

MISK Global Forum Youth Leadership and Innovation

Posted on September 21, 2018

The MISK Global Forum and Youth Development

MISK global forum was established in 2011 by the Saudi Prince Mohammad bin Salman Al Saud. The organization is run by the Prince's Foundation and is categorized as a non-governmental organization. The organization targets the growth and development of Saudi youth with a significant focus on areas such as innovation, technical skills, information technology, and technology. The MISK global forum is an event that began in 2016 that brings together youths from all over the world in one stage where they can share their experiences and knowledge.

I had the privilege of attending the first MISK global forum that happened in 2017(Anon, 2017). I was part of the team that my college had selected to participate in the event to grow our skills. We were chosen based on our academic performances in the various courses that we took. I am an entrepreneurship student, and the forums provided me with a platform for interacting with those and who's in the Saudi business community, as well as helped me develop my entrepreneurial skills. The event took place in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia and attracted over 20 global leaders in industries such as telecommunications, manufacturing, and many more. The main organizer was the MISK Global Foundation. The event is similar to the telecommunications education and development (TED) talks that take part all over the world through the MISK, mainly focusing on growing the youth (MISK Foundation, 2017).

The event was one of the most eye-opening occasions that I had ever attended. From all the leaders that spoke I was able to gain at least one crucial thing that I can use to harness my skills. The speakers were elaborate in their talks and quick to answer a question from the participants. The event helped to expand the way I think about things and people. I was also able to interact with other young people from other parts of the world. They helped shape the way I think about how business needs to be conducted. My thinking had been limited to the area that I lived and had never thought about using my skills in other regions where there are ready markets and higher potential for success. I felt challenged to research more on what the leaders do in their respective fields. My role in the group that I was in was to develop new business models that could be integrated into any business model and be successful or at least produce positive results.

Innovation, Self-Assessment, and the Vision of Young Leadership

The founder, Prince Mohammed, is a firm believer in the youth as drivers of the economy; hence, he organized the event through his foundation. The primary purpose of the event was the education of the youth through interaction with global market leaders as a way of gaining knowledge in various industrial fields. The event was organized based on four main pillars. The first pillar was the role of artificial intelligence in the world today. The youth would discuss how the world is moving from the traditional organizational structure and how technology is influencing the organizational changes (Anon, 2017). The second pillar was the well-being of an individual. It focused on decisions that youth make based on their media consumption and how they influence investments in the long run. The third pillar was based on how our education systems are shaping us for future success. The forum sought to provide new ways of integrating the changes in the globe into education curriculums to promote success. The final pillar was about community participation. What should the youth do to contribute to the outlook of their community, and how can they use their skills to grow the society and not only themselves?

Being the first event of its kind in the Middle East region, I expected a lot from the occasion. I was sure that I would be able to interact with the most intelligent minds that the world could offer. I hope that by the end of it, I will be a complete and more learned person. I also wanted to interact with young people who had been making global changes and learn how they had achieved that despite all the challenges they face from already established individuals. Our college professor had also given us objective to fulfill at the end of the event and which we would teach our other classmates. The forum demanded the highest level of concentration and I had to write down most of what was said because I felt it was relevant to my set goals. The forum is very relevant to the course that I am pursuing that is entrepreneurship. The forum will provide me with all the information about being a great entrepreneur in future.

I created a self-assessment test that I could use at the end of the forum to see if I had achieved the goals I set at the beginning. The assessment was composed of questions such as what is the main lesson I learned. How can I use the knowledge gained to change the poverty levels in my community? What activities are the youth likely to take part in and which can bring monetary benefits? How can youth who are not intellectually gifted use their skills to change the world? My assumptions are mainly based on job creation for the youth in my community. The levels of crime in my town have increased in recent years, something that can be blamed entirely on the unemployment rate. Most of the businesses are laying off employees because of the increasing price of inputs. The youth have no source of income and hence are turning to crime to meet their daily needs. I sought to change all that through everything that I would learn in the forum.

Educational Inspiration and Lessons from Global Speakers

The speaker that touched me most and whom I learned a lot from was Sal Khan. He is the founder of the Khan Academy, a globally recognized school that provides the highest quality education through the internet (Kaplan, 2015). The world is evolving, and we are moving away from reading hard copies of books and accessing more through the internet. Online libraries rake in millions of dollars every year through the premium subscriptions that they charge annually. The Khan Academy started as a family thing where Khan sought to make home videos to teach his kids about various topics and issues. Through his presentation, I was able to learn how the education system is changing gradually with the increasing use of technology. Children no longer want to read books but want something that interests them such as videos that incorporate images in learning. Education is becoming more practical rather than theoretical than it was in the past. The growth of the academy has been tremendous over the years in the United States, and he has earned millions of dollars while helping many young people attain success.

The teaching from Khan is very relevant to me. The community I live in has many youths who did not complete school and choose to look for employment in the informal sector. From an assessment, I conducted a majority of them dropped out because of peer pressure and gangs in the neighborhood. The teachers that I had interviewed earlier described some of them as brilliant boys who would have achieved more if they continued learning. The lack of education is what is ailing the unemployed youths in my community. Businesses are closing down because the owners do not understand how the world works today. The work that Khan has done through online teaching can be helpful in educating the young men and women in my community (Cargile, 2015). They would be kept occupied at all times and thus free from committing crimes. Moreover, they can learn while continuing with work, and many would appreciate it because they will not feel embarrassed as they would learn in a classroom of youths way younger than them. I can start the high school classes, prepare the videos, and create a website where they can access all the learning materials needed. I have never thought about being a teacher but Khan's experiences showed me that I can achieve more through sharing the knowledge that I have rather than starting a business. I would be able to equip the youth with skills to start their own companies or expertise to be employed in well-paying jobs.

Education was a key theme in most of the speeches throughout the two-day conference. Most of the speakers agreed that they had gotten to where they are because of always learning. Education cannot be confined to the classroom only and people can learn about many things outside (Kaplan, 2015). One should not be brainwashed to believe that good grades are what determine one's success; rather, one should be aware that determination and attitude are the key drivers of success. Overall, the experience at the event was good. There is nothing I can fault the organizers to have missed. My way of thinking was completely changed. I can now analyze a situation using multiple points of view to come up with a reliable solution. For example, Bill Gates saw a gap in the technological sector and

came up with a solution to fix it. His ability to think critically is what has enabled us to use computers today. He taught me that problems will always be there what lacks is the ability of people to identify the issues and address them critically.

Personal Commitment to Educational Change

I aim to change how people view education everywhere. I want to become a teacher and spread the knowledge that many scholars have over the years gained. My short-term goal is to ensure that I can convince at least twenty people in my neighbourhood to finish school. I will approach the local high schools and colleges to create an online resources platform where they can learn instead of going to class. I hope to convince some of the teachers to provide tutorials on various subjects that the youth can use to determine. I will also begin a technology awareness campaign that will target the businesses in my community. The campaign will be voluntarily based. Its main aim will be to create awareness of the importance of technology in business (Gibson, 2015). I will help the business owners set up social media platforms where they can reach more customers and thus reduce the rate of businesses that are being shut down. I went to the event mainly because I wanted to learn how to start a successful business. However, through the forum, I saw that my business would eventually collapse because I would not get highly qualified labor. If I teach the youth in future, I will be able to start my own business and have competent employees.

Since the forum, I have enrolled about ten individuals. The ten are high school dropouts, and they are enrolled in online teaching programs that I set up in collaboration with various high schools. They can learn at their preferred times and send the assignment to teachers for marking. Many parents have approached me about homeschooling their children because they feel that the current education system is not doing enough for their kids. I now tutor about one hundred children after school for about two hours, focusing more on mathematics and business. Their teachers have said that the grades of the children have reduced significantly. In improving the business, my awareness campaign has helped revive most businesses. The owners are now using computers to carry out their daily inventory and filling their taxes. The area has seen an increase in the number of visitors that come to shop because of social media platforms such as Facebook. In conclusion, the event has helped me to change the outlook of my community, and I hope that it will become a model that other regions can emulate.

References

Anon, (2017).

Available at:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WRZr3vECHOU&index=2&list=PLbIWGd9Oe6SMGrALJH8VAFCr8U4UyuKA1> [Accessed 26 Mar. 2018].

Bowen, H., 2018. *Investment in learning: The individual and social value of American higher education*. Routledge.

Cargile, L.A. and Harkness, S.S., 2015. Flip or Flop: Are Math Teachers Using Khan Academy as Envisioned by Sal Khan?. *TechTrends*, 59(6), pp.21-28.

Gibson, D., Ostashewski, N., Flintoff, K., Grant, S. and Knight, E., 2015. Digital badges in education. *Education and Information Technologies*, 20(2), pp.403-410.

Kaplan, A.M. and Haenlein, M., 2016. Higher education and the digital revolution: About MOOCs, SPOCs, social media, and the Cookie Monster. *Business Horizons*, 59(4), pp.441-450

MISK Foundation (2017).

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y9gtp4Us14M&index=3&list=PLbIWGd9Oe6SMGrALJH8VAFCr8U4UyuKA1>.

Murphy, R., Gallagher, L., Krumm, A.E., Mislevy, J. and Hafter, A., 2014. Research on the use of Khan Academy in schools: Research brief.