

THE EUROPEAN DOCTORAL PROGRAM IN ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND SMALL BUSINESS MANAGEMENT CONTRIBUTION TO DEVELOPMENT

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ABSTRACT

The link between higher education and development has been one of the most important issues extensively discussed in multiples conferences and action proposals in a regional and international context during the nineties. (World Declaration about Education for All, Thailand, 1990; Iberoamerican Conference in Education, Argentina, 1995; Regional Conference about Higher Education in Latin America and the Caribbean, Cuba, 1996; Higher Education, 1998; Higher Education in Developing Countries: Peril and Promise, UNESCO, 2000; Constructing Knowledge Societies: New Challenges for Tertiary Education: A World Bank Report, 2002).

This issue, of increasing importance within the knowledge economy, argues that quality and relevance of teaching and research conducted in underdeveloped countries are critical to close the gap between rich and poor countries. These areas depend at the same time on the availability of highly qualified and compromised scholars in underdeveloped countries. In this context priority has been given to the necessity of international cooperation to attain the objective of faculty development.

Moreover, development requires that efforts be made to ensure that higher education institution's curricula respond to local skill requirements. In this sense the development of scholars in Entrepreneurship is of critical importance since it is linked to the creation and growth of local new firms, which will provide an economic alternative and social improvement for the country's people in order to attain autonomous development.

This paper analyzes the European Doctoral Program (EDP) contribution to development. The Program is studied from its creation in 1989 to 2002. The founder of the Program was interviewed in order for us to become acquainted with the original objectives. As part of the research methodology the enrolment for the period studied was analyzed. Participants were distributed by country of origin, gender and area of study from which they come. In addition, a survey was realized among the students who have completed their P.h.D. degrees in order to know their actual performance and contribution to their countries of origin, including the research area.

Through the years the Program's enrolment has been changing. Participants coming from countries other than the European region have been increasing. It is argued that the Program's structure and logistics facilitate the high standard development of scholars and researchers and their return to the countries of origin, besides promoting the creating of regional and international networks through which the development agenda advances.