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Educating For the Future: Lifelong Entrepreneurship

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Peer Review Information	Abstract
<p>Submission: 13 March 2026</p> <p>Revision: 0.2 April 2026</p> <p>Acceptance: 16 April 2026</p> <p>Keywords</p> <p>Education, Lifelong Entrepreneurship, Innovation.</p>	<p>The room fell silent as Keshav, a Grade 10 student, stood before a panel of teachers, parents, and industry mentors during the Innovation Day, a flagship event organised by Arya Indus School on 21st April, 2025. Holding his laptop in his hand, he pitched an idea that sounded more like a startup than a school project. On the screen appeared the words: “I am a Startup.” In 2020, the school began experimenting with Lifelong Entrepreneurship, an invention of self. A bold initiative that replaced conventional classroom routines with design thinking, imagination retreats, and student-led innovation journeys.</p>

The Architect of Lifelong Entrepreneurship at Arya Indus School

Lt. General Arjun R Dev is the Founder, Managing Director and CEO of Arya Indus Trust, the organization behind the Arya International Schools. A former senior officer of the Indian Army, he transitioned from military leadership to education with the belief that schools must prepare children not only for careers, but for life itself. Drawing from decades of experience in high-responsibility command roles, Ray envisioned an education system that combines discipline, character development, global exposure, and innovation. His philosophy of “Lifelong Entrepreneurship,” positioning entrepreneurship as a mindset rooted in humanity, purpose, and self-leadership rather than merely business creation. He has often emphasized that the role of a teacher is to “design the life of a student” by nurturing autonomy, resilience, ethical thinking, and creativity.

Schools’s Pedagogy

Business entrepreneurship primarily focuses on creating products and economic value, whereas Lifelong Entrepreneurship (LE) aims to cultivate individuals who learn to “BE HUMAN” self-aware, purposeful, and socially responsible. LE shifts education away from exam-centred outcomes toward human-centred development, emphasising the discovery of a higher purpose in life. The approach encourages learners to strengthen critical thinking, develop a creative and reflective mindset, and engage in collaborative learning that builds collective intelligence. Through this philosophy, education becomes a process of shaping character and meaning, not merely achieving academic performance.

Pedagogy for Primary classes from 1st to 4th standard: Students are introduced to an entrepreneurial mindset from the primary years. As part of experiential learning, they visit nearby

villages to understand local communities and their living conditions, with the primary objective of cultivating empathy at an early age. Pedagogy for Middle classes from 5th to 8th standard: In middle school, Lifelong Entrepreneurship integrates weekly sessions and STEAM-H projects to build design thinking knowledge, collaboration skills, and SDG awareness. Activities such as problem walks, team projects, and creative remix strengthen initiative, ethical decision-making, and real-world problem solving.

Pedagogy for Higher classes from 9th to 11th standard: Indus adopts a differentiated pedagogical approach for senior students. *Startup*, is a weekly learning hours are dedicated to strengthens leadership, innovation behaviour, and fearless experimentation. Students engage in pitching competitions, collective intelligence practices, and technology-enabled projects while balancing academic rigor with entrepreneurial exploration and long-term innovation outcomes. Parents actively participate as mentors and co-educators, supporting entrepreneurial learning, while students receive personalised guidance through structured innovation curriculum activities. While the Lifelong Entrepreneurship model gained strong momentum in the early years, sustaining the same level of entrepreneurial behaviour in higher classes proved more complex. Established academic routines and exam-oriented expectations often reinforced the status quo, presenting challenges in maintaining autonomy, risk-taking, and proactive learning. To address this, the school emphasizes competency development as a pathway to creativity and startup readiness. Initiatives such as, community service projects, inter-school tournaments, and inter-house competitions provide experiential platforms through which students develop collaboration, resilience, and leadership skills, preparing them to navigate a world characterized by volatility, uncertainty, complexity, and ambiguity (VUCA).

Conclusion

As Innovation Day came to a close, the excitement in the auditorium slowly gave way to reflection among educators and mentors. The Lifelong Entrepreneurship philosophy had begun to reshape how younger students

approached learning with empathy, creativity, and purpose at the center. Yet, as students moved into the senior grades, challenging the school's ability to sustain entrepreneurial behaviours.

The leadership at Arya Indus now faced a critical question: should Life Entrepreneurship evolve into a deeper institutional model that reshaped assessment and pedagogy across all grades, or remain a complementary innovation alongside traditional academic expectations? Scaling personalised mentoring, balancing parental aspirations, and preserving the human-centered vision while preparing students for competitive futures remained complex decisions. As Keshav closed his laptop after presenting his idea "I am a Startup" the question lingered in the minds of educators: could a school truly redefine entrepreneurship as a way of being human, or would the pressures of conventional education ultimately shape its future direction?

Teaching Note

Educating For The Future - Lifelong Entrepreneurship At Arya Indus School

Dr. R. Jeevitha, and Dr. U. Amalshwari wrote this teaching note as an aid to instructors in the classroom use of the this case. This teaching note should not be used in any way that would prejudice the future use of the case.

Case Synopsis

Arya Indus Altum International School, Bangalore, led by education innovator Lt. General Arjun R Dev (Retd.), has introduced "Lifelong Entrepreneurship," a human-centred educational philosophy designed to cultivate purpose-driven, innovative, and socially responsible students. Moving beyond traditional exam-focused schooling, the institution integrates design thinking, SDG awareness, experiential learning, and student-led innovation across primary, middle, and higher grade pedagogy. Through initiatives such as empathy training, Startup You, and collaborative problem-solving projects, the school seeks to redefine entrepreneurship as a mindset rooted in self-leadership and collective intelligence rather than business creation alone.

However, as the programme scales into senior grades, Indus faces a strategic dilemma. Academic pressures, parental expectations for

conventional outcomes, and limited instructional time challenge the sustainability of entrepreneurial behaviours among older students. At a critical decision point during the school's Innovation Day in 2025, leadership must determine whether Lifelong Entrepreneurship should evolve into a deeply institutionalised model reshaping assessment and pedagogy across all levels, or remain a complementary innovation alongside traditional academic structures. The decision will shape how the school balances human-centred learning with competitive educational expectations in an increasingly volatile and complex world.

Learning Objectives

- Understand how Lifelong Entrepreneurship changes traditional teaching and learning in schools.
- Analyze how different activities help students develop an entrepreneurial mindset.
- Evaluate the challenges schools face when balancing innovation with academic performance.
- Apply entrepreneurial thinking to real-world educational situations and student projects.
- Assess the leadership decision on whether Lifelong Entrepreneurship should become a core part of the school system.

Discussion Questions with Analysis

1. Why did Indus introduce Lifelong Entrepreneurship? – To shift education from job preparation to purpose discovery.
2. How are skills and behaviours developed? – Through experiential projects, collective intelligence, and reflection.
3. What challenges exist? – Academic pressure, parental expectations, and limited time

allocation.

4. Should Lifelong Entrepreneurship become a core institutional model? – Encourages debate on strategic implementation.

Position in Course

This case can be used in Entrepreneurship, Strategic Management, Innovation Management, Educational Leadership, and Sustainability/SDG-focused courses at the MBA, Executive MBA, and advanced undergraduate (senior-level) management programmes.

Relevant Readings

Shepherd, D. A. Educating entrepreneurship students about emotion and learning from failure. *Academy of Management Learning and Education*, 3(3), 274–287. (2004). <https://doi.org/10.5465/amle.2004.14242217>

Lumpkin, G. T., & Dess, G. G. "Clarifying the Entrepreneurial Orientation Construct and Linking It to Performance." *Academy of Management Review*. (1996)

Robinson, K. & Aronica, L. (2015) – *Creative Schools*. Penguin Books.

Assignment Questions

Analyze how Life Entrepreneurship helps students develop an entrepreneurial mindset at primary, middle, and higher levels.

Evaluate the challenges Indus School faces in balancing academic performance with innovation-driven learning.

Apply the concept of entrepreneurial orientation and its dimensions innovation, proactiveness, risk-taking to the activities described in the case. Recommend whether Indus should fully integrate Life Entrepreneurship into its core pedagogy or keep it as a complementary programme, giving reasons for your decision.