Editorial—Quest for knowledge: The tenacity behind innovation

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Eduardo Leite, Universidade da Madeira, OSEAN—Outermost Regions Sustainable Ecosystem for Entrepreneurship and Innovation, Portugal, eduardo.leite@staff.uma.pt.

The dynamic between originality and derivation has historically driven human knowledge forward. Some disrupt norms with fresh ideas, while others preserve and disseminate this knowledge, ensuring its accessibility and longevity. This interplay requires a careful balance, especially within academia, where journals play a pivotal role in either stalling or advancing the broader social impact of innovation.

As Lord Chesterfield once observed, many achieve distinction and fortune through outward accomplishments rather than intrinsic merit. Throughout history, the interplay between originality and derivation has been essential for advancing human knowledge. Some disrupt norms with fresh ideas, while others preserve and disseminate knowledge, ensuring it remains accessible. This dynamic requires a nuanced balance to maximize social and scientific impact, especially in today's academic ecosystem, where journals play a pivotal role. This insight applies not only to courts but also to academia, where the pursuit of prestige can overshadow genuine intellectual contributions. Therefore, the balance between originality and derivation transcends mere knowledge advancement, touching upon authenticity and substance.

Schopenhauer warned against the excessive consumption of others' ideas, cautioning that it can weaken independent thinking: "When we read, another person thinks for us: we merely repeat his mental process. [...] When these, at last, withdraw, what remains?" (Schopenhauer, 1970). His message underscores the importance of self-reflection in fostering original thought, as uncritical absorption of external ideas risks eroding our innovative capacities.

In today's rapidly evolving landscape, journals must go beyond traditional knowledge dissemination by fostering originality and embracing publications that disrupt norms. Originality demands more than creativity; it requires resilience—or, as Shepherd (2003) and Lichtenstein & Plowman (2009) suggest, tenacity. Unlike resilience, which implies returning to a previous state, tenacity reflects ongoing adaptation and transformation in response to challenges (Callister, 2002).

Furthermore, studies on schadenfreude—pleasure derived from others' misfortune—suggest that fear of failure and aversion to risk can stagnate innovation (Smith et al., 2009). Feather, Wenzel, and McKee (2014) noted that in competitive settings, others' setbacks are often perceived as indirect victories, even when the observer is uninvolved. This phenomenon can create a cycle in academia where satisfaction with others' failures discourages collaboration and curbs innovation. For those who have never faced true failure, conformity may seem safe but restricts their creative potential, leaving them stagnant rather than inspired to transform. Ultimately, they too may experience failure—without ever having tried.

To allow original thinkers to thrive, academic journals must revise their editorial policies to foster intellectual freedom and support autonomous development, foundations that should begin within academia. True innovation calls not only for replicating ideas and disseminating knowledge but for challenging paradigms and nurturing intellectual freedom. Bernardo Soares, one of Fernando Pessoa's heteronyms, aptly reflected on this: "To understand, I destroyed myself." This thought encapsulates the need to go beyond mere absorption, moving toward creative transformation.

As Peter Drucker emphasized, innovation is the "specific instrument of entrepreneurship" that generates new, value-creating capacities (Drucker, 1985). Higher education institutions and journals, which often aspire to publish groundbreaking work but hesitate with disruptive content, should instead cultivate original thinking over the mere reproduction of established theories. Academia must normalize failure as integral to the scientific process and cherish the creative journey.

The transition between scientific paradigms is naturally complex, often marked by crises that call for new approaches to fuel innovation. The precarious conditions faced by researchers, coupled with the low salaries for university faculty, reveal a paradox within academia, which demands excellence without providing adequate resources. Just as in the arts, science must honour intellectual contributions by compensating researchers beyond institutional salaries. Such financial recognition would encourage original knowledge production, reduce the fear of risk, and foster an environment where experimentation and creativity are genuinely valued.

After two years of publications by the *Journal of Entrepreneurial Researchers*, we reaffirm the importance of fostering the courage to take risks and creating an academic environment that views failure as an essential part of growth. Authentic innovation demands a willingness to explore disruptive solutions, even when this challenge established norms. As Einstein observed, "The true sign of intelligence is not knowledge but imagination." By embracing risks, we open pathways for true knowledge creation and advancement.

This paradigm shift in science and technology reveals the tension between derivative, exploitative approaches—sometimes bordering on predatory practices—and a new paradigm dedicated to sustainability and scientific integrity.

This journey toward a new scientific and technological paradigm is not about reaching a destination but about an unending quest. Here, the concept of utopia becomes essential. As Eduardo Galeano eloquently put it, "Utopia is on the horizon. I move two steps closer; it moves two steps away… It keeps us walking." Utopia, like scientific innovation, is not a destination but an ideal that drives us to question, transcend, and expand our understanding.

Inspired by cinema, where narratives like Coppola's Megalopolis capture paradigm transitions, we face a future that demands a balance between disruptive innovation and sustainable practices, respecting both human and ecological complexity. In considering whether our scientific endeavours serve as acts of "salvation" or perpetuate exploitative paradigms, we redefine what it means to innovate ethically and inclusively. With startup failure rates around 90%, studying success alone limits our understanding. This phenomenon, known as survivorship bias, results in skewed conclusions by focusing only on surviving entities, ignoring the vast majority that did not. In entrepreneurship, such bias fosters a misleading belief that certain practices guarantee success, neglecting those ventures that followed similar strategies yet failed. By acknowledging failures and challenges in academic literature, we cultivate a realistic view crucial for preparing individuals for the real-world demands of the market.

We invite readers to reflect on the need for fresh institutional and personal perspectives that accommodate both original and derivative thinkers while nurturing true innovators and rewarding effort and merit. Academia must create environments that champion success yet accept failure as a fundamental element of innovation, forming an ecosystem where risk-taking is encouraged. The future calls for identifying, supporting, and uplifting those who dare to innovate and face the uncertainties of failure, paving the way for generations grounded in sustainable, resilient socioeconomic models.

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Ethical Statement

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