the pedagogies relative to the outcomes. For
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3 both these analyses, the framework is anchored in theory, but the degree to which educators
4 identified with these roles or are committed to one or another pedagogical approach is less clear.
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8 Neck and Corbett (2018) conducted a Delphi study which asked educators to report
9 periodically on perceptions of their role as educators, the role of students, and how students engage
10 in and practice entrepreneurship in higher education. The 17 award-winning professors in the study
11 varied from being a facilitator, coach, mentor, guide, role model, enabler, or connector. They also
12 note that instructional approach correlated with how the educator sees him/herself and how they
13 see students. Neck and Corbett (2018) conclude that there is a continuum of approaches that is
14 grounded in entrepreneurship and reflects one of three education perspectives - old school, today,
15 ideal - and that there are specific educator roles for each- lecturer, coach, and facilitator,
16 respectively. This study is unique in that it draws the data from faculty narratives and perspectives
17 about how they think about entrepreneurship education.
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31 Current studies articulating models and approaches for entrepreneurship educators
32 recognize the links between instructor perception of his/her role, perceptions of students, pedagogy
33 approaches, and outcomes, but we are lacking an in-depth understanding of how the educator sees
34 him/herself, and the factors associated with these role perceptions. With the exception of Neck and
35 Corbett (2018), most typologies of educator approaches and roles are based on literature reviews
36 rather than actual data from educators. Given that identity theory suggests individuals within
37 certain role categories will have different role perceptions to which they will attach different
38 meanings, and that will motivate them to enact different behaviors in their roles (Greenberg et al.,
39 2007; Stets & Burke, 2000), we argue that it would be useful to understand how role perceptions
40 vary among entrepreneurship educators and what influences these perceptions. This is the impetus
41 for our study. We ask, “*How do entrepreneurship educators see their role?*” We also ask, “*How*
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3 *committed is the educator to his/her role?” “Which factors are associated with different role*
4 *perceptions?”* And “How are role perceptions linked to expectations for student behaviors?” The
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8 next section outlines the methodology we employed to examine these questions.
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11 12 **METHODOLOGY**

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15 The methodology for this research is rooted in Jones and Matlay’s conceptual framework
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17 (2011) which described entrepreneurship education with its five different elements surrounding
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19 the construction of teaching: the educator itself, student, educational institution, community, and
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21 educational processes. The Jones and Matlay (2011) framework propose a dynamic interaction
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23 among all the elements, but for this investigation, we are specifically concerned with the educators
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25 and the educational processes. As noted earlier, the goals of educational institutions offering
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27 entrepreneurship programs is to develop entrepreneurial students that in the end assist in
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29 developing the community. It is through the entrepreneurship education practices and processes,
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31 and the interactions of students and educators that this goal is achieved. The educator therefore
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33 plays a significant role in developing and inspiring the entrepreneurial mindset, skills and concepts
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35 of the students through entrepreneurship education. The actual approaches differ depending on
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37 learning objectives of the educator, how the educator interprets these objectives and how these are
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39 translated into the teaching process (Jones & Matlay, 2011). Further, the educators’ perceptions
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41 and reflections of their own position, their role identity as an educator, their beliefs and values are
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43 also related to their teaching process (Seikkula-Leino et al., 2010; Shulman & Shulman, 2004).
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50 As such, we developed our study to explore the way the entrepreneurship educator
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52 perceives his/her identity based on the interaction with students and interpretations of their
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54 experiences. A qualitative method was deemed appropriate to understand complexities of
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3 entrepreneurship role identity in the educational environments, and in particular to understand the
4 entrepreneurship educator's role perceptions (Demirkaya, 2009; Robinson et al., 2016). The data
5 was collected through a qualitative method using video recorded semi-structured interviews
6 (Kvale, 2007). This approach, referred to by Ibarra and Barbulescu (2010) as a self-narrative, or a
7 story about self, allows the narrator to make a point about his/her identity. Applying Maxwell's
8 (2013) qualitative research design for the study, the core theoretical goal was to gain new insights
9 into the role identity of entrepreneurship educators, and to better understand how the role identity
10 influences educators' perceptions of students and learning objectives in the classroom.
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21 The interview questions were pretested with two educators from the network of the senior
22 author. No major changes were made as a result of the pretest. The senior author performed all the
23 interviews, which lasted from 35 to 83 minutes, and were audio and video recorded (Harris, 2016;
24 Tripp & Rich, 2012). The interviews were performed in the middle of the semester, from March
25 to May 2017 (one in the beginning of June). Each interview was divided into two parts: firstly,
26 each interviewee was asked to define each of the five elements mentioned above (e.g., educator,
27 institution) (Jones & Matlay, 2011) and to draw their own model to reflect and describe their own
28 position as entrepreneurship educator. Each model was the foundation for the second part of the
29 interview in which several questions were asked in relation to each of those five elements. When
30 possible, the researcher asked clarifying questions and explored the responses from different
31 angles to confirm the validity (Saunders et al., 2012).
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47 *Sample*

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49 The entrepreneurship educators were identified based on their teaching activities; either an
50 educator who taught only entrepreneurship or an educator who taught entrepreneurship as a part
51 of a bigger teaching portfolio. All educators were well-qualified instructors and had taught several
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3 entrepreneurship courses. We designed the sample in this way in order to see if the two educator
4
5 groups perceived their own role differently depending on their teaching portfolio. All educators
6
7 were involved in teaching and interacting with the students at the time of the interview. The sample
8
9 was based on “network sampling” strategy using the authors’ social network to identify more
10
11 precisely educators teaching entrepreneurship at the university of applied science level (Neergaard,
12
13 2007). We chose this approach because it was an appropriate and a natural way to gain access to
14
15 this educator group. Although, we had a relatively small sample consisting of 13 entrepreneurship
16
17 educators, we believe, based on the context of the study, we gathered sufficient data to perform an
18
19 in-depth analysis considering the variation across the sample with respect to their teaching
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21 experience, gender and age (Patton, 1987). Of 13 entrepreneurship educators, six were non-
22
23 business educators (with a primary focus on public administration, social work and pedagogy) and
24
25 seven were business educators (with a primary focus on entrepreneurship, finance and marketing).
26
27 The business educators were involved in teaching students aiming at career in the private sectors,
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29 while the non-business educators were involved in teaching students aiming at careers in the public
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31 sector. Moreover, among the entrepreneurship educators, eight were females and five were males.
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33 Regarding the age of the educators, four were over 50 years old, and nine were below 50. The
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35 educators primarily taught entrepreneurship at five different universities of applied sciences, few
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37 were from university level in Denmark and two were international educators.
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44 *Analysis*

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46 All interviews were transcribed verbatim, and each respondent was given the opportunity
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48 to read and edit the transcript for the accuracy of the transcription (Maxwell, 2013; Wigren, 2007)
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50 and only one had minor editing remarks. We used NVivo (version 12) to aid the analysis process.
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52 This tool has been used in similar studies (e.g., Kleine et al., 2019; Lackéus, 2014). No pre-coding
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3 was applied to transcripts prior to use of software for characterizing educator's role perception
4 (Ramzan et al., 2019). Next, data were content analyzed and broken down into component parts,
5
6 and based on the educators' perceptions of, e.g., students' role or institution's role, headings and
7
8 sections were given to different passages of the interviews. Then, transcripts were imported into
9
10 the NVivo program for further analysis. In order to ensure the consistency and accuracy of the
11
12 codes and nodes created, all the authors were involved in both developing the criteria for coding
13
14 and actual coding process. Based on the theoretical framework used in the research, coding process
15
16 was performed and five nodes (community role, educator role, institution role, learning role, and
17
18 student role) in relation to entrepreneurial education were identified. Subsequently, from these
19
20 nodes, several sub-nodes were also created (e.g., challenges in teaching and results achieved).
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22 Several iterations were made until a consensus was achieved that the nodes were accurately and
23
24 precisely assigned to each particular passage.
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31 The demographic information of the interviewees was used to assess if any of the
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33 interviewees' characteristics influence perceptions of the interviewees regarding their role as an
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35 entrepreneurship educator or the potential category in which they could belong. We created a node
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37 classification consisting of several attributes (e.g., age, gender) for all interviewees and "coding
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39 stripes", "memos", and "annotations" were also created and used. Upon completion of coding and
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41 reaching to a more advanced stage, we created a "mind-map" to gain a broader overview and obtain
42
43 a visual representation of data, nodes, and relationship between the nodes, child nodes, and sibling
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45 of the child nodes. The analysis showed that two terms were mentioned a significant number of
46
47 times: teaching goals (n = 94) and educator role (n = 88). Other terms mentioned frequently were
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49 learning role (n = 57), community role (n = 57), challenges (n = 54) and student role (n = 51).
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3 In addition, we examined the intensity of the educators' opinions regarding their positions
4 and role perceptions. In doing so, we analyzed the transcripts to see how strongly interviewees
5 emphasized their role as an entrepreneurship educator and how persistently they referred to the
6 role they perceived during their interview. Also, as an indicator for intensity, we analyzed if they
7 had one single definition in mind regarding their position and role perception or they changed their
8 conception of their role during the interview. Then, we used this information and linked it with
9 educator's demographic such as age, gender, past experience in teaching and whether they have
10 an entrepreneurial background or not.
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22 A further analysis of values that were associated with different perceived roles, following
23 Hitlin's (2003) value-based model, was also conducted. We looked for relationships between
24 values and identity. This model is originated from Schwartz's (1992) value-structure and consists
25 of values divided into seven distinct factors: universalism, conservation, openness to change,
26 achievement, benevolence, power, and spirituality. Moreover, inspired by (Hitlin, 2003, p. 127)
27 values-based conception of personal identity model, we further analyzed data to obtain the level
28 of one specific identity because we believe values-based conception of personal identity is an
29 important motivational force within the self. We then identified values that were similar and
30 different for each of the educators' position or role perceptions.
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42 In addition to analysis of values, we also ran word frequency analysis to determine how
43 these were attached to different roles. Regarding similar words among educators, we first identified
44 the most frequent words mentioned by the interviewees. The results show that seven words were
45 the most frequent ones used by the educators. Then, we counted how many times each of those
46 seven words were repeated by each identified role. We elaborate on this in the next section.
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RESULTS

Our analysis of the interviews showed that entrepreneurship educators reflected a continuum of different educator role conceptions. These role conceptions varied relative to educator role self-perception, core values, learning objectives and view of student role. Within the entrepreneurship educator roles, we identified three distinct foci: teacher-focused, network-focused, and student-focused, as noted in Table 2.

Table 2

Teacher-Focused

The first group we identified was teacher-focused group comprised of three female and two male educators. Of the educators in this group (n = five), four of them had entrepreneurial experience, and three had teaching experience, with some having overlapping experience. The educators in this group believe they are at the center of attention and at the core of the process. Their main role perception is to transfer and communicate information and knowledge (sender of message) to students and to help them to develop skills and realize their role in the society. This finding is similar to the Béchard and Grégoire's (2007) *supply* model. One educator (I11, male, non-business educator, with both teaching and entrepreneurial experience) indicated that "*They [students] need to know when they must act as a professional, and when they just act as an ordinary committed citizen*", and he continued by saying that "*I see myself as a very privileged person who has the opportunity to make young people as clever as myself*". Another commented that (I10, female, business educator, having entrepreneurial experience) "*I will also have to make a setup that is inspiring enough that they bother to come, that this is more important than sleeping or lying at home*" and commented that "*As an educator, I believe that I have a multidisciplinary*

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3 *role and it is important for me to be a part of the business life too, so I teach half of the time and*
4 *get project work done on the other half”*. In the teacher-focused group, educators see themselves
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6 as having responsibilities and obligations. For example, I10 noted: *“So, I think I have obligations*
7
8 *to the community.”* Another educator (I2, female, business educator with entrepreneurial
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10 experience) indicated that *“The educator, that is the person who provides teaching, which is the*
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12 *sender of the message, educator who sits in the middle of it all, you could say, as the spider and*
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14 *who has the wires out to the students.”*

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19 We also observed a strong belief or emphasis on their role self-perception. For example, I9
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21 (female, business educator, with teaching experience) said: *“This is mega essential to say if I will*
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23 *lead them in one direction, then I need to know what the direction is and then I can go back and*
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25 *then say what types of input is it I give them here, right, so my role will be to determine how*
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27 *relevant is this input to the output if the output should be the leaders of tomorrow”*.

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31 According to the educators in this group, students are expected to gain knowledge for
32
33 business life and to develop an entrepreneurial mindset while passing their exams. One educator
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35 (I2) mentioned that *“There are actually two goals, one is of course that they must pass their exams*
36
37 *and preferably with a good grade, but the next goal is actually they get some knowledge that they*
38
39 *can translate out in the business life”* and she put forward that *“The businesses not just*
40
41 *necessarily request that students know how to create websites but now they also really like that*
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43 *they can design the website, so it changes all the time, so we are constantly in dialogue ... what is*
44
45 *it actually that students should be able to do when they are supposed to go out”*. This group of
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47 educators believe that it is their responsibility to help students broaden their horizons, one of them
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49 mentioned (I12, male, business educator, with both teaching and entrepreneurial experience)
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51 mentioned that *“What I see as my most distinguished role as an educator is to constantly push my*
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3 *students to the limit*". The analysis of values for the teacher-focused group showed that educators
4 mentioned several items under the universalism value, notably "equality", "creativity", and
5 "beauty" (See Table 3).
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11 Table 3
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16 Under the conservation value, "politeness", "tradition", and "discipline" were noted. With regard
17 to the openness to change value, educators mentioned teaching as "exciting", while for the
18 achievement value, we found educators spoke about "independence". Finally, for the benevolence
19 value, "friendship" was prevalent. There were no indications of the "power" and spirituality"
20 values for this role. The presence of values around tradition and discipline as well as equality are
21 consistent with the instructor perspective of knowledge delivery and testing, rather than an
22 experiential pedagogy. The word frequency analysis also showed that in teacher-focused group,
23 educators emphasized learning more than the other two groups, and used the words "expect",
24 "support", "curriculum", and "knowledge", whereas these were not mentioned by the other groups.
25 The prominence of these words appears to be consistent with a traditional approach to teaching,
26 where teacher is at the center of the learning experience, imparting knowledge and learning to
27 students (See Table 4).
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48 ***Network-Focused***

49 The second group we identified was a network-focused, comprised of three female and one
50 male educators. Of the educators in this group, two did not have teaching experience but three had
51 entrepreneurial experience. Educators in this group considered themselves more as consultants and
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3 believed their main task is to guide and provide support to students and have a cross-faculty and
4 multidisciplinary teaching role. In this group, educators were not as clear and definitive about their
5 own role perception or their view of the students' role. They were less confident about their role
6 perception and how they perceived their role as an educator. The educators believe they are
7 responsible for a wide range of activities from asking questions to supervision, from putting
8 variation in learning process to encouraging students. For instance, one educator (I8, female,
9 business educator with not extensive teaching and entrepreneurial experience) mentioned that: *"I*
10 *see myself as being more knowledgeable than students, and so I know a little bit more than they*
11 *do, but I try to make them understand their own responsibilities."* Educators in this group were
12 concerned with helping their students to develop entrepreneurial skills and believed they must
13 contribute to business community. For instance, one educator (I3, female, business educator with
14 teaching experience) stated: *"for me it is very important that students are self-going, and have*
15 *responsibility and I always, as an educator, try to tell them this in all processes, and then I always*
16 *tell them that I present themes and perspectives, and that they have to think by themselves, because*
17 *they are all adults"*. Another educator (I1, female, non-business educator with teaching
18 experience) noted: *"My role is to provide a general framework for the students in context to the*
19 *curriculum"*. Moreover, it seemed that this group of educators followed a more flexible approach;
20 for example, one (I13, male, business educator with entrepreneurial experience) noted *"What*
21 *happens in the classroom is not always something that is planned, like one could say it is very*
22 *entrepreneurial, there is something they have to read and prepare and then we suddenly work with*
23 *some things else than what was planned, that is what I try to catch as a facilitator."* For these
24 educators, learning objectives were manifold. For example, acquainting students with different
25 innovation skills, enabling them to develop their skills further, seeing them grow as individuals
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3 and taking responsibility for their own learning. One educator (I1) stated, *“We have set the goal*
4 *that we shall focus on skill development on innovation”*.
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8 In the analysis of values for this group, we found that under the universalism value,
9
10 “creativity” was important, while under the conservation value, “security” was highlighted. For
11
12 the achievement value, these educators mentioned “success”, “ambition”, “independence”, and
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14 while for the benevolence value, “friendship” was stated frequently. The other three values were
15
16 not mentioned by the educators in this group, i.e., openness to change”, “power”, and spirituality”.
17
18 The focus on creativity and achievement was consistent with students gaining skills that lead them
19
20 to be successful as entrepreneurs, contributing to the community. The word frequency analysis
21
22 showed that network-focused educators tended to mention “entrepreneurship” more often than the
23
24 other groups, and they also emphasized “relations”, “role”, “development”, and “personality”
25
26 whereas the other groups did not use these terms. This further demonstrated that in the network-
27
28 focused group, educator facilitate and connect through roles and relationships.
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32 33 ***Student-Focused*** 34

35 The third group we identified was student-focused, comprised of two female and two male
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37 educators. Of the educators in this group, three of them had teaching experience and one with
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39 entrepreneurial experience. The role perception of the educators in this group was centered on
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41 teaching students to learn and contribute to the public sector, while they expected students to
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43 become critical thinkers and seek for opportunities, learn business life and be responsible for their
44
45 own lives. Educators in this group expected students to be independent, active, take the leading
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47 role, and become entrepreneurs. As one of the educators indicated that (I6, male, business educator
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49 with both teaching and entrepreneurial experience) *“They must have entrepreneurial mindset, as I*
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51 *think the business life wants the students to get this entrepreneurial mindset”*. Another educator
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3 (I7, female, non-business educator with both teaching and entrepreneurial experience) mentioned
4 that “*we do have the agreement with the Ministry that 10 percent of our students should start their*
5 *own business, so I have the students who writes their bachelor in the last period and starts their*
6 *own business*”. The educators in this group believed that students are the center of the learning
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(I7, female, non-business educator with both teaching and entrepreneurial experience) mentioned that “*we do have the agreement with the Ministry that 10 percent of our students should start their own business, so I have the students who writes their bachelor in the last period and starts their own business*”. The educators in this group believed that students are the center of the learning experience and were strong and emphatic in their emphasis on their role perceptions. While the reasoning for their description of this role perception differed by educators, they all believed that their role is defined only in the relationship with the students’ demands and expectations, and that students are the inspiration and ultimate judges. These educators believed students’ varying backgrounds play a central role in how they are perceived. For instance, I6 noted, “*I see the students as singular individuals, so you cannot treat them the same, or you could but to get the best possible outcome then I will have to look at them and meet them where they are, because when they come to us come from different places and skills, to get them to work together in the best possible way, then you will have to have an eye for them all, so for me students are about team capacity and a lot about the individual*”. Another educator (I5, female, non-business educator with not substantial teaching and entrepreneurial experience) mentioned that, “*I consider a student to be an individual human being who is going through an educational development, who is going from one place to another*”, or another educator (I4, male, non-business educator, with teaching experience) indicated that “*students are the center of rotation and should seek for opportunities and learn business life.*”

The educators perceived their roles as both facilitator and counselor. For instance, one educator (I4) mentioned that, “*I am very relatively instructional, which is then more facilitative instructional*” he continued by saying that “*If I understand the theory correctly, and then I am more of a consultant role, so it actually becomes both as consultant but also facilitator, who tries*

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3 *to give some suggestions on how student can continue working with their project because it is their*
4 *project.”* Another educator (I7) mentioned that *“I am a facilitator, I very reluctantly want to come*
5 *with very many answers”* Moreover, educators perceived their role based on the students’
6 expectations, defining them as being the source of income for the educational institution, and gave
7 students the central role. The main objectives and goals for the educators included making students
8 satisfied and enabling them to succeed and understand why they do what they do. They also
9 indicated that students must learn to manage innovations and business life and behave like an adult.
10 They also mentioned that they focus on knowing students at individual level and encouraging them
11 to get more involved with their professors. For example, one of the educators (I6) noted: *“I also*
12 *talk to my colleagues about my students, how is it going with those? How do you experience it, so*
13 *we spend a lot of time talking about the students, about their development and how they are in*
14 *groups?”* Similarly, another educator (I7) noted: *“I can sit and guide any student and suddenly it*
15 *makes me want to ask a specific question, then I will just ask about something, and then it turns*
16 *out that I hit completely into something that they are trying to hide, both for me and for each other,*
17 *some problems in their teamwork or something else that is not working.”*

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38 Different from the other two groups, all seven values were represented by this group. We
39 found that under the universalism value, “equality”, “creativity”, “peace”, and “protecting
40 environment” were frequently mentioned. Under the conservation value, “security” and “self-
41 discipline” were apparent, while for the openness to change value, these educators spoke about
42 nurturing an “exciting life”. Under the achievement value, educators emphasized “success” and
43 “ambition”. For the benevolence value, “friendship” was noted; for the power value, “social
44 power” and “authority” were discussed; and for the spirituality value, educators talked about the
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3 “meaning of life”. The emphasis on broader philosophical, environmental, and human values was
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5 consistent with the idea of facilitating the development of students into good citizens.
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8 The word frequency analysis showed that educators emphasized innovation more than the
9
10 other two groups and mentioned “exciting or excited”, “influence”, “thinking”, and “facilitate or
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12 facilitator”. This supports the description of the student-focused group, where the educator is
13
14 motivating and facilitating the students.
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19 **DISCUSSION**

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21 Our analysis sought to determine the role identity conceptions of entrepreneurship
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23 educators through analysis of transcripts from interviews, a values analysis, and word frequency
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25 analysis of the transcripts. The qualitative analysis yielded three role descriptions, linked to their
26
27 role perception, expectations for students and learning objectives. Our study not only found three
28
29 distinctly focused roles, (i.e., teacher-, network-, and student-focused) but also, we found that
30
31 based on the educators’ personal characteristics, they attach different values to their role perception
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33 (personal identity). Further we found that previous experiences and values were related to how
34
35 they enacted their role, similar to Greenberg et al. (2007) and Ibarra (1990).
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40 While we did note distinctive differences among the role focus for each of the three groups,
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42 we found that there were some commonalities as well. For instance, regardless of role focus
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44 perception, the majority of the educators believed that it is very important that students build and
45
46 develop an entrepreneurial mindset and learn business life (Neck & Corbett, 2018). Most educators
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48 mentioned that they expect their students to be independent, irrespective of their role or learning
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50 objectives. One explanation is that in the entrepreneurship education context, independence is
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52 associated with the role of the entrepreneur, where most entrepreneurship courses emphasize
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3 starting an independent new venture and this may often be alone rather than in a team or group
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5 (Neck et al., 2014). Further, the word frequency analysis indicated that all three educators' groups
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7 emphasized on "learning" and "processes" as a key consideration.
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10 When we considered the unique differences across the educators' roles, teacher-focused
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12 educators were those with business background, and both teaching and entrepreneurial experience.
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14 These educators focused more on their central role in teaching, where they were in charge of the
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16 learning and the pedagogies were based on imparting skills, information, and knowledge to
17
18 students who were then tested on their knowledge. While the pedagogy is similar to the Bechard
19
20 and Gregoire (2005) supply model description, our study finds that educators with this role
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22 perception emphasize tradition and discipline, while helping students to broaden their horizons
23
24 and gain knowledge about life and business, which is consistent with the "Athena" philosophy
25
26 noted in Greenberg et al. (2018). Because of past experience, it is possible that teacher-focused
27
28 educators attach greater importance or emphasis on their social role (as entrepreneur, and therefore
29
30 an expert) and personal role as an "educator" (Hitlin, 2003; Stryker & Serpe, 1994). While this
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32 does suggest a combination of roles, we find one is more prominent than the other. In other words,
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34 the traditional "teacher" role identity is more prominent and associated with being in charge of,
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36 and directing the class, which is also consistent with the values orientation of discipline and
37
38 tradition. This role identity is similar to the Neck and Corbett (2018) description of stage one in
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40 self-directed learning where student is dependent on teacher as the authority and coach, as in "old
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42 school" learning.
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49 The network-focused group is characterized by educators who believe they have a cross-
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51 faculty and multidisciplinary teaching role and view their role as a consultant as well. Instead of
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53 being at the center of the learning experience, they were more concerned with setting frameworks
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3 for students. This group had mixed background on business and non-business with more teaching
4 experience than the entrepreneurial experience. The educators in the network-focused group
5 expected students to have responsibilities and obligation, and to contribute to business life by
6 developing entrepreneurial skills and a mindset. Similar to the Neck and Corbett (2018) stage three
7 of self-directed learning approach where student is involved, and teacher is the facilitator. The
8 network-focused role was consistent with the idea that educators are “coaches and developers” or,
9 in our analysis “consultants or even facilitators”, while the outcomes are to learn skills that can be
10 used to solve real life complex problems. In the network-focused group, the educators professed
11 values linked to security, friendship, success, and ambition, different from the other educators. For
12 this group, it is possible that the entrepreneurial or business identity is equally or even more
13 prominent in their hierarchy of role identity than the educator identity (Stryker & Serpe, 1994).
14 Hence, while we might expect the teacher identity to be more salient in the university setting,
15 instead we see that network-focused educators appeared to enact two identities, or a combination
16 of identities, even though the business identity may or may not be a fit to the context (Stets &
17 Burke, 2000). Because the emphasis in describing this role was lower for this group than the others,
18 meaning it was expressed with less intensity, it might be that this group was either comfortable
19 with presenting two role identities in the education context, or alternatively, they were less sure
20 about their educator identity (Simpson & Carroll, 2008).
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44 The student-focused group included the educators who were characterized by a strong
45 belief that students are the central part of the education and they are the main judges. This group
46 was the most mixed in terms of their business background and teaching or entrepreneurial
47 experience. The educators had different expectations from students including being responsible
48 for their own life, being open-minded, having an entrepreneurial mindset (rather than developing
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one as in the teacher-focused group), and being able to seek for opportunities and become critical thinker. The learning objectives were designed for student success and satisfaction regardless of their background, demands and expectations, but students have to take the responsibility for their own learning, similar to the stage 4 approach to self-directed learning (Neck & Corbett, 2018) and the general definitions of the student-centric learning approach which characterizes a learning process where the power resides with students (Estes, 2004). These educators perceive their role as less salient or prominent, and their educator identity to be more tightly linked to a social role (position in society) rather than the categorized role as educator (Stryker & Serpe, 1994). The value orientation for these educators was global and humanistic, concerned with peace, equality, security, self-discipline, and meaning of life. It is possible that a mix of business and non-business experience combined with teaching experience brings a broader perspective to the role identity rather than one salient factor, as in the teacher-focused group.

CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS

This paper makes three major contributions. First, our investigation is one of the first to examine the role identity of entrepreneurship educators using a self-narrative qualitative approach, rather than deriving roles and pedagogical approaches from literature reviews. Our study shows that there is variation across educator's role focus, and the variation is mainly based on educator's role perceptions, perceptions of students, personal values and learning objectives. While role identity theory is clear about self-perceptions and associated with student/teacher relationships, we find that within the role identity of the entrepreneurship educator there is a continuum based on perceived centrality of the educator's role in relationship to the students. Our analysis shows that educators have multiple role identities which are incorporated into a view of self in a hierarchical

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3 way (Burke, 1991), where their experience in business, teaching, or entrepreneurship is more or
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5 less salient or central in their educator role identity (Stryker, 1980). The variation in role emphasis
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7 may have implications for how departments of management and entrepreneurship think about the
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9 portfolio of their faculty, both full and part timers. Hiring is always strategic and in addition to
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11 considering the role of those who are primarily researchers or teachers, our study suggests that
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13 consideration of the role focus may be important for thinking about how entrepreneurship
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15 education is delivered. While it is less clear how entrepreneurship educator role identity develops
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17 and what influences this over time, an interesting future research question might be to explore why
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19 educators choose to identify more strongly with one role focus rather than another, and what
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21 influences these role perceptions. Future research might study whether or not role models (e.g.,
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23 senior faculty) and/or training influence entrepreneurship educator's role identity (Ibarra, 1999).
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28 Our findings about different entrepreneurship educator role conceptions suggest
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30 implications for student outcomes and faculty assignment to courses. Because colleges and
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32 universities all have different learning goals and objectives for their courses, (e.g., to create an
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34 entrepreneurial mindset, to create entrepreneurs or inspire entrepreneurial awareness) (Neck et al.,
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36 2014), one important implication is for department chairs or those staffing entrepreneurial classes
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38 to consider the role identity of the educators and attempt to fit that role identity with the learning
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40 objectives for the course (Middleton et al., 2019). Instead of staffing courses based on seniority
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42 or time schedule, it may be that considering the role identity of entrepreneurship educators would
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44 be an appropriate way to insure better student learning experiences. For example, teacher- focused
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46 educators might be more suited to introductory entrepreneurship courses which rely on stories,
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48 cases, and learning the basics of entrepreneurship, while network-focused educators might be more
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50 appropriate for community-based student projects, where students interface with entrepreneurial
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3 companies. Finally, student-focused educators might fit best in courses where students are actually
4 creating their own ventures. Alternatively, teacher-focused educators might be more appropriate
5 for undergraduates whereas network-focused might be better placed in graduate entrepreneurship
6 courses. Future research might explore more deeply how the relationship between focus of
7 educator role identity affects their expectations of students and student learning. In addition, there
8 may be a relationship between educator confidence level in delivering certain courses that are more
9 aligned with their role perceptions and focus, which is also an avenue for future research.

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19 Alternatively, it is possible that when entrepreneurship educators are matched to a course
20 with learning objectives that conflicts with their role identity, they may be less able to engage
21 students effectively, which may result in negative teaching evaluations or frustrations on the part
22 of students (Silva et al., 2008). In other words, a course approach and pedagogy that is aligned
23 with the role focus of the educator has a better possibility of resulting in a positive learning
24 experience for the students. This is consistent with prior findings of Tam (2009), who argues that
25 there is a significant relationship between entrepreneurship education and entrepreneurial attitude,
26 such that students' participation in entrepreneurship education positively impacts their decision
27 towards an entrepreneurship career. Moses (2016) finds that an educator's focus on skill
28 development will help students to be more equipped with technical and real-life skills needed for
29 a successful entrepreneurial career. Our results in network-focused group also show the same
30 findings.

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47 Second, this research provides some support for earlier work by Béchar and Grégoire
48 (2007), who proposed three different pedagogical models rooted in an extensive literature review,
49 and Neck and Corbett (2018) who point out levels of self-directed learning and propose a
50 continuum of entrepreneurship education programs. Not only does our work complement these
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3 studies, but also extends these works by characterizing the role identity in relationship to students,
4 and showing the connections to value orientation, past experience and the desired outcomes for
5 student learning. For instance, educators in teacher-focused group value independence, tradition
6 and discipline, and believe that the students must gain knowledge for business life, develop an
7 entrepreneurial mindset, and being able to realize their role in the society, and that they will gain
8 knowledge about entrepreneurship (to know something), which is measured by an exam. In
9 contrast, the educators in network-focused group value creativity, friendship and achievement and
10 assume students are responsible and have an obligation to contribute to society and business
11 community, so they are taught skills to do things, understand why they are doing what they do,
12 solve problems, and develop a mindset. Then, educators in student-focused group value equality,
13 creativity, peace and success, and assume students have an entrepreneurial mindset to start a
14 venture. Learning is facilitated, so they can be satisfied and learn to be innovative and manage
15 business life, to be something. Further, some educator identity roles may be linked to cognitive
16 approaches, for instance, the degree to which educator is empathetic to students, or the extent to
17 which educator may understand other people's point of view (perspective taking) (Neck et al.,
18 2014). An extension of this research would be to further explore how role identity influences
19 pedagogical approaches in the classroom, for instance, types of assignments, materials used,
20 interactions, expectations from students, and assessment as well as the content chosen (Henry,
21 2020).

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47 Third, our research utilized a self-narrative approach, which asked educators to "reflect"
48 on their role, and interaction with students. The self-narrative approach is useful because it assists
49 educators to reflect on and express their understanding of the different roles involved in being an
50 entrepreneurship educator, assists in their identity formation and highlights a stronger role salience
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3 towards specific roles (Ibarra & Barbulescu, 2010). Many of the educators agreed that the narrative
4 approach of reflection on your own role was a powerful tool because they had to consider their
5 actual role and how they appeared as educators when interacting with, e.g., students, community
6 and, colleagues. Therefore, the narrative and reflective approach gives educators the opportunity
7 to consider who we are and which role we play, and as a result of this, assists educators to improve
8 when planning and executing teaching entrepreneurship.
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17 As with all research, our study is not without limitations. Firstly, it should be noted that the
18 findings of this qualitative research are not generalizable, as it captures the perceptions and the
19 experiences of 13 educators. However, the findings could be considered as the basis of a grounded
20 theory for role identity in entrepreneurship education and future studies could take a quantitative
21 approach to further explore these findings. Our focus was to explore the role identity of
22 entrepreneurship educators, but, as such, the study is only viewed from that perspective. We
23 acknowledge that a connection to the students interacting with each respective educator from this
24 study could have added another level of insight into this relationship and how it affects what takes
25 place in the classroom. However, we did not have teaching evaluations of students nor did we have
26 access to the syllabi. These ideas might be considered in further studies of how students influence
27 educator identity, as educator identity development. Furthermore, we acknowledge that the study
28 was performed in a rather small sample context at universities of applied sciences in Denmark.
29 While this study has provided new insights into a rather unexplored area of entrepreneurship
30 education, further investigation of this work in other educational contexts would be of value.
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49 It should be noted that in the educational institutional environment, what is rewarded, or
50 not rewarded, has a great impact on how faculty perceive their role identity, and how they act
51 relative to these educational institutional expectations. This is also a promising research direction.
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3 In addition, our research finds that these educators were forthcoming and pleased to have the
4 opportunity to respond to the interview, reflect and participate to such study. Most colleges and
5 universities teaching entrepreneurship have metrics and evaluations which assess faculty
6 effectiveness and student opinions of faculty teaching (Finkle et al., 2006). Further, for
7 entrepreneurship programs, the measure of success is often program effectiveness; for instance,
8 number of businesses started and amount of money they raised, self-employment, income,
9 technology transfer, etc. (Duval-Couetil, 2013). Our research suggests there might be more insight
10 into the effectiveness of entrepreneurship educators by using a reflective practice technique. In
11 other words, asking entrepreneurship educators to reflect on their role, expectations, and learning
12 objectives might shed light on reasons some educators are more effective in some classes and not
13 in others. Further, how educators see themselves in their entrepreneurship education ecosystem
14 (their courses) and their educational institutions, and how this is manifested in their expectations
15 for students has an important impact on how entrepreneurship educators craft classes and content,
16 and how educational institutions think about matching particular courses to educators, to achieve
17 effective entrepreneurship learning for our students.
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Table 1. Literature review summary

Subject	Investigating	Methodology	Findings	Educators working as	Authors
Background of the educator	The profiles of faculty	Quantitative (online survey)	Entrepreneurship educators represent a wide variety of entrepreneurial experiences in the classroom	Entrepreneurship educators in business programmes	(Kabongo & McCaskey, 2011)
	Teaching entrepreneurship	Quantitative (online survey)	Can background characteristics explain the implementation of EE	HEAD teachers in schools	(Ruskovaara et al., 2016)
	The demographic profiles of entrepreneurship educators and the pedagogical modalities		Quantitative	Ten findings related to modalities, educational outcomes and pedagogical materials	Educators at community colleges
Perception of their own role/skills	Perception of EE and their future role	Qualitative (written essays)	Categorizing respondents into three types: skeptics, followers, and innovators	Teacher students	(Lepistö & Rönkkö, 2013)
	Visions, understanding practice, motivation, and individual reflection	Qualitative (reflections on open questions via email)	Need for coordination between subjects to develop an “entrepreneurial” community	Basic, upper secondary and vocational level	(Seikkula-Leino et al., 2010)
Perception of EE	View of EE	Qualitative (written essays)	Confusion between aims and practices in EE	Student teachers	(Rönkkö & Lepistö, 2015)
Competencies	Development of entrepreneurial competencies	Qualitative (learning reflections)	Connection between previous knowledge of entrepreneurship. Positive attitude, but not always in relation to the curriculum	Primary, second and vocational level	(Peltonen, 2015)
	The impact of a training program in fostering an entrepreneurial mindset	Qualitative	Collaborative learning can help in adapting a more entrepreneurial teaching approach and building up self-confidence	Higher Education	(Teerijoki & Murdock, 2014)
Mindset of educators	The effect of entrepreneurial development and coaching	Mixed; both written and numerical feedback	A program can positively impact the perception of the educator, not necessarily intentions	Teachers at vocational teaching level	(Gustafsson-Pesonen & Remes, 2012)
	Participation in training activities and the influence on the use of external stakeholders	Quantitative (online survey)	The mindset of teachers was more entrepreneurial than before the program	Teachers at vocational teaching level	(Gustafsson-Pesonen & Remes, 2012)
Educators participating in programs	Creativity-led	Mixed methods	There seems to be a positive connection	Vocational education teachers	(Ruskovaara et al., 2015)
			Creative-based pedagogies motivate	Mixed levels	(Penaluna et

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Classroom practices	training program EE practices in relation to background factors	Quantitative (online survey)	educators The perception the educators have of their own skills is connected to the implementation of EE	Basic and upper secondary education	al., 2015) (Ruskovaara & Pihkala, 2013)
	Opinions about the implementation process of EE	Qualitative (semi structured interviews)	Educators benefit from collaboration in class. Best entrepreneurial characteristics to nurture students: risk taking, brains-storming, good planning, curiosity, self-confidence, and creativity	Teachers educators in science	(Deveci & Seikkula- Leino, 2016)
	Key challenges with content (what to teach)	Theoretical paper	Entrepreneurship educators in the role of 'unique aggregators' of entrepreneurship content	-	(Henry, 2020)
Complexity and heterogeneity of EE	Educator reflections on own role	Qualitative	One educator reflects upon own teaching and what to change in future courses	Higher education	(Robinson et al., 2016)
	Becoming and being an entrepreneurship educator	Qualitative	Personal reflections on entrepreneurship educators, including their role as entrepreneurial leaders within the educational institution	Higher education	(Hannon, 2018)
	The entrepreneurship educator in the landscape of EE	Qualitative	The entrepreneurship educator is embedded in a system of dialogic relationships with a range of stakeholders	Higher education	(Wraae & Walmsley, 2020)

Table 2. Entrepreneurship educator continuum of roles

Perceptions	Teacher-Focused	Network-Focused	Student-Focused
Perception of educator role	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Is the center of attention - Is responsible for a wide range of activities from designing the framework to asking questions to supervision and to get the process going - Must be independent - Must be active and take a leading role 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Considered to be more a consultant or a facilitator - Their main role is to guide and provide support for the student 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Their role is defined based on the students' demand and expectations - Students have the central role
Perception of student role	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Learn about life and business - They need to be critical - They must be opportunity seeker 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Person with responsibilities and having an obligation - Contributing to business community and sets framework 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - They need to be open-minded - They have to take responsibility for their own learning -Should have entrepreneurial mindset - They are at the center - They are the judges
Perception of learning objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Gaining knowledge for business life - Passing the exam - Teaching students to learn and do something about public sector - To create someone with entrepreneurial mindset 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - See people grow Teaching different skills and mindset - Skill development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Innovation management - Student success - Student satisfaction
Core values and emphasis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Values tradition, discipline, and equality -Emphasis on curriculum, learning, knowledge, and processes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Values achievement, student success, creativity -Emphasis on processes, relationships, and role development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Values environment, equality, creativity, and peace - Emphasis on learning, innovation, facilitation
Background information	(Female oriented, below 50, mostly business and having teaching experiences)	(Male oriented, below 50, mostly business and having both teaching and entrepreneurial experiences)	(Mixed gender, below 50, business and having both teaching and entrepreneurial experiences)

Table 3. Values and role identity

Values	Teacher-centric	Network-centric	Student-centric
Universalism	equality, creativity, beauty	creativity	equality, creativity, peace, and protecting environment
Conservation	politeness, tradition, discipline	security	security, self-discipline
Openness to change	Exciting life		exciting life
Achievement	independence	success, ambition, independence	success and ambition
Benevolence	friendship	friendship	friendship
Power			social power, authority
Spirituality			meaning of life

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Table 4. Word frequency and role identity

Similar words	Teacher-Focused	Network-Focused	Student-Focused
Processes	94	122	122
Learning	150	113	144
Entrepreneurship	57	88	42
Innovation	50	28	112
Challenge	49	39	49
Create	34	30	31
Goals	32	70	70
Distinct words			
Teacher-Focused			
Expect	Support	Curriculum	Knowledge
23	23	21	20
Network-Focused			
Relations	Role	Development	Personality
63	61	40	44
Student- Focused			
Exciting/excited	Influence	Thinking	Facilitate/facilitator
29	16	36	31