

# In Search for Inspiration Economy Currency—A Literature Review

Mohamed Buheji, Dunya Ahmed

International Institute of Inspiration Economy, Maribor, Slovenia

Email: buhejim@gmail.com, dr.dunya@hotmail.com

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## Abstract

With economic instability and the increase of uncertainty in all the issues of socio-economy, the world is looking for diversification of currencies that help human beings' development. With limited research coming up yet on inspiration based economy, the currency of inspiration is becoming a more important performance indicator. In this paper, we review the literature and try to link and measure the role of currency in all the types of the coming economies that are creating a transformation from traditional thinking to more of a transitional thinking. The paper concludes with recommendations of how to build more solid inspiration currency that would come from within to serve all of us and would increase our independence from external sources.

## Keywords

Inspiration, Sources of Inspiration, Currency of Inspiration, Inspiration Economy

## 1. Introduction

The world is in search more than ever today for a different economy concept that makes sense. Most of us however have been more of followers than creators of our fate, due to such materialistic driven economies that we rarely manage to engage with or control. In this paper, we call for a transitional thinking for an economy that is designed and built by all of us. This economy we call Inspiration Economy, it comes from within us to serve all of us, without the currency of the dollar, or the total dependency on external depleting sources.

Inspiration based economy is believed to be built in many enablers and different inspiration generation theories, without which we can't see a competitive and sustainable future.

## 2. Literature Review

### 2.1. History and Meaning of Inspiration Currency

Thrash and Elliot [1] was one of the earliest researchers whom identified inspiration as important psychological construct that can be generated. The test of inspiration has been for long time about the power to inspire and to kindle inspiration in others. Alternatively, inspiration as a medium or spiritual currency has been used by different religions indirectly, as per Hedge *et al.* [2]. Different religions have used different methods to utilize the inspiration currency to inspire its followers to act. Therefore, Hedge *et al.* [2] seen that faith and inspiration enhance the currency of inspiration as it gives different sides of one fact.

Currency means something valuable that you have, that you can trade for something you want or need. Currency is valid if you have to offer something others want. Having a strong currency means that you can create an influence with it or even you can drive change through utilizing it effectively. Examples of currencies other than money are having specific technical expertise, or specific organizational knowledge, political well, or knowledge about clients, etc. Gratitude, recognition, appreciation, listening, respect, assistance with tasks, are also considered small currencies. Grants and budget allocation are also considered type of currencies.

In knowledge based economy ability to utilize the position and the role, or the organizational affiliation (school, company, industry), or the relationships, or the networks, or the knowledge and skills are all considered to be important personal currencies.

Cohen-Bradford has set a model in (2009) that can be used for inspiration currency enhancement through focusing on the big picture (vision), excellence practices and values. Then resources, information, assistance and support as advancement, recognition, visibility, reputation, networks/contacts, inclusion, self-concept, challenging, ownership, gratitude and involvement were considered another type of currency.

Linda Hill [3], in her “Exercising Influence” in (1994) emphasized the sources of power which any currency could have in order to play an influence. The currency as per Hill [3] depends on the key players using this inspiration currency, the key competencies then desired outcomes.

### 2.2. The Logic of Inspiration Currency

Inspiration is becoming most essential social and human capital for any successful business. Inspiration comes more when you deliver your heart, and you visualize it in your mind the energy moves. Inspiration if used as a currency it would makes a difference as to your energy and thus capacity. What you focus on matters and this would moves from being a scarcity based individual to abundance based individual.

Oleynick [4] mentioned that under optimal conditions when the idea is actionable we are have enough capacity to do, the process of being “inspired by” gives way to the process of being “inspired to” which motivates action. Regarding the transmission model, creative inspiration often takes a specific form of transmission called actualization [5]. Here is where inspiration currency is created and ready to be shared or transmitted

from an idea to a finished product or service. **Figure 1** shows how the concept and logic of inspiration is being created from the time of its being just may be a momental Aha moment as per Topolinski and Reber [6] till the time is converted to a suggested awakening and finally till we create the necessary reflections that leads to more abundant thinking thus become a value currency [1].

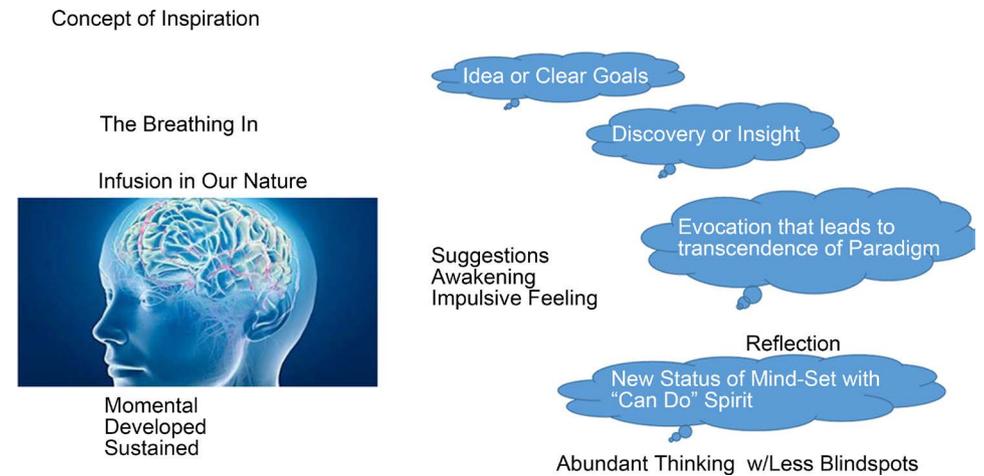
### 2.3. What Is Inspiration Economy?

It is an economy that focuses on raising the capacity of discovering the potential of human beings abilities to be the currency of competition and source of a planned outcome and legacy. Thus Inspiration Economy (IE) is a mix of many disciplines that lead to inspiration practices that motivate the spirit to a level that creates waves of inspiration in socio-economic development. These mixed discipline practices can be like entrepreneurship, innovation, risk taking, opportunity seeking/creating; along with a focused and change driven mind-set. It is a type of economy that would be based on our societies and organizations’ abilities to discover the potential and the capacities or human being and thus capitalize on it through inspiration [7].

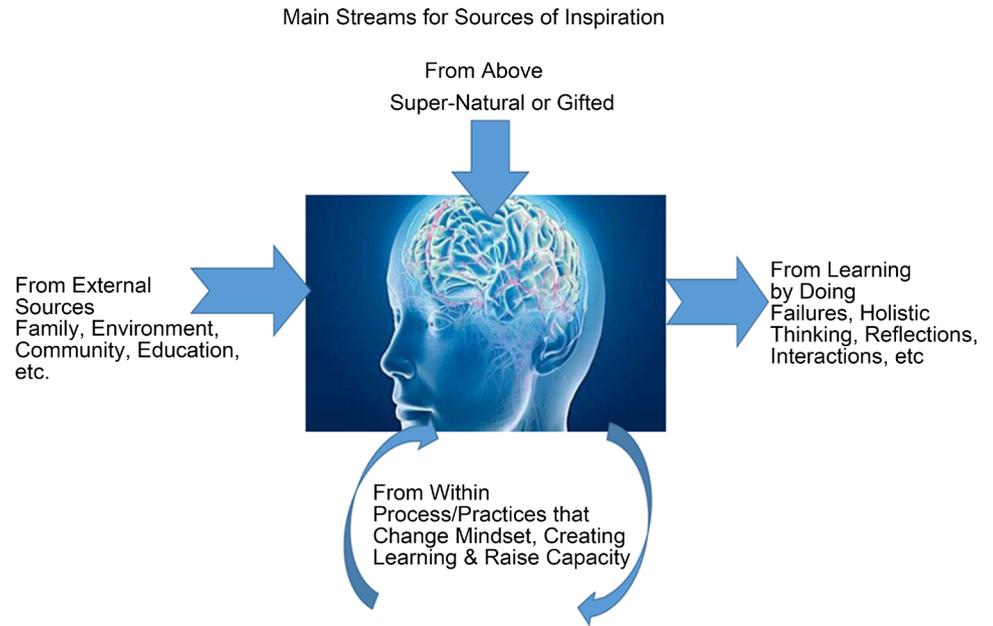
### 2.4. How Can Inspiration Currency Solve Socio-Economic Issues?

With inspiration many communities would start believing that the world is worth living. With inspiration we can use our minds to think of what we want instead of what we see.

Inspiration have shifted from being mainly an outcome that is created only a supernatural or gifted source to being an outcome from external source as family, environment, community, education, etc. as shown in **Figure 2**. It is a source that would enhance the inspiration within to lead better processes and/or practices that would help change the mindset thus creating a learning environment that would raise the capacity versus the demand; thus leading an outcome that would revive more and more by learning by doing, failures, holistic thinking, reflections and social interactions. These



**Figure 1.** Concept and logic of inspiration till it becomes a value currency.



**Figure 2.** Main streams of sources and outcome of inspiration.

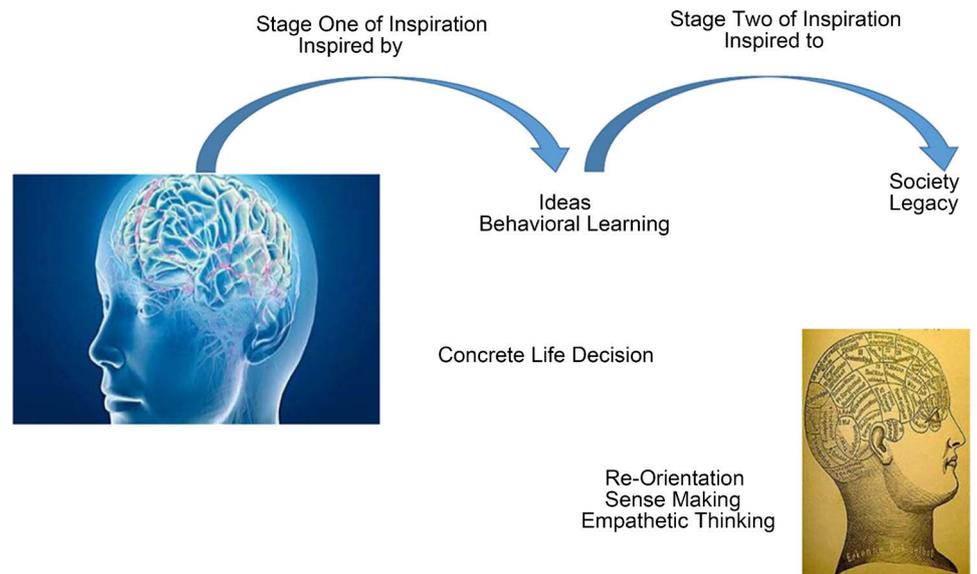
basic practices formulate the inspiration drive and its currency.

Just wonder around and you'll see inspiration is used today in every globally marketed materials or services. For example, when organizations are marketing a product today they would link inspiration to the product in different ways, *i.e.* either through involvement, or through using focus groups in open circuit and social media, or through making a life difference through inspiring stories or good practices and then presenting the product to the people. So, inspiration as a currency is well commercialized and used today.

Inspiration currency is a means for empowering people to see their internal potential and shift them to be producers instead of being purely consumers. Therefore, through inspiration currency people are expected to evolve and to shape more and more the communication medium without any saturation. Those that would capitalize on this now would be the richest and also the most powerful influencers. However inspiration currency produces passion, and passion might have a high production cost and therefore it is not fair to measure it the formula of immediate financial return, but rather on the level of legacy return.

As per **Figure 3** inspiration currency can be created by two stages. The first stage of this currency manufacturing is when we are being "inspired by" ideas, behavioral learning, concrete life decisions or others things or individuals. The second stage of this currency making is when we are being an "inspiration to" our society or our legacy. Here once people reach this stage they would achieve higher value of this currency capacity as they would create more of re-orientation, sense making and empathetic thinking that would differentiate the competency ad capacity to creating actual change.

Inspiration set a message for the type of currency that we need to define who we are as people and what our goals toward a more resilient society or what we want to



**Figure 3.** Two stages of inspiration currency.

contribute to the word. This make our social equity is of value that would shape the fate of any individual status and wellbeing.

Once inspiration becomes of a value and we realize the meaning of give and take, then it will become a currency that would be valued both financially and non-financially. Most of all that this type of currency if well utilized it would lead to a better healthy (well communicated) and profitable (very value added) community.

Inspiration currency would not only make people deal on higher level of returns, but would be a source of enrichment the community since it would facilitate freedom of thinking and reflection that would re-shape our future.

Many authors have written about creative currency where they've seen that the key to this currency is reclaiming your abundance ability. Inspiration currency also needs practices beyond abundance to create better insight. As the researchers of creative currency, we believe that it feed into our soul and make us feel more alive, thus becoming more selective and focusing on what is essential for your passion.

Thus one of the ways to optimize the utilization of inspiration currency is thinking about what excite you. If teaching or sport or changing community is what excites you then this is the currency you should invest in. Observing the practices that made giant companies as Google and Alibaba differentiate themselves from competition is that they focused on exponential growth rather than gradual sequential growth, using the inspiration currency. For example, through using inspiration currency that motivated and controlled the human mindset, they manage to bring an accumulated affect to achieve in few years what others couldn't do in decades or centuries.

Even though our brains are designed to assimilate change, without inspiration currency we can't notice the implication of change on us. In fact inspiration currency believes in disruptive change, the power of ideas and can change the economy of the world or the basis on how we manage to inspire each other and then how we capitalise on

change with each other.

Currency of inspiration would depend on throughput of transition of inspiring, yet sometime simple or radical or even disruptive ideas. So, it is a type of currency that would depend on our insight abilities and how we can renew our visualization of the future without any guarantee for smooth transmissions, regardless of language, race, age and political situations.

In contrast to human developed languages where evolution and inspiration seized to grow exponentially, now with technology and media being the main language there are no limits to that. Such exponential development can be enhanced by imagining how we can use the inspiration currency thus enable us to participate in the next coming major human evolution. Through the currency of being inspired we can now appreciate how the best historical paintings or sculpture or music been used long back in history as an inspiration currency.

What the currency of inspiration does, is that it helps us to pick the future possibilities and then get inspired to see the opportunities between them. Inspiration currency can be possible in mankind environment, since we humans (as per Nietzsche [8]) are a bridge and not an end.

Inspiration if utilized affectively by societies, governments, organizations and individual can enhance our ability to pick up the future possibilities.

## 2.5. Importance of Selecting Inspiration as a Currency

In order to see, handle, manage the highly disruptive innovation of products and services, in reality we have limited choice of not to choose inspiration, as without inspiration we can't see the huge folding of things and thus can't see how to use between these folding and unfolding disruptions. Thus inspiration currency would help us absorb and then ride smoothly this radical disruptions and with high adoption capabilities in accordance with the speed of human highly evolving innovation.

As we are coming with many innovations that would capture our attention more, yet are going to fade rapidly. Inspiration can enhance our mediation ability to adopt and even create what seems to be impossible. Once inspiration is used as a currency for differentiating our competitiveness, it can extends our thoughts and visions to what we can expect, thus raising our forecasting abilities. So instead of using magic sticks or money or knowledge to extend who we are, we can use inspiration to extend our cognitive, mental, physical and spiritual abilities.

Once inspiration becomes a realized currency we'll shorten the gap between human systems and technological sophistications. Inspiration architects would look on what patterns of inspiration waves needed in their socio economy that would help develop the society with minimal resources or with no extra resources. Maximizing the power of inspiration means we can release innovative products and services overcoming whatever type of challenges and thus ensuring more survival.

If the power of inspiration is used into a means of exchange currency we can yield a substantial transformation for an entire societies rather than just attempting to adopt

new version of something consumers already use and need, with inspiration one or society can see the same thing from different perspective.

The benefit of Inspiration Currency is that it works within different environments ranging from simple to more complex one as engineering. So, it is a currency that would help to enhance and transform basic and classical experiences to a more universal and modular systems with great adaptation.

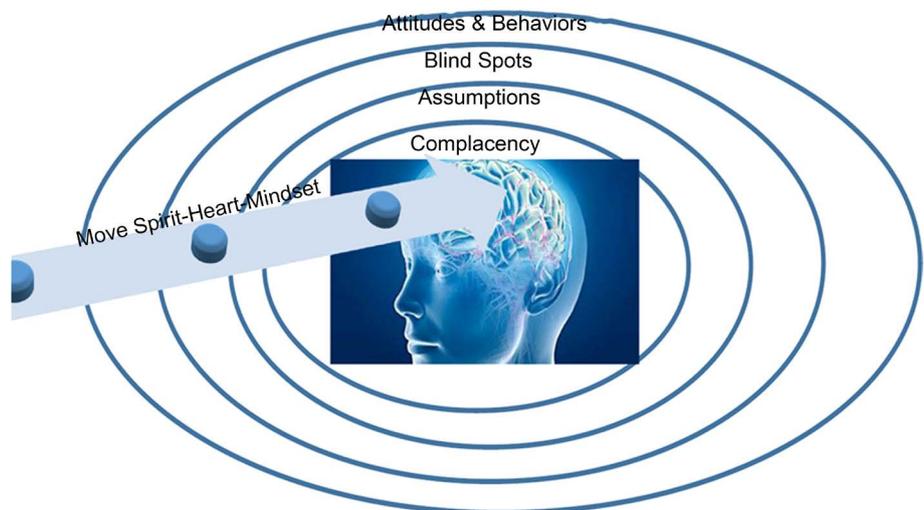
## 2.6. Feelings of Inspiring Others and Inspiration Currency

Inspiration is “the” most important tool you can equip someone you love and care about with during their life journey. Since inspiration is about belief that turns into love and messages of trust. Inspiring others means you open their minds, hearts, spirit and the rest of their body senses for their ability to achieve what was thought to be impossible [3].

We can create or use the currency of inspiration once we try to move the spirit, the heart and mindset. This means as per **Figure 4** we can have attitudes and behaviors, blind spots, assumptions and complacency more controlled towards the common goal.

Being able to make time in your life to inspire others and not only help them is the future of an inspiration economy. Inspirational moments are like dreams in your mind that create powerful feelings. Being able to give or transform inspiration to others is the most powerful currency we can share or deal with. The Prophet of Islam “Mohamed” is quoted saying repeatedly about the importance of the feeling of inspiring others, to the extent he described the feeling of managing to inspire others as better than the rare red type of Arabian camel species in the dissert, or on another occasion he said “it is better than having a fortune of the whole world!” I am sure we will come across many similar sayings from those who have experienced inspiring others. It is really an indescribable feeling.

Inspiring others can be considered the dream transportation cart. Through inspiring



**Figure 4.** The creation and use of inspiration currency.

others we can take them to somewhere near to their dreams, or make them feel the need to have new dreams, or make them realize that their dreams can come true! It is difficult to imagine a currency, fortune or a business that would do all this together. This is the economic power of inspiring others. It is again what we call “influencing without power”.

The power to inspire others is exactly the power that Ghandi and Mandela managed to acquire to make dreams come true for Indians and South Africans and it is the same power that each of us can have. It is difficult to sustain this power, but it can be with practice and the most important it is free, yet it is not owned by the government. We believe it to be the power that differentiates the market and sets conditions and future social status.

### **2.7. Blooms Thinking Model and Inspiration Currency**

An inspiration economy is based on a knowledge economy (KE), since without a KE there will not be an appreciation of knowledge that changes socio-economic measures and gains. Moreover, KE practices are related to Benjamin Bloom’s classification of levels of intellectual behavior with relevance to the process of learning. Different authors as Buheji and Thomas [7] in their handbook of Inspiration Economy believes that after a KE the world might progress into a Learning Economy, where the differentiation and the power of the socio-economy will be based on the ability to learn.

Bloom’s learning scale contained three overlapping domains: the cognitive, psychomotor, and affective. These domains are very important for the intensity of inspiration. Each of these domains had a level of activities and/or practices. Bloom identified, for example, the cognitive domain by six levels, all of them are related to the frequency and intensity of inspiration and these are: knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis and evaluation. This intensity and frequency of inspiration would off course affect its own currency.

If we study Bloom’s thinking model we will see that it involves logical thinking and reasoning, including skills such as comparison, classification, sequencing, cause/effect, patterning, webbing, analogies, deductive and inductive reasoning, forecasting, planning, hypothesizing and critiquing. This type of thinking enhances the utilization of inspiration currency, since it involves creating something new or original. It involves the skills of flexibility, originality, fluency, elaboration, brainstorming, modification, imagery, associative thinking, attribute listing, metaphorical thinking and forced relationships. The aim of creative thinking is to stimulate curiosity and promote divergence and these are all sources of inspiration.

### **2.8. Inspiration Currency and the Knowledge Economy**

Knowledge as a currency can be managed to where demand is highest and barriers lowest. Therefore today ‘knowledge enhanced’ products or services can command price premiums over comparable products between low embedded knowledge, or high knowledge intensity products/services. The pricing and value of products and services in a KE

are becoming dependent on the context.

As inspiration involves not only transcendence and evocation, but also approach motivation, we may also look to the neuroscience literature on states of approach motivation [4] [9]. If knowledge is not valued, transformed or trapped, then it will not be of value at all. With availability of inspiration practices knowledge can have various forms in which it may appear.

## 2.9. Inspiration Currency and the Happiness Economy

Over the past few years, economists have become interested in happiness or the subjective well-being economy [10] [11]. This area has long been discussed by the positive psychologists in the last two decades [12]. It has become clear, however, that the concept of happiness is able to offer new insights on issues if it is met with eager self-consciousness and discovery.

Therefore, Graham [13] focused on the economy of well-being using the trend where economists are increasingly using happiness surveys to study what causes populations to deliver a better satisfactory life. Today, we are witnessing many economic reports that measure happiness effects on health and marriage to the unhappiness effects of unemployment, divorce, and even commuting time. This off course would increase the frequency and level of Inspiration Currency.

Since happiness economy research can show many hidden treasures within human capability that can be discovered, inspiration currency would play a role in the identification of the determinants of individual well-being. Happiness itself can be one the inspiration currency tool or measures of exchange, as with happiness as per of inspiration currency well have better welfare, using techniques such as self-realization and inspiration.

## 3. Design/Methodology/Approach

Through studying cases of inspired individuals, organization and communities, the study explores the understanding of inspiration currency, through an analysis of the interfaces and interplays between different variables that affect and influence such currency.

This research uses a mixture of qualitative methods including semi-structured and narrative interviews, focus groups, as well as survey, documentary analysis and observation as supplementary approaches. In addition, it was decided not to use quantitative methods as a main method as area is virgin and such area cannot be measured quantitatively.

The theoretical approach to data analysis will be used in this research is grounded theory. This is systematic approach where theories emerge out of the study data [14]. It is suggested that such an approach is particularly suited to new areas of studies, such as this study of IC [14]. Where no theory exists, grounded theory allows new theory to emerge in a new area of study [15] [16].

## 4. Research Limitations and Implications

This researched is applied as pilot in Bahrain, further it will be applied in different con-

tent to prove the theory more imperially.

## 5. Originality/Value

As the world is trying to discover what would be the shape of the next economy, inspiration is considered by certain authors in many communities would start believing that the world is worth living. With inspiration we can use our minds to think of what we want instead of what we see. Inspiration based economy is believed to be built in many enablers and different inspiration generation theories, without which we can't see a competitive and sustainable future.

The original contribution to knowledge of this study is its consideration of an approach that can transfer inspiration to currency. The study will show that this can be applied for different categories as there is a need to develop an approach in this area with changing in economy. While most of empirical experimental part of this study took place in a country with limited resources and use to depend mostly in oil the model can be used in developed and development countries.

## 6. Conclusions

From reviewing the literature of other economy currencies, our minds, our attention and our ability to visualize would set our future currency. It causes things to happen just the way we imagine it and even more energetically.

Inspired person can differentiate countries fate from his ability to shift from supply to capacity verses the demands. The role of Inspiration Currency would be to bring our imagination onto existence on daily basis. Thus it is a currency that would be able to help us shrink the world. With inspiration as a currency, we would reduce the lag time between our needed realization and our level of inspiration.

Without shifting to such inspiration currency, we are really keeping the minds of humanity trapped in materialistic issues that in reality doesn't help our humanity to rapidly evolve and increase our humility of not being able to deal with the within.

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