

Chapter 15

Fostering Sustainable Development in Undergraduate Students' Entrepreneurial Mindsets: Integrating Digital and AI Ethics in General Education

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ABSTRACT

This chapter explores integrating digital and AI ethics into undergraduate general education as a vital approach for cultivating sustainable entrepreneurial mindsets. As AI and digital technologies reshape the entrepreneurial landscape, ethical concerns such as data privacy, algorithmic bias, and environmental sustainability must be addressed to ensure responsible innovation. By embedding ethical principles into entrepreneurship education, universities can guide students to develop ventures aligned with global frameworks like the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The chapter discusses the role of universities in shaping future business leaders, the challenges and opportunities of embedding ethics in education, and best practices for fostering ethical entrepreneurship. Through interdisciplinary collaboration, experiential learning, and established ethical frameworks, universities can prepare students to balance innovation with social and environmental responsibility, creating ventures that contribute positively to society and sustainable development.

DOI: 10.4018/979-8-3693-9894-4.ch015

INTRODUCTION

Breakthroughs like climate change, resource depletion and social inequality require new generations to address these challenges collaboratively and responsibly. Encouraging undergraduates toward sustainable entrepreneurial thinking is essential in developing a new generation of leaders who can address these global issues. It is more than just what we know as the traditional, profit-oriented way of thinking and emphasizes the ethical consequences of social, economic, and environmental results, respectively (Daddi et al., 2020; Hansen & Wyman, 2021; Mohapeloa, 2017).

No longer being positioned as an isolated target, sustainable development is closely related to the economic target. Global efforts such as the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) advocate for a more balanced approach in which businesses operate responsibly, and economic growth coexists with the challenge of addressing poverty, inequality, and environmental sustainability. This paves the way for entrepreneurship to be a force for social good.

For example, countries like the United Arab Emirates (UAE) represent this mentality, with national strategies towards innovation and sustainability. The UAE's Vision 2021 calls for entrepreneurship to align with sustainability and requires both technical know-how and a commitment to ethical principles. Emphasizing the development of businesses that are financially viable, yet benefit the wellbeing of society, makes it crucial to impart a sustainable entrepreneurial mindset in students.

THE ROLE OF UNIVERSITIES IN PROMOTING SUSTAINABILITY

Universities play an important role in educating future decision-makers who will lead global sustainable development. As key institutions that equip students with the skills needed to tackle global challenges, they can integrate sustainability and ethics into entrepreneurship education. This synergy primes students to smoothly adapt to a business environment that needs to balance the force of economic prosperity with aspects of societal responsibility and environmental management (Daddi et al., 2020; Voldsund et al., 2020).

Creating university programs in line with these frameworks, the approaches we call SDGs, provides students with the base to grow a venture tackling important global challenges. These ethical constructs also extends their focus beyond profitability, so that students see their businesses as vehicles for positive social transformation, as building blocks of a better society, which are key value-added constructs to include into the curriculum. As Mohapeloa (2017) argues, this change can be seen as an increasing acceptance that sustainable development plays an integral part in modern business education.

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