

**TRANSFORMATIVE ENTREPRENEURIAL EDUCATION FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT****Hemant Malawat\*****Dr. Gobind Singh Gure\*\***DOI: <http://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.20252155>**Review: 01/05/2026****Acceptance: 04/05/2026****Publication: 17/05/2026****ABSTRACT**

The main objective of entrepreneurship education (EE) is to instill certain knowledge, practical skills, and self-confidence in students, so that they can successfully pursue an entrepreneurial career. The article is concerned with the role of EE in facilitating economic growth, social cohesion and environmental sustainability by instilling in individuals a creative mindset. The extensive review of the literature has demonstrated that effective EE is critically dependent on innovative pedagogical practices, well-designed curricula, supportive learning environment, adequate resources, and consistent reflective and assessment practices. The action-oriented learning, practical applications and authentic and regular assessment practices help in continuous improvement and make students prepared to develop entrepreneurial skills. Implementing EE educational structures is often faced by numerous challenges like lack of sufficient funds, skilled teachers, and instructions to implement these programs. Therefore, until these challenges are tackled, it will be hard to make the most of EE on sustainable development. On balance, this article proposes a strategic re-invention of entrepreneurship education, as not only a pedagogical practice but also as a fundamental tool to enhance sustainability objectives.

**Keywords:** Entrepreneurship Education, Sustainable Development, Education**INTRODUCTION**

Entrepreneurship as an economic development engine should be given first priority in the developing nations as a way of promoting rapid economic growth. Moreover, entrepreneurship assists in enhancing change in the society towards more sustainable commodities and services. In the current situation, education in entrepreneurship plays a key role in sustainable development, enhancing economic growth, social equity, and environmental sustainability by providing individuals with innovative solutions and mindsets. Entrepreneurship has the potential to support the economic, environmental, and social aspects of sustainable development (Filser et al., 2019). Entrepreneurship has become one of the best drivers towards the realization of the “Sustainable Development Goals”(SDGs), innovation, job creation, social and environmental issues. Education with entrepreneurship can encourage sustainable entrepreneurship and environmental consciousness, enhance the quality of education, and meet the present and future needs (Iyer, 2015). A sustainability-oriented creativity, innovation, and entrepreneurship education framework can turn thinkers into doers through creativity and social innovation, contributing to “economic and social development” (Shu et al., 2020). Similarly, (Johnson & Schaltegger, 2019)

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pointed out that entrepreneurship for sustainable development connects social, environmental, and economic dimensions, impacting market transformations and large-scale societal developments. Entrepreneurship education in tertiary institutions is crucial for sustainable development, as it helps create a more sustainable future through research and innovation. Higher education can play an important role in laying the foundation for sustainable entrepreneurs, reinforcing both education for entrepreneurship and sustainability ([Lans et al., 2013](#)). The fourth “Sustainable Development Goal” (quality education) focuses on education for sustainable development, universal access through inclusive and equitable education, and creating opportunities for lifelong learning. Higher education institutions, however, cannot usually integrate Sustainable Development concepts and practices into all aspects of instruction. Business schools should encourage sustainable development from an entrepreneurial and "opportunity-identification perspective" to enhance students' knowledge of the advantages of sustainable entrepreneurship.

While this is an important factor in the development of entrepreneurial intentions, its impact is not consistent, it is a key element of sustainable development as it allows the individual to develop innovative solutions to social, economic and environmental problems. Effective EE programs develop entrepreneurial mindsets, skills, and knowledge, leading to increased employability, job creation, and economic growth. Thus, the need for entrepreneurship education in recent decades has led universities to create sustainability institutes, colleges, and study programs. The main goal of “entrepreneurship education” is to provide students with the skills, information, and mindset required to start and operate their own firms, and this educational approach is progressively being implemented into curricula globally, with the purpose of improving students' employment opportunities. In general, the possibilities of entrepreneurship to solve various social, economic, and environmental problems are becoming more and more obvious in the framework of sustainability. Sustainable entrepreneurship education is linked to sustainable development goals through educating students on environmental, economic, and social aspects ([Zahrani, 2022](#)). Because of its general implications, the topic is now being studied in a variety of scholarly fields, especially in management, economics, and the behavioral sciences. The skills of entrepreneurs can be learned through entrepreneurship education.

## UNDERSTANDING ENTREPRENEURSHIP EDUCATION

Entrepreneurship education is a growing trend that seeks to inculcate the necessary skills and mindset among students to start and operate their own businesses. At the outset, understanding the meaning of entrepreneurship education requires looking at the definitions provided by various scholars in this area: “Entrepreneurship education focuses on starting a company, while small business management involves operating an existing company.” ([Zeithaml & Rice, 1987](#))

- “Entrepreneurship education is linked to venture creation and entrepreneurial performance, with the most suitable indicator being the rate of new business creation.” ([Raposo & Paço, 2011](#))
- “Entrepreneurship in education is a process where a vision based on identifying a need or problem within the education system leads to formulating goals and working to attain them in a manner that adds value, influencing the immediate surroundings and the broader education system.” ([Attali & Yemini, 2016](#))
- “A definition of entrepreneurship education suggests developing the mindset, skill set, and practice necessary for starting new ventures, with far-reaching outcomes.” ([Neck & Corbett, 2018](#))

- “Entrepreneurship education is an important determinant for venture creation among young students.” ([Vodă & Florea, 2019](#))
- “Entrepreneurship education positively associates with increased entrepreneurial mindset and perceptions of future career success” ([Rodriguez & Lieber, 2020](#)).
- “Entrepreneurship education has a significant positive effect on career prospects, with Entrepreneurship Practice being the most important factor.” ([Huang et al., 2021](#))
- “Entrepreneurship education enhances students' entrepreneurial attitudes and skills, supporting them in developing independent and versatile ways” ([Miço & Cungu, 2023](#)).

From the above definition it is quite obvious that the education of entrepreneurship is about the creation of a business, while the management of a small business is about running an existing business. It is connected to venture formation and entrepreneurial performance and the formation of new businesses is an important measure. It involves recognizing learner needs and problems in the education system, establishing aims and attitudes, skills and practices regarding new initiatives in the education system. There is no universally accepted definition of entrepreneurship education and therefore various interpretations and approaches. It is about new business creation, learning-by-doing, and entrepreneurial attitudes, skills and competencies. Several research papers on the topic suggest that it enhances the quality of employment, fosters self-employment and helps build certain entrepreneurial skills. Though there are some differences, entrepreneurship education is closely related to small business management. It is seen as a key enabler of economic growth and social change, and is able to cater to the new challenges of the labor market, including gigification and digitalization. The field is constantly changing, incorporating new teaching methods and tackling economic and social issues. In recent years, the focus of engineering education has shifted to "doing" rather than merely "thinking", including group projects, real world problem solving, learning through collaboration and professional networks. The impact of personality factors such as locus of control and drive for success, and of practical and integrated education, and exposure to successful role models, have a profound impact on these outcomes. Overall, entrepreneurship education equips students with the skills and confidence they need to undertake an entrepreneurial career, which in turn could be expected to enhance employment opportunities.

## **ROLE OF ENTREPRENEURSHIP EDUCATION IN SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT**

In 2015, the “Sustainable Development Goals” (SDGs) was adopted by the United Nations as a universal call to action to end poverty, protect the planet, and ensure that by 2030 all people enjoy peace and prosperity. These 17 “Sustainable Development Goals” (SDGs) are highly interconnected and based on the principle that the progress of one sector affects the outcomes in the other ones and that a careful balance is to be established between social equity, economic growth, and environmental protection. According to Arogundade (2011), sustainable development demands a balance between the environment and the society; as well as between the environment and the economy. Thus, social, economic and environmental sustainability are integrated in 17 SDGs and focused on intergenerational equity, gender equity, peaceful societies, social tolerance, environmental preservation, poverty alleviation, and natural resource conservation. Entrepreneurship education (EE) plays a critical role in achieving sustainable development as it helps reduce poverty, boost economic growth, enhance social and environmental sustainability. It equips people with the skill and mind to initiate businesses that aim to achieve “Sustainable Development Goals” (SDGs) including decent jobs, economic growth, and renewable energy. The

competence frameworks for sustainable entrepreneurship emphasize the integration of entrepreneurial abilities with sustainability competencies such as foresight, complex problem-solving, and interdisciplinarity. However, problems include a lack of research on EE's impact in fragile states and diverse demographics, restricted access to EE for individuals outside of university settings, and a profit-first mindset in business schools. Effective teaching methods and frameworks, such as incorporating entrepreneurial competencies into sustainability education programs, can help solve these issues. Research in the field confirmed EE's important role in regional sustainability. Moreover, it is increasingly recognized for its capacity to solve social, economic, and environmental problems. Thus, it is studied in business, management, economics, social sciences, and psychology.

### **THE MAIN COMPONENTS OF SUSTAINABILITY-FOCUSED ENTREPRENEURSHIP EDUCATION**

The sustainability-focused “entrepreneurship education” aims to prepare students with the knowledge and mindset essential for developing innovative solutions that address economic, social, and ecological challenges. Sustainability-focused entrepreneurship education should focus on the following key components: Economic Responsibility and Sustainability One of the 17 SDGs, SDG 4, is “Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all. Target 4.4: By 2030, substantially increase the number of youth and adults who have relevant skills, including technical and vocational skills, for employment, decent jobs and entrepreneurship.” (UN General Assembly, p. 3). The entrepreneurship education and training (EET) can be directly correlated with positive entrepreneurial outcomes and sustainable development ([Rashid, 2019](#)). It involves integrating sustainability principles into entrepreneurship training, equipping students with the skills to create profitable, socially and environmentally responsible businesses (Yadav S., 2024). In this regard, UN General Assembly (2024) suggested the following: -

**Table1: The Role Of Entrepreneurship In Achieving Sustainable Development**

<b>S.N</b>	<b>Sustainable Development Dimension</b>	<b>Entrepreneurship Contribution</b>
<b>1</b>	Economic	Entrepreneurial activity performs as a primary engine for economic prosperity. It achieves this by generating new employment, upholding standards for quality labour, advancing eco-friendly farming practices, and accelerating the pace of innovation.
<b>2</b>	Social	Entrepreneurship advocates for social equity or bridge social gaps. It supports to equitable labour practices and ecological farming, startups and social enterprises drive social inclusion and enhance communal welfare through scalable, user-centric innovations.
<b>3</b>	Environmental	Entrepreneurial ventures combat environmental degradation by pioneering tools for climate resilience and mitigation. The main focus of these businesses is on institutionalize eco-friendly operations and responsible consumerism rather than just be innovative.

**Source: United Nations General Assembly. (2024, July 2022).**

Based on the table above, it has been made clear that UN General Assembly (2024, July 2022) clarifies that entrepreneurship is a necessary means of holistic sustainable development. Such a combined strategy will ensure that small enterprises become the main driver of sustainable development, helping to close the gap between the global priorities and the real impact at the community level. This will decrease unemployment, especially among the youth, and foster a culture of responsible business practices. In order to make sustainability-oriented entrepreneurship education more economically effective, the real-life examples of sustainable practices (e.g., project-based learning) should be included in the curriculum, and partnerships with industry stakeholders are critical in designing useful programs, offering resources, mentoring, and practical problems to students. Through the application of social responsibility in entrepreneurship courses, students understand how to match their business decisions with the needs of society, which promotes a culture of ethics and profitability. The strategy helps create a sustainable community and inclusive economic growth. It also contributes to competitiveness by equipping emerging businesses to be innovative in a sustainable manner, as consumers are interested in social and environmental benefits rather than solely for profit. Social responsibility in the form of entrepreneurship also helps to create entrepreneurs who are not only profit-oriented but have greater societal impact. Moreover, Valerio et al. (2014) established that a global survey of entrepreneurship and training programs by the World Bank, which analyzed 230 program assessments, determined that such programs—primarily for students in secondary or higher education—are inclined to foster knowledge and skills for business creation. These programs are aimed at the formation of mindsets and skills, including self-confidence, leadership, creativity, risk propensity, motivation, resilience, self-efficacy, entrepreneurship awareness, and business skills.” Moreover, sustainable entrepreneurship education should integrate theoretical knowledge with hands-on experience, with business models that take into account social and environmental factors, incorporating real-world applications of sustainable practices, such as project-based learning, to assist students in comprehending the complexity of sustainable entrepreneurship. ([Abidin et al.,2023](#)) recommended various teaching methods for entrepreneurial mindset development, such as Case studies, group discussions, individual presentations, written reports, group projects, formal lectures, guest speakers, action learning, seminars, web-based learning, and video recordings. Industry stakeholders are crucial for developing effective programs, mentoring students, and equipping them with resources. Fostering a culture of sustainability among students is essential to encouraging creative thinking and ethical entrepreneurship. This holistic approach equips graduates to handle the new business complexity while focusing on sustainable practices that can enhance economic growth and provide societal and environmental benefits. This plan enables students to be innovative and form long-term habits. Entrepreneurial training institutions that embrace sustainability would be able to raise socially responsible entrepreneurs who can make lasting positive impacts on their communities. All these instructional methods are effective in imparting knowledge to a large number of people within a short period. This model empowers students to act as change agents with a proactive approach, focusing on social equality and ecological balance. Successful sustainability education combines entrepreneurial and sustainability competencies, focusing on enhancing creativity, risk-taking, and socialization skills.

## **ENVIRONMENTAL RESPONSIBILITY & SUSTAINABILITY**

Sustainability entrepreneurship education is one of the important strategies to equip students with knowledge and skills to create new business models towards sustainability, which not only can help increase the economy but can also improve the environment and society. The method seeks to solve the ecological issues as well as foster a

culture of sustainable entrepreneurship and connect theory with practice. It fosters students to put their knowledge into practice. The role of education institutions can be very important to build a culture of sustainable entrepreneurship by strengthening sustainability training and education. Integrating sustainability into the university curriculum can ignite students' entrepreneurial spirit to guide them in building businesses that not only aim for economic growth but also promote environmental sustainability. Encouraging sustainability among aspiring entrepreneurs by applying real world sustainable practices including project-based learning which could be used to prepare students for future entrepreneurial ventures. Encouraging sustainability among aspiring entrepreneurs by introducing and applying real world sustainable practices (project-based learning) for preparing students for future entrepreneurial ventures. Such collaboration with stakeholders and educating about sustainability at educational institutions is vital in the creation of successful programs. A commitment to ethical issues and a social impact orientation can help future entrepreneurs to develop solutions to environmental challenges and to promote economic growth. This process will be comprehensive and will allow the students to be ready to face the challenges of business in the modern world in the context of sustainability. Thus, a well-designed curriculum on entrepreneurship for sustainability needs to provide theory as well as practice, and project-based learning should be incorporated. Partnering with industry members is vital to the creation of viable sustainability programs, mentoring opportunities and access to resources. Social responsibility is also key for the promotion of innovation in establishing sustainable business models that have social and environmental sustainability.

## **SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY & SUSTAINABILITY**

The sustainability-oriented entrepreneurship education aims to advance the ideas of social responsibility and sustainability among students to equip them with the ability to develop innovative ideas to address environmental issues. According to Gibb (2002), social responsibility is one of the core principles of entrepreneurship training. This plan involves the use of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in the curriculum to promote the culture of social innovation and economic prosperity. Academic institutions have a significant role to play in ensuring that a sustainable entrepreneurial culture is established to equip students to participate in responsible entrepreneurial practices. Education in social entrepreneurship will help students increase their awareness of sustainability problems, encourage their desire to effect positive change, and provide them with the means to design and execute sustainable business models ([Baltador & Grecu, 2023](#)). It is an indispensable element for responding to environmental and social issues and stimulating economic development. The educational practice has incorporated ideas of sustainability in entrepreneurship education and has developed innovative solutions that lead to sustainable development. Theoretical knowledge should be linked to practical application of the theory, e.g., project-based learning in curriculum development. Success in developing effective sustainability programs, mentorship and resources is achieved through industry cooperation. Social responsibility contributes to the development of an ethical approach to decision making in business, encouraging students to think outside the box and create business plans that focus mainly on the care of the environment and the well-being of the community. Such a holistic approach will ensure that future leaders are able to come up with new solutions that will benefit society and promote economic prosperity in the long term. Hence Entrepreneurship Education (EE) plays a vital role in achieving Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in the context of developing entrepreneurial attitudes and skills. It builds capacities for people to create enterprises that solve global issues like the eradication of poverty, decent work and economic growth, and good health and fight hunger. Teachers should develop curricula

that combine learning, real life experiences, and social and environmental issues into business models to provide appropriate training on sustainable entrepreneurship. Students' innovation and sustainable behavior should be encouraged by social responsibility. However, some of the existing EE practice still has gaps such as the absence of research in fragile states, access of non-university students to EE and the limited EE and sustainability education in teacher training programs. The EE effectiveness can be enhanced by using creative thinking and business model, such as sustainability-based creativity, innovation and entrepreneurship education. The contribution Universities can make to the achievement of SDGs is essential for EE, through extending the scope of collaboration networks, embedding sustainability concepts in business and management programs, and implementing strategic interventions.

### **Challenges to Implementing Sustainability-Focused Entrepreneurship Education**

Various challenges associated with the implementation of sustainability-oriented entrepreneurship education include insufficient funding, lack of inclusion of entrepreneurship courses in the school curriculum, lack of teachers, facilities, and equipment, poor design and implementation, poor social perspectives, governmental self-interest, and an economy lacking technical expertise. Sustainability-oriented entrepreneurship education is not usually supported by the institution; therefore, the gap between theory and practice is not bridged. There is also the problem of assessment, where conventional practices risk overlooking students' understanding of complex sustainability policies. Sustainability-oriented entrepreneurship education also faces cultural resistance and resource constraints to its implementation. Addressing these issues is crucial for redefining entrepreneurial education and developing environmentally responsible entrepreneurs. Other challenges include institutional barriers, resource constraints, curriculum development problems, and the necessity of a favorable entrepreneurial culture. Institutional barriers, such as a lack of administrative, financial, and informational support, may deter potentially successful business owners from their ventures. Time and financial constraints could also be barriers to the implementation of the sustainability-oriented entrepreneurial education. The importance of social and environmental considerations in entrepreneurship may be weakened through elements flaws in curriculum design, including an excessive profit mindset.

### **Strategic Recommendations for Integrating Sustainability in Entrepreneurship Education**

To overcome the challenges associated with implementing sustainability-focused entrepreneurship education, several recommendations can be made based on recent research and best practices. The following recommendations are made:

- The government should construct small business schools for students and community members. This would promote student self-reliance and contribute to national sustainability.
- The government should create an entrepreneurship internship program that connects students with successful local businesses and provides structured educational programs.
- The government should establish an enterprise college to provide the necessary skills for entrepreneurship education and foster sustained national growth. This would act as a skill acquisition centre for aspiring entrepreneurs.

- The government should foster an economically beneficial atmosphere by focusing on reducing taxes for small enterprises.
- Expose entrepreneurs to many sources of knowledge and commercial prospects, both in India and abroad.
- Government agencies, R&D organizations, nonprofit organizations, and development partners should create business awareness programs and communicate information about investment prospects.

Moreover, the encouragement of student-led projects, industry partnerships, curriculum redesign, provision of sufficient resources and training for educators, sustainability awareness-raising, and program monitoring and evaluation are some of the suggestions for creating a sustainable entrepreneurial culture in educational institutions. These include encouraging an interdisciplinary approach, putting project-based learning into practice, funding professional development initiatives, creating awareness campaigns, and introducing training in soft skills. The institutions should also invest in programs for professional development and set aside enough funds for efficient teaching strategies and regular assessment and feedback systems to gauge community impact, business establishment rate, and students' involvement, among other factors. Thus, overcoming challenges and fostering a supportive entrepreneurial culture will help students turn their sustainable business ideas into reality. In conclusion, entrepreneurship education plays a crucial role in promoting sustainable development by promoting environmentally friendly, socially conscious, and economically viable businesses. Entrepreneurship education may assist in preparing people to be responsible and enterprising, thereby enhancing economic growth and fostering sustainable neighborhoods (Boldureanu et al., 2020). The entrepreneurial education framework should focus on Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and a sustainability-oriented creativity, innovation, and entrepreneurship (CIE) model (Shu, Y., Ho, S.-J., & Huang, T.-C., 2020). This model will help develop thinkers, provide them with knowledge of SDGs, and teach them how to become social entrepreneurs. Universities are important for ensuring sustainability in entrepreneurship through developing an entrepreneurial culture that highly values sustainability. To teach sustainable entrepreneurship, educators need to design a curriculum that integrates theoretical and practical experiences, and includes social and environmental concerns in their business models. Innovation and sustainable habits can be encouraged among students to promote social responsibility. The primary objective is to make educational programs more effective, develop a favorable entrepreneurial culture, and ensure that the concept of sustainability is incorporated into the curriculum. To overcome these challenges, it is important to create a balance between an entrepreneurial spirit and being socially responsible. A conducive entrepreneurial culture is also needed to motivate the students to undertake sustainable ventures.

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