

Implications of Character Strengths for University Education in the Light of Call for Innovation and Entrepreneurship Domains

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Fighting rising levels of unemployment - particularly among young people - has become one of the most urgent tasks for governments. Too many young people leave school prematurely running a high risk of being unemployed and socially marginalised. The same risk threatens many adults with low skills. Technologies are changing the way in which society operates, and there is a need to ensure the best use is made of them. It has been argued that well-performing education and training systems and youth policies can provide people with the skills required by the labour market and the economy, while allowing them to play an active role in society and achieve personal fulfillment. Whereas such efforts are laudable, in this paper we argue that such efforts should emphasize character strengths and character virtue. The virtues of character include the moral virtues, the civic virtues, the intellectual virtues, and the virtues of performance. Examples of the virtues of character include humility, justice, gratitude, curiosity, diligence, and honesty. We argue that a noble character is the foundation for this much-needed competent human capital. Technical skills alone are not sufficient. Good craftsmanship and highly skilled labour force without noble virtues will not give meaning to development. Hence, efforts to establish moral values should not be a secondary agenda behind academic and technical capabilities, or the sophistication of physical infrastructure. In fact, the formation of a noble character should take precedence and become a prerequisite to progress.

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