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Effect of Entrepreneurship Education on Entrepreneurial Intention

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Abstract

As a result of global economic problems and technological innovations, education is no longer a guarantee for employment. Consequently, most governments have introduced entrepreneurship education in institutions of higher learning with the aim of creating entrepreneurial intention among students. The purpose of the study was to investigate the effect of entrepreneurship education on entrepreneurial intention of students in Technical and Vocational Education and Training institutions in Kenya. The findings suggest a significant but low correlation between entrepreneurship education and entrepreneurial intention. Given the importance of entrepreneurship education it is desirable to realign the entrepreneurship education curriculum to reflect a competence based outfit that incorporates practical approaches to imparting entrepreneurial knowledge and skills.
Key words: Entrepreneurship education; Entrepreneurial intention, competence based

1.Introduction

As a result of recent global economic problems and technological innovations (Feldmann; 2013; Matsuzeviciute, Butkus, & Karaliute, 2017), for today's college, university and TVET graduates, training is no longer a guarantee to formal employment. Both private and public institutions have resorted to employ fewer people thereby increasing the demand for job creators and not job seekers (Morris & Liguori, 2016). Consequently most of the training institutions have introduced entrepreneurship education in their curricula. The introduction of entrepreneurship education is based on the premise that the education creates entrepreneurial intention among learners which may subsequently lead to entrepreneurial intention (Nabi, Linan, Fayolle, Krueger, & Walmsley, 2017; Consortium for Entrepreneurship Education, 2008). Entrepreneurship education is viewed as a collection of formalized teachings that informs, trains and educates anyone interested in participating in socio-economic development through a project to promote entrepreneurship awareness, business creation or small business development (UNESCO, 2006; ILO, 2010). It is a method whereby students practice how to create, find, and act on opportunities of creating value (Neck, Greene, & Brush, 2014). Despite lack of universal definition of the term, entrepreneurship education has been proposed as an avenue for educating students to take any academic discipline and be creative, innovative and entrepreneurial. Through entrepreneurship education flexibility, adaptability and resilience are imparted and applied to ensure success (Welsh, Tullar, & Nemati, 2016).

Literature suggests that the past two decades have witnessed significant growth in entrepreneurship education programs in most countries (Neck et al., 2014; Singer, Amoros, & Arreola, 2014). In their view, Neck et al., (2014) attribute this significant growth of entrepreneurship education programs to global belief in the positive impact that entrepreneurship can have on the socio-economic and political infrastructure of a nation. Public policy makers recognize the importance of entrepreneurship as promoter of economic development and hence support entrepreneurship education programs to increase entrepreneurial activity (Ambad & Damit, 2015). The European Commission, for example, reports that the primary purpose of entrepreneurship education is to promote entrepreneurial attitudes, develop entrepreneurial intention and influence mindsets of potential entrepreneurs (European Commission, 2010) and recommends integrating entrepreneurship fully into higher education curricula.

2. Statement of the problem

As a result of recent global economic problems and technological innovations (Feldmann; 2013; Matsuzeviciute et al., 2017), for today's college, university and TVET graduates, training is no longer a guarantee to formal employment. Graduate unemployment in developing countries is on the rise and causing concern to policy makers (Mohamedbhai, 2016; ILO, 2015) and Kenya is not an exception. The youth unemployment in Kenya has been on a worrying upward trend in the recent past (United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), 2013). This problem could be partly solved by encouraging entrepreneurship education in institutions of higher learning (Institute of Economic Affairs (IEA), 2011).

Many scholars have explored the relationship between entrepreneurship education and entrepreneurial intention (Oosterbeek, Praag, & Ijselstein, 2010; Fayolle & Gailly, 2015; Nabi et al., 2017; Bae, Qian, Miao, & Fiet, 2014). The results from these prior studies are not, however, unanimous on the effect of entrepreneurship education on intention of the learners. Whereas some studies (Bae et al., 2014; Kautonen, van Geldren, & Fink, 2017) reported a significant and positive effect of entrepreneurship education on intention, other scholars (Von Graevenitz et al., 2010; Oosterbeek et al., 2010) have reported a negative effect. Furthermore, a study by Souitaris et al. (2007) and Nabi et al., (2017) found insignificant and mixed results on influence of entrepreneurship education on intention among university students. This study is therefore necessary because of the inconsistent findings in past studies.

3. Research Framework and Hypothesis

Entrepreneurial intention is defined as the desire of a person to either own his or her own business or to start one (Krueger, Reilly, & Carsud, 2000). It is a cognitive state of mind immediately prior to executing a behavior or initiating action (Izedomni & Okafor, 2010). In this paper entrepreneurial intention is defined as a cognitive representation of actions for exploiting a business opportunity by applying knowledge and skills (Thompson, 2009). It is argued that intentions have proven to be a strong predictor of future entrepreneurial behavior. In this sense, intention acts as a force that propels entrepreneurial intention and behavior and as a catalyst for action (do Paco, Ferreira, Raposo, & Rodrigues, 2015).

Entrepreneurship education has emerged as a means of inculcating confidence, identity development and intentions. In that sense, it acts as a means to educate students on the skills for being creative and innovative (Welsh et al., 2016; Rae & Woodier-Harris, 2013; do Paco et al., 2015). It is argued that some issues inherent in entrepreneurship education content such as idea generation process, market analysis, and business planning to mention a few, can be enhanced by education (Bae et al., 2014).

Empirical studies that have investigated the effect of entrepreneurship education on entrepreneurial intention of students are less unanimous on the results. While some scholars report positive effects (Bae et al., 2014; Kautonen et al., 2017) others find mixed (von Graevinitz et al., 2010) and negative (do Paço et al., 2015; Marques et al., 2012; Oosterbeek et al., 2010; Nabi et al., 2017; Souitaris et al., 2007). Bae et al. (2014) conducted a meta-analysis that focused on the relationship between entrepreneurship education and entrepreneurial intention among the youth in Belgium. The findings suggest a significant but small correlation between entrepreneurship education and entrepreneurial intention. However, Bae et al. (2014) report that when they controlled for pre-education intention of respondents, post-education intention was not significant. In another study,

In contrast, a number of studies, however, have found that entrepreneurship education has either no discernible influence or a negative influence on entrepreneurial intention (do Paço et al., 2015; Marques et al., 2012; Oosterbeek et al., 2010; Olomi & Sinyamule, 2010; Souitaris et al., 2007). A study by do Paco et al. (2015) compared the psychological attributes and behaviours associated with entrepreneurship as well as entrepreneurial intention among students attending a sports school in Portugal. The results report that despite their not receiving any kind of entrepreneurship education, the students at the neighbouring sports school tended to have higher entrepreneurial intention which suggests that there are other factors influencing entrepreneurial intention other than entrepreneurship education.

In a similar vein, Marques et al. (2012) assessed the impact of entrepreneurship education, psychological and demographic factors in prediction of entrepreneurial intention among secondary school students in Portugal and reported that entrepreneurship education does not have a significant influence on entrepreneurial intention. Elsewhere, Oosterbeek et al. (2010) analyzed the impact of entrepreneurship education program on college students' entrepreneurship skills and motivation. The scholars (Oosterbeek et al., 2010) found that the effect of entrepreneurship education on students' self-assessed skills was insignificant and the effect on intentions to become an entrepreneur was even negative.

Further, Nabi et al. (2017) also conducted an empirical literature survey focusing on entrepreneurial outcomes in higher education examining the links between pedagogic methods and specific outcomes. However, when it comes to measuring individual activities and programs, they found a range of results from those that exhibited no effect to those who show that some programmes do produce positive entrepreneurial results. Similarly, Souitaris et al. (2007) examined the influence of entrepreneurship education on entrepreneurial attitudes and intent of university students in Germany. The study concluded that exposure to entrepreneurship education process increases some attitudes and overall intentions of students. More so, von Graevinitz et al. (2010) studied the effect of entrepreneurship education on intention of learners in Munich School of Management in Germany. The

study reported mixed results. According to the findings, students' intentions decline with education but the program had a significant positive effect on self-assessed entrepreneurial skills of the students.

3.1Theory of Planned Behaviour

Scholars argue that the Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB) is a model which can be used to explain intention-behavior relationship hence applicable in intentionality studies (Kautonen et al., 2015). The TPB was developed initially by Icek Ajzen (Ajzen, 1985). The theory links beliefs with behavior and suggests that intention is the best predictor of an individual's behaviour. This is because intention is an indication of how hard an individual is willing to try, and of how much of an effort he or she is planning to exert, in order to perform the behaviour. As a general rule, the stronger the intention to engage in certain behaviour, the more likely should be its performance Ajzen, 1985). The theory of planned behaviour also suggests that intention toward a specific behaviour has three immediate antecedents: personal attitude towards the behaviour, subjective norm and social pressure to perform. First, attitude toward the behaviour is the degree to which a person has a favourable or unfavourable evaluation of the behaviour in question. Second, subjective norm refers to the perceived social pressure to perform or not to perform a particular behaviour. Thirdly, perceived behavioural control refers to the perceived ease or difficulty of performing the behaviour of interest and it is assumed to reflect past experience as well as anticipated impediments and obstacles ((Ajzen, 1985; Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975).

A number of studies find empirical support for the theory of planned behaviour in relation to entrepreneurial intention (Iakovleva, Kolvereid, & Stephen, 2011; Liñán & Chen, 2009; Siu & Lo, 2013). The theory provides the opportunity to measure the development of intentions through education (Fayolle et al., 2006). Based on the above literature, it is hypothesized that:

> There is a statistically significant effect of entrepreneurship education on entrepreneurial intention.

4. Research Design and Methodology

In this study, data were collected from students in 27 public TVET institutions in Kenya. Questionnaires were distributed to 265 students in TVET institutions in Kenya. A total of 239 questionnaires in a form usable for analysis were returned, which constituted a response rate of 90%. This response rate was considered adequate as suggested by Bryman and Bell (2007). An inspection of the missing data patterns was conducted. The inspection results showed that the number of missing values on the study variables was random and small. The cases with missing patterns did not reveal systematic values on the items of the independent variables and the dependent variable. Being that the cases of missing values were randomly distributed and small, imputation of missing values was not considered necessary; and missing values were excluded pair-wise.

This study focused on engineering students because of the notion that it is science and engineering students in particular whose entrepreneurial activities create new, high quality firms therefore students undertaking engineering related courses are assumed to be more likely to consider themselves as inventors more than other students (Barba-Sanchez & Atienza-Sahuquillo, 2017). Furthermore, entrepreneurship education is the only business related subject these students taking engineering related disciplines are exposed to in their three year course in TVET institutions.

4.1 Instrumentation

Entrepreneurship education was measured in terms of course content and pedagogical approaches. The two constructs were measured by the items adopted from Souitaris et al., (2007) and Johannisson (1991). Finally, the measurement scale for entrepreneurial intention was adopted from Entrepreneurial Intention Questionnaire (EIQ) that was developed by Linan and Chen (2009).

4.2 Reliability and Validity Analysis

The reliability test was conducted using Cronbach's Alpha, and the values were found to be 0.774. Each variable's Cronbach Alpha value is as indicated: course content (19 items) 0.903; pedagogical approaches (12 items) 0.777; self-prediction (7 items) 7.08; and desirability (4 items) 0.706. Overall, the instrument met the

recommended threshold of 0.7 (Baker, 1994) and thus was considered reliable. The study instrument was subjected to content validity test. Items for the variables used in this study were carefully developed based on the literature on entrepreneurship education and entrepreneurial intention. All the items were designed according to the definition of the constructs as well as the related findings of the existing literature.

5. Results of the Study

The respondents in this study were students in public TVET institutions spread across the country and taking engineering courses in their third year of study. They were considered to have formed entrepreneurial intention as a result of prior three years of entrepreneurship education in their respective institutions. Frequencies and percentages were used to examine the distribution of the respondents by course of study, gender and region. The profile of the respondents is shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Distribution of Respondents by Course, Gender and Region

Feature	Aspect	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Course	Electrical Engineering	73	30.5	30.5
	Quantity Surveying	9	3.8	3.8
	Civil Engineering	25	10.5	10.5
	Architecture	2	.8	.8
	Building and Construction	25	10.5	10.5
	Mechanics and Automotive Engineering	56	23.4	23.4
	Plumbing	2	.8	.8
	Land Survey	18	7.5	7.5
	Others	29	12.1	12.1
Gender	Male	176	73.6	73.6
	Female	63	26.4	26.4
Region	Mount Kenya	30	12.6	12.6
	Nairobi	93	38.9	38.9
	Western	71	29.7	29.7
	North Rift	28	11.7	11.7
	Coast	17	7.1	7.1

As shown in Table 1, majority of students were taking Electrical Engineering (30.5%), followed by Mechanical and Automotive Engineering (23.4%). The students enrolled for Civil Engineering and Building Construction Engineering stood at 10.5% respectively. A total of 7.5% enrolled for Land Survey while 3.8% were taking Quantity Survey. The least popular courses were Architecture and Plumbing (0.8%) respectively.

The distribution of respondents by gender indicated that the majority of respondents (73.6%) were male while only 26.4% were female. This was expected as most of engineering courses are popular with males than they are with females not only in TVET institutions, but also in other institutions of higher learning in Kenya.

From Table 1, Nairobi Region had the highest enrollment (38.9%) followed by Western Region (29.7%). While Mt. Kenya Region had an enrollment of 12.6%, North Rift Region registered only 11.7%. Finally, Coast Region had the least population of only 7.1%. These figures show that respondents were drawn from both gender, course of study and regions of the country.

5.1. Entrepreneurship Education

The responses were analyzed using mean scores and standard deviations. Higher mean scores indicated strong agreement on the item and lower mean score implied strong disagreement with the statements. The descriptive results show that the items with the highest score was “entrepreneurship course enhances my ability to identify a business opportunity” (M = 4.48, SD = 0.782). The item with the lowest score was “there were frequent field visits to established businesses” (M = 2.69, SD = 1.335). The overall mean score for entrepreneurship education was 3.71. These results were interpreted to mean that entrepreneurship education is capable of creating entrepreneurial intentions. Thus, the entrepreneurship education curriculum content offered in TVET institutions

is effective and comprehensive enough to impart "know what", 'know who", "know why" and "know what" skills. However, Neck et al., (2014) proposes that in building curricula to encourage and empower future entrepreneurs, it must be recognized that "one size does not fit all." This means that there is no perfect content and therefore the curriculum content should be based on the learning needs of students (Welsh et al., 2014).

In inculcating entrepreneurial skills, lecturers require several innovations in the mode of teaching (do Paco et al., 2015). The findings in this study reveal that pedagogical methods employed in TVET institutions to teach entrepreneurship are entirely based on traditional approach, especially, classroom lecture. This contradicts the assertion by (Arasti, Falavarjani, & Imanipour, 2012) that effective entrepreneurs are exceptional learners who ought to learn from a variety of effective sources. They should learn from other entrepreneurs and also from experience and by doing. The above discussion shows that an application of variety of pedagogical approaches is essential for effective delivery of the curriculum.

5.2. Entrepreneurial Intention

Responses regarding entrepreneurial intention were also analyzed using mean score and standard deviations. From the results, it is evident that the overall mean for entrepreneurial intention was 4.12. The mean score for self-prediction dimension was 4.26. The item "I am determined to create a firm in future" had the highest mean score (M = 4.42, SD = 4.08), while the item "my professional goal is becoming an entrepreneur" scored the lowest mean (M = 4.04, SD = 2.72). The score for desirability dimension was 3.96. The highest mean was for the item on "Working in my own business would be very personally satisfying" (M = 4.35, SD = 1.01) while the item with the least score was "I cannot imagine working for someone else" (M = 3.25, SD = 1.33). These scores indicate that a majority of the respondents strongly agreed that they had entrepreneurial intentions.

5.3. Effect of Entrepreneurship Education on Entrepreneurial Intention

The objective of the study was to determine the effect of entrepreneurship education on entrepreneurial intention. It was hypothesized that entrepreneurship education has a significant effect on entrepreneurial intention. The hypothesis was tested using simple regression. The results of the analysis are presented in Table 2.

Table 2: Simple Regression Results for Effect of Entrepreneurship Education on Entrepreneurial Intention

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.384[a]	.147	.144	.61292

ANOVA[a]

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	15.339	1	15.339	40.829	.000[b]
	Residual	88.659	236	.376		
	Total	103.998	237			

a. Dependent Variable: EntreIntention

Table of Coefficients

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics	
		B	Std. Error	Beta			Tolerance	VIF
1	(Constant)	2.008	.324		6.191	.000		
	Entrepreneurship Education	.541	.085	.384	6.390	.000	1.000	1.000

a. Dependent Variable: EntreIntention

b. Predictors: (Constant), Entrepreneurship Education

As shown in Table 2, the R^2 for the model is 0.147 indicating that 14.7% of the variation in entrepreneurial intention is explained by variation in entrepreneurship education. A possible explanation for the low variation in entrepreneurial intention explained by entrepreneurship education (14.7%) suggests that there could be other factors which affect entrepreneurial intention which were not included in the model.

The ANOVA results indicate that the model is statistically significant (F= 40.83, p = 0.000, thus, p<0.05). The

standardized coefficients show that the effect of entrepreneurship education on entrepreneurial intention is positive and statistically significant. The simple regression model results support the hypothesis that there is a statistically significant effect of entrepreneurship education on entrepreneurial intention. The hypothesis is therefore accepted. This means that provision of entrepreneurship education would result in higher entrepreneurial intention.

6. Discussion of Results

The objective of the study was to determine the effect of entrepreneurship education on entrepreneurial intention. It was hypothesized that entrepreneurship education has a significant effect on entrepreneurial intention. The hypothesis was tested using simple regression. The regression results showed a positive and significant relationship between course content and entrepreneurial intention ($\beta = 0.309$, $t = 4.875$, $p < 0.05$) and a positive but insignificant effect of pedagogical approaches on entrepreneurial intention ($\beta = 0.175$, $t = 2.706$, $p > 0.05$). Thus the results supported the hypothesis that entrepreneurship education has a significant effect on entrepreneurial intention. The hypothesis was therefore was accepted. The finding of this study is consistent with the view that entrepreneurship education improves knowledge, skills and information needed to pursue an opportunity and also equip individuals with analytical ability and knowledge of entrepreneurial process (Bae et al., 2014). The finding is also in support of the argument that entrepreneurship education aims at equipping students with skills and also enhances their abilities to recognize, evaluate, marshal resources and to initiate and run the business successfully (Souitaris, 2007). Further, the finding corroborates the findings of past studies (Kautonen et al., 2015; Fayolle & Gailly, 2015) that entrepreneurship education positively affects entrepreneurial intention of students.

The positive coefficients for both course content and pedagogical approaches suggest that an effective entrepreneurship education program should comprise comprehensive course content and appropriate pedagogical approaches. These findings support the suggestion that an effective entrepreneurship education program should include a variety of entrepreneurial skills namely: “know-why” which reflects personal values and interest in learning; “know who” reflecting learning at social level by interacting with people; “know how” which is the practical part of entrepreneurial learning, and “know what” which refers to the theoretical part of entrepreneurship that involves definitions and basic concepts of entrepreneurship (Johannisson, 1991).

The results of this study also reveal that the effect of pedagogical approaches on entrepreneurial intention was positive but not significant. A possible explanation for the insignificant effect of pedagogical approaches on entrepreneurial intention may be that most entrepreneurship education instructors do not employ innovative methods of course delivery but could be relying on traditional methods such as classroom lectures which do not excite the learners.

7. Conclusion

The purpose of this study was to determine the effect of entrepreneurship education on entrepreneurial intention. The findings of the study yielded the conclusion that entrepreneurship education has an effect on entrepreneurial intention among engineering students in TVET institutions in Kenya. The finding confirms that entrepreneurship education is pivotal in enhancing entrepreneurial intention. Hence effective entrepreneurship education would result in higher levels of entrepreneurial intention.

8. Implications for Entrepreneurship Education Theory

The study found that entrepreneurship education has a positive effect on entrepreneurial intention among students in TVET institutions in Kenya. This finding supports the arguments in the theory of planned behavior. The theory of planned behavior argues that intentions are usually planned and the planning can be done through exposure to education. A well planned entrepreneurship education process involves relevant course content and appropriate pedagogical approaches to content delivery.

8.1. Implications for Management Policy and Practice

The study has implications to management policy and practice. First, the study confirmed a positive effect of entrepreneurship education on entrepreneurial intention. This implies that relevant course content and a mixture of effective pedagogical approaches are essential for entrepreneurial intention. Thus, to encourage many students to become entrepreneurs and start own enterprises, institutions need to focus on development of a comprehensive course content and application of a variety of pedagogical approaches in imparting entrepreneurial skills.

9. Limitations of the Study and Recommendations for Further Research

All research has limitations and this study was of no exception. First, the study was limited to only 265 third year

students taking engineering courses at diploma level. The findings are therefore specific to only students taking engineering courses and cannot be generalized to students in other disciplines or levels of education. Respondents from other academic disciplines or levels of education such as undergraduate and master university students might have different perceptions about entrepreneurial intention. Second, this study was cross-sectional and, therefore, the findings may be time specific and lack generalizability over time. A longitudinal study could increase understanding of the direct relationship between entrepreneurship education and entrepreneurial intention.

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