

Entrepreneurship Education and Creation of Postgraduate Entrepreneurs in a Post-Socialist Economy

Issack Shimba Allan
University of Dar es Salaam, Business School
Department of Marketing, Dar es Salaam, Tanzania
E-mail: issacka@yahoo.co.uk

Abstract

This article presents empirical findings of a study conducted in three Tanzanian universities. The study arose from observations that most of the students taking MBA evening classes pursue their studies while already employed in various organisations, a situation which spurs debates about the value of entrepreneurship education in their career. Both quantitative and qualitative data was collected involving 442 students. Findings show that generally, over 80% of the students have a positive perception about the relevance of entrepreneurship education. However, a few of them don't appreciate it for various reasons, including the need to focus its contents more on intrapreneurship than entrepreneurship. The article contributes to teaching practices and policies on making entrepreneurship education more impactful.

Keywords: *entrepreneurship, entrepreneurship training, learning styles, postgraduate students, Tanzania*

Introduction

In recent years it has become widely acknowledged that entrepreneurship education plays a vital role in economic growth of individuals and nations, both in developed and developing countries (Mandel & Noyes, 2016; URT, 2017; WB, 2019). The creation of entrepreneurs, who are essentially people with an entrepreneurial spirit (Falkang & Alberti, 2000) has been seen as one of essential outcomes of teaching and learning processes, especially in higher learning institutions (Allan, 2018; Mkala & Wanjau, 2018). Many scholars have examined this matter and there is a growing body of academic research on the effectiveness of entrepreneurship training and the provision of support services to entrepreneurs as a way of enhancing their capacity to plan, develop and grow their businesses (Allan, 2019; Gibb, 2011; WB, 2019). However, since entrepreneurs mostly learn from the real world through adaptive learning (Gibb, 2002; 2011), experiential-based encounters (Kolb, 1984) and problem solving discoveries (Deakins & Freel 1998; WB, 2019), it appears their creation is not an easy and straightforward task. Smilor (1997), for instance,

argued that entrepreneurs learn in an unordinary manner and from various sources of information such as competitors, employees, customers, suppliers, regulators of the business environment, policy makers, and other entrepreneurs as well as from their own mistakes through trial and error. This perception of how entrepreneurs learn induces debates about the ways entrepreneurship facilitators and training institutions have to plan, implement and evaluate the teaching and learning processes. Notwithstanding the appreciation of entrepreneurship education as pointed out above, there are scholarly debates regarding the different meanings that are associated with the concept of entrepreneurship (Bruyat & Julien, 2000), ranging from those which approach the concept from a psychological perspective (McClelland, 1961; Schumpeter, 1934), to those who look at it from the sociological perspective (Stanworth & Curran, 1976; Thomas & Mueller, 2000). Nevertheless, despite being conceptualised differently, to a large extent, entrepreneurship is seen as a process of identifying opportunities and innovatively bringing up new resource combinations and using in creating more value (Schumpeter, 1934). The underlying dominant view is that entrepreneurship encapsulates a wide range of behaviours associated with success in any endeavour, including having high needs for achievement, self-confidence, calculated risk taking, personal drive and determination. Entrepreneurship has been socially desirable in many countries across the globe (WB, 2018; 2019) including those which had a predominant socialist orientation. Such countries include those in the Eastern Europe block, wherein operation of private enterprises was unacceptable (Lafuente & Vaillant, 2013), a situation which is very similar to the Tanzanian context. A number of value - adding processes have been linked up with entrepreneurship and therefore making the basis for its appreciation. For instance, Ulrich (1997) observes that the importance of entrepreneurship education is derived from the significance of entrepreneurs throughout the economic systems. These include the potential for job creation, income generation to the majority and overall economic competitiveness of nations (URT, 2003a; URT., 2017; WB, 2019).

In universities and colleges, a great deal of attention and research on entrepreneurship education and training has been growing since the early 1990s (Gibb, 2011; Kaijage & Wheeler, 2013) testified in part by the growing number and types of programmes offered. A question worth asking is: Why has there been more concern about entrepreneurship in universities and colleges in recent years than before? Part of the explanation could be that traditionally universities have had concern with provision of knowledge governed by proven principles. Entrepreneurship on the other hand is behavioural, situational, calculated risk-taking oriented and hence more tasking in terms of teaching and learning (Smilor, 1997; URT, 2017). Studies have further shown that although entrepreneurship is a relatively new

phenomenon to higher education, it is one of the fastest growing areas of study at universities and colleges (Mars & Garrison, 2009; WB, 2019).

Moreover, since universities are there to offer knowledge and skills for societal benefit, it is apparent that for the sake of keeping abreast with the ongoing changes in the society, some universities have currently mainstreamed and embraced entrepreneurship. For instance, Gibb and Hannon (2006) observed that increasing entrepreneurial activities is central to the United Kingdom (UK)'s drive for international competitiveness and that the UK's world class higher education sector has a significant role to play in developing and supporting entrepreneurial talents and opportunities. Cone (2007) also observed that in the United States of America (USA) over 66% of all universities and colleges provide at least one course in entrepreneurship, and many universities have designed specific programmes aimed at enhancing entrepreneurship knowledge and skills of their graduates. Similar to Gibb and Hannon's (2006) views, Henry, Hill and Leitch (2005) argued that entrepreneurship education should aim at developing learners' attitudes, mindset, behaviour, skills and capabilities, which will create the entrepreneurs of today and the future. These and similar views have emerged as a result of a belief that entrepreneurship can, and should be taught (Fiet, 2000; Gibb, 2002), contrary to some earlier predispositions that entrepreneurship is an inborn trait (Baumol, 1983). Despite developments and initiatives to create more entrepreneurs in economies, contextualisation of entrepreneurship training programmes is an important factor if such programmes have to be impactful on the learners. Raffo, Lovatt, Banks, and O'Connor (2000), for instance, conducted a study in the UK about the influence of cultural factors and found out that lack of appropriate knowledge of the cultural values, historical experiences, the sectors involved and mindset of the people are likely to lead to inappropriate support. Moreover, in the course of reviewing training and support provision to Asian economies, Dana (2001) cautioned that there are also problems of translocating Western vocational education and training programmes to Eastern Europe or Asian economies. These observations suggest that prior to training people on entrepreneurship and business development matters, it is necessary to understand them as well as their historical backgrounds.

Statement of the research problem

In Tanzania, due to dominance of socialist policies from the early 1960s to the mid 1980s, concern about entrepreneurship development and the role of entrepreneurs in the economy wasn't a matter of priority to policy makers, politicians and academicians during those times. As some scholars put it, despite that the country is now governed by market - oriented policies, some Tanzanians still find it difficult to cope with the demands and challenges of the market economy because they still

have socialism hangover (Tripp, 1997). For instance, one would expect that Master of Business Administration (MBA) graduates from Tanzanian universities would be part of the few agents of change because of the exposure and awareness that they gain through studying entrepreneurship as one of their core courses in their MBA programme. Unfortunately, this has not always been the case. This follows an observation from registration information that over 80% of these students join the MBA programme while they are already employed in various organisations, with some of them holding managerial positions. Their dedication to learn about entrepreneurship and hence the impact which entrepreneurship education might make in such graduates' mindsets is debatable.

There appears to be a knowledge gap on whether postgraduate students study entrepreneurship courses with the same level of seriousness as the universities and learning facilitators expect. The underlying question is, 'Given Tanzania's socialist historical background and observation that many of these MBA students are already employees of various companies and institutions, to what extent do such trainees appreciate entrepreneurship education?' Moreover, 'What are the major issues that might raise their appreciation for such a training programme?'

Purpose and objectives of the study

In line with the background presented, the purpose of this study was to examine entrepreneurship teaching and learning processes at postgraduate levels in a post-socialist economy, taking evening MBA students in Tanzania as a case study. Specifically, the study aimed at:

- (i) exploring the relevance attached to entrepreneurship education by postgraduate students who are taking MBA evening classes.
- (ii) analysing the level of participation of these postgraduate students in entrepreneurship learning processes.
- (iii) assessing the level of supportiveness of the existing infrastructure on teaching and learning processes for entrepreneurship at postgraduate level.

Theoretical background and literature review

How individuals learn as well as how the teaching processes have to be conducted in order to attain the highest level of impact on the learners are questions which scholars have dealt with for a long time and the debate continues. Focusing on entrepreneurship education and training, it is notable that the theoretical debate ranges from the perspectives of those who believe that entrepreneurship can be learnt and is trainable (Dana, 2001; Fiet, 2000; Gibb, 2002), to those who think it is an inborn trait, embedded in an individual's personal traits (McClelland, 1961; Schumpeter, 1934). In between there are those who consider that entrepreneurship

is both a science and an art (Miller, 1987). Such individuals are convinced that the science part of it is teachable while the art part of it is non-teachable. The science of entrepreneurship encompasses business and management functional skills like business planning, marketing and financial aspects while the art part of it entails creativity and innovation dimensions.

Contemporary views (Gibb, 2011), to which the current study also ascribes to, are in line with the views that there are some elements of entrepreneurship that can be taught meaningfully and others which cannot. Taking the latter stance, that there are both teachable and non-teachable elements of entrepreneurship, further concern is on how the learnable elements could be best instilled into the learners and how learning facilitators should support their trainees. The learning styles through which certain trainees learn best have to be understood well in order for the trainers to cause the highest level of impact. Stewart and Felicetti (1992) define learning styles as those educational conditions under which a student is most likely to learn. This implies that learning styles are not really concerned with *what* learners learn, but rather *how* they prefer to learn.

One of the learning theories which many scholars have often paid attention to is Kolb's (1984) theory of experiential learning. The theory proposes that, ideally, an individual learner goes through a cyclic process entailing four phases: a) immediate, concrete experience (CE); b) reflective observation (RO) on the experience; c) abstract conceptualisation (AC) or formation of theories; and d) active experimentation (AE) on how these learning outcomes can further enhance the quality of performance and acquisition of second level experiences. In support of Kolb and linking Kolb's theory with managerial experiences, Honey and Mumford (1986) adopted the stages in the learning cycle by associating each of them with a category of learners. They accordingly developed a set of learning styles. They argued that people with more preferences to learning through having an experience are referred to as *activists*; those with more preference to learning through reviewing the experience are referred to as *reflectors*; those with more preference to learning through concluding from an experience are referred to as *theorists*; and those with more preferences to learning through involvement of planning for the next steps are referred to as *pragmatists*. The assumption is that in any given group of learners, there are activists, reflectors, theorists and pragmatists in such a way that to achieve the best results from a learning process, facilitators have to take all these groups into account when planning and implementing learning activities. Many other scholars support the value of using experiential learning approaches, especially for entrepreneurship matters in universities (Allan, 2019; Gibb, 2011; Higgins & Elliott, 2011; Jones & English, 2004).

However, in discussing the usage of Kolb's theory of experiential learning, observations have been made by some scholars that apart from being widely shared and appreciated, there are some criticisms on the theory. These include the views that learning includes goals, purposes, intentions, choices and decision making, but it is not clear where these elements fit into this learning cycle (Rogers, 1996). There are also views that the claims made for the four different learning styles could be exaggerated (Jarvis, 1987; Tennant 1997). Nevertheless, even in the light of such criticisms, in the absence of best alternatives, Kolb's (1984) theory still stands as one of the most useful descriptions about experiential learning processes. The relevance of Kolb's (1984) theory of experiential learning in this study is associated with the observation that entrepreneurs mostly learn from various sources of information and in unstructured ways (Higgins & Elliott, 2011; Smilor, 1997; WB, 2019). Moreover, it provides a systematic and informative way through which entrepreneurship teaching and learning processes can be examined; that is, if the teaching and learning sessions are well planned and implemented, each category of learners should be able to internalise entrepreneurship education. Adoption of a combination of facilitation approaches (Jones & Matlay, 2011), will engage learners into real world learning activities and expose them to learning situations upon which they can reflect their competencies.

Conceptually, it can be argued that the most direct application of the model in entrepreneurship teaching and learning processes has to do with teachers providing learners with action-based learning activities that give valuable experiential learning in each stage of the cycle. For instance, students may be encouraged to perform actual selling of some products (such as books to their fellow students) in order to get some concrete experiences (CE). After that, they could be given an opportunity to individually examine their selling performance in order to come up with personal reflective observations (RO) and discuss such reflections with their colleagues and facilitators (lecturers). Next, the students could be provided with opportunity to consider ways of improving their selling performance, and try out methods and strategies based on previous actions. This will enable them to undertake an abstract construction (AC) process or theory formation in connection with how the selling process can be effectively and efficiently handled. Finally, they could be guided to rethink about the overall selling process, their performance as well as making links with previous experiences of selling, customer behaviour, and any other theories or knowledge they might apply in order to get better results in the next selling activities. This is undertaking an active experimentation (AE) process. In this way, they will have gone through the whole experiential learning cycle, and by so doing the learning facilitator will have enabled all categories of learners (activists, reflectors, theorists and pragmatists) to learn.

Historical review of entrepreneurship education in Tanzania

In the light of the observations made, it is apparent that in many universities and colleges in Tanzania, entrepreneurship training is still at the juvenile stage and there are more challenges to face along the way. First, it has to be acknowledged that the country's history in terms of education system, ideological values, policies and the dominant economic governance structures pose their own set of challenges. Secondly, it should also be noted that the changes that were induced by economic reforms of the mid 1980s brought up another set of challenges to deal with. Thirdly, the ongoing dynamics and developments in the world are responsible for other challenges that universities have to confront in the course of imparting entrepreneurship education. In a nutshell, these trends of timelines can be explained as hereunder.

Historically, the country can be portrayed to have gone through three phases in its development struggle from the time it gained independence in 1961. As summarised in Table 1, these had various implications on the focus of education systems, perception about entrepreneurship, as well as the mindset that developed in the people.

Table 1: *Phases of Economic Governance and Perceptions on Entrepreneurs in Tanzania*

| Aspect | Phase 1 | Phase 2 | Phase 3 |
|---|---|--|--|
| Nature of economic governance | Period of centrally-planned economy (1961-mid1980s) | Period of a transitory, mixed economy (Mid 1980s – early 1990s) | Market driven economy (Early 1990s onwards) |
| Focus of the education system | Education for self-reliance | Mixed | More market oriented |
| Perceptions on entrepreneurs and entrepreneurship | Entrepreneurship was formally criticized, not allowed | Mixed - Ruling party continued upholding socialist ideology while the government gradually adopted a market-oriented economy | Entrepreneurship is formally appreciated, allowed and supported |
| People's mindset | Socialist oriented, with negative consideration on entrepreneurship | Mixed Both socialism and market orientation prevailed | More inclined on the market, with positive consideration on entrepreneurship |
| Supporting documents | Nyerere, 1967, 1968;1974; 1978; URT,1984 | Bagachwa, 1994; URT, 1986; Mmuya & Wangwe, 1996; Wobst, 2001 | URT, 1999;2003a; 2003b; 2017 |

Source: Summarized from literature review.

In Phase 1, Tanzania like any other socialist country was characterised by a centrally-planned economy, which was dominated by large-scale, state-owned enterprises. Under that governance of the economy, entrepreneurship was largely disallowed (Tripp, 1997) and individuals who in one way or another attempted to behave entrepreneurially were reprimanded. Entrepreneurship was considered exploitative, evil, and hence socially unacceptable. The ruling party's ideology which was driven by the Arusha Declaration (Nyerere, 1967; 1968), the government and the mass media of that time (Tripp, 1997) further negatively painted enterprising individuals. As a consequence, people's mindsets had formed a negative image of entrepreneurs and entrepreneurship as a process. In order to deal with deviants, those who were seen practising enterprising behaviours, the government enacted laws (URT, 1984) that were used to convict such people. Given this situation, the enterprising spirit among Tanzanians of those times was highly suppressed.

In Phase 2, among many other things, the period was marked with transitory conditions that were dominated by economic, social and political reforms which aimed at revitalising the country's competitiveness out of the economic crises of the mid 1980s. Politically, the major change was the retirement of the first president of Tanzania, Julius Kambarage Nyerere in 1985 who was succeeded by Ali Hassan Mwinyi. These two had quite different orientations about entrepreneurial initiatives, in a way that while the former suppressed entrepreneurial spirit, the latter supported it. Economically, while the former embraced African socialism in which private ownership of resources was discouraged, the latter adopted semi-market oriented policies. This arose from the observations that by the mid 1980s the country was in an economic crisis after having embraced a socialist policy for over 20 years (Tripp, 1997). Hence, the second regime considered reforms were unavoidable. It was at that point that trade was liberalised, and structural adjustment policies were enacted, coupled with privatisation of large state - owned enterprises (Wobst, 2001). Apparently, it was during this period that the government slowly started to appreciate the role of the private sector, through which operations of micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) started gaining acceptance and support from the government and other stakeholders.

In Phase 3, though not explicitly declared, from the early 1990s the country's economic governance largely resembled that of a market-led economy, especially after adoption of the Zanzibar Declaration (Mmuya & Chaligha 1992; Tripp, 1997). It is during this period that the role of the private sector was openly advocated; for instance, through national statements and policies such as the Tanzanian Vision 2025 (URT, 1999), National Small and Medium Enterprises Policy (URT, 2003a) and the National Trade Policy (URT, 2003b). The private sector, in which entrepreneurship

is at the centre, was identified as the engine for the country's economic development. This appreciation of private operations correspondingly induced the need for an appreciation of entrepreneurs and entrepreneurship, something that the country had earlier strongly fought against as noted above. To conclude, it is apparent that appreciation of entrepreneurship and the role of entrepreneurs in Tanzania have gained attention in the past few years. This suggests that people's mindset in this post-socialist country hasn't changed fully from perceiving entrepreneurship and entrepreneurs negatively to seeing them as vital economic-change agents. Thus, in order to have a significant impact on learners, entrepreneurship educators have to be aware of this situation when planning, implementing and evaluating their training initiatives.

Methodology

To be able to achieve the objectives of this study, the researcher adopted a mixed methods research approach, in which a descriptive research design was combined with longitudinal qualitative in-depth interviews for three consecutive years. The descriptive research design was an appropriate choice because it enables the researcher to study a given phenomenon and then describe the proportions of the observation units behaving in certain ways (Cooper & Schindler, 2003; Yin, 2003). Moreover, when studies are conducted longitudinally it becomes possible for a researcher to collect data repetitively from the observation units so that trends of the phenomenon can be established.

Data was collected from students in the MBA evening classes from three Tanzanian universities, namely the University of Dar es Salaam – at the University of Dar es Salaam (Business School [UDBS]), Saint Augustine University of Tanzania (SAUT (School of Graduate Studies Dar es Salaam Centre)), and TUMAINI University (Dar es Salaam College [TUDARCo]). At the UDBS both quantitative and qualitative data were collected from second year students for three consecutive years. A total of 422 students were involved at UDBS, consisting of 164 in 2013, 127 in 2014 and 131 in 2015. The choice of these students was based on the fact that the course about entrepreneurship development at UDBS was taught in the second year of study and was compulsory to all MBA students. UDBS has a policy that demands all lecturers to record attendance of students in the MBA evening classes when they attend lectures. This made it possible for the researcher to have access to the daily attendances record of the students for this course. At SAUT all 12 students in the Marketing option, who were in the second year of the MBA evening class in 2016 were interviewed. Likewise at TUDARCo all 9 students in the Marketing option, who were in the second year of MBA evening class were interviewed.

At UDDBS a brief questionnaire was consistently administered to all the students during the three years. It aimed at collecting data about gender of the respondents, employment status, personal views about the relevance of entrepreneurship training to the student's career, challenges faced in learning entrepreneurship and the possible ways of addressing such challenges. The questionnaire consisted of 5-points Likert scale items as well as open ended questions. To supplement the data collected through the questionnaire, attendance of students to the various learning sessions (lectures, seminars, presentations and discussion sessions, tests and final examinations) were consistently collected. In addition, students' preparation for the learning sessions in terms of reading in advance the learning materials provided quality of presentations and discussions in the classroom, participation in group assignments and analyses of cases were also consistently recorded.

Moreover, students were required to brainstorm and identify an innovative business idea for which they had to write a business plan, in groups of at most five people. The groups were limited in size so that each student could have an opportunity to actively participate. The business planning exercise required them to make oral presentations and thereafter submit a hardcopy to the lecturers for grading. In the course of all these teaching and learning processes it was possible to observe, record and assess students' expectations on the entrepreneurship course, their motivation to actively take part in learning, their motivation in undertaking entrepreneurial ventures upon graduating, the ways through which they learnt most, as well as the relevance that they attach to the course. However, at both SAUT and TUDARCo only qualitative data were collected through in-depth interviews, as a way of validating the findings obtained from UDDBS.

Analysis of quantitative data was done by establishing summaries of frequencies and percentages of occurrences of the observed variables, using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). Qualitative data on the other hand was analyzed by content analysis and pattern matching.

Findings of the Study

Students' perceptions on relevance of entrepreneurship education

Results of data analysis show that most of the students registered in the MBA evening classes believe that entrepreneurship education is relevant to their career. This was deduced from percentages of their responses on a five -points Likert scale, on which they provided their perceptions of the relevance of this subject in their career. As summarised in Table 2, students in the three consecutive years who rated entrepreneurship as "very relevant" and those who said it was "relevant" were 74.39%, 85.04% and 84.32%, respectively.

Table 2: Respondents' Views about Relevance of Entrepreneurship Education

| Responses | year 1 | | year 2 | | year 3 | | Total | |
|---------------------------------|------------|---------------|------------|---------------|------------|---------------|------------|-------------|
| | Freq. | % | Freq. | % | Freq. | % | Freq. | % |
| Very relevant | 39 | 23.78 | 35 | 27.56 | 27 | 20.61 | 101 | 24% |
| Relevant | 83 | 50.61 | 73 | 57.48 | 79 | 63.71 | 235 | 56% |
| Neither relevant nor irrelevant | 21 | 12.80 | 10 | 7.87 | 11 | 8.40 | 42 | 10% |
| Irrelevant | 12 | 7.32 | 5 | 3.94 | 7 | 5.65 | 24 | 6% |
| Very irrelevant | 0 | 0.00 | 0 | 0.00 | 0 | 0.00 | 0 | 0% |
| Total | 155 | 94.51 | 123 | 96.85 | 124 | 94.66 | 402 | 95% |
| Missing | 9 | 5.49 | 4 | 3.15 | 7 | 5.34 | 20 | 5% |
| Total | 164 | 100.00 | 127 | 100.00 | 131 | 100.00 | 422 | 100% |

Source: Data collected for this study

For the subsequent questions which required the students to provide reasons for their responses on the relevance, some of the explanations given were as follows:

- i) *“I am currently employed, but entrepreneurship education has helped me to have some self-awareness on the kind of the business ventures I can do well while I am still employed and even after retirement”.*
- ii) *The skills I have learnt, such as creativity and innovativeness, having high needs for achievement, calculated risk taking and the like are not limited only to operations of private business; I can equally apply them even in the public sector, where I am currently serving”.*
- iii) *The presentations and discussions about entrepreneurial theories, analyses of case studies and the practical business planning project enabled me to reflect upon my personal potentials ... generally, the course is very relevant and I have learnt a lot from it.*
- iv)

The percentages of those who considered it neither relevant nor irrelevant were also as indicated in Table 2. The students provided various reasons for such mixed responses. There were those who said they considered it as any other course in the MBA programme and that application of the knowledge and skills gained from it was not easy, given the constraints in the Tanzanian business environment. The mixed views arose from arguments that since some of the bosses in the organisations

for which these students were working were not entrepreneurial, it was hard for the students to apply this approach in such organisations. This is because by attempting to be entrepreneurial, they might be considered as opponents of their bosses, hence risking their employment.

Moreover, the proportions of those who considered the course irrelevant were 7.32%, 3.94% and 5.65% for the three respective years. Some of the explanations they provided were as follows:

- i) *I hardly see any direct link between entrepreneurship education and my career because as a civil servant I cannot balance being an employee and at the same time thinking about enterprises. Entrepreneurship appears to be too demanding and if I involve myself in it, serving the public will be affected. To be effective and efficient, I must choose one.*
- ii) *Though the idea behind the course may be good, all people cannot be entrepreneurs, and engaging all the students into business planning assignments is a waste of time to some of them!*
- iii) *To be honest, succeeding in entrepreneurship requires reasonable financial capital and a friendly environment, both of which are not easy to find in Tanzania. That is why there are very few successful entrepreneurs in Tanzania and the majority are just petty traders. How can one with an MBA degree but without capital succeed as an entrepreneur?*

i. Students' participation in various learning processes

Analysis of participation of students in the learning processes provided the results summarised in Table 3. Students' active participation appears to be higher (above 80%) in attending tests and final examinations. This is because these are mandatory and failure to attend has direct impact on the students' grade.

Table 3: Students' Participation in the Various Learning Activities

| | Assessment criteria | Percentages of students' participation | | | | |
|---|--|--|-------|-------|-------|--------|
| | | 0-20 | 21-40 | 41-60 | 61-80 | 81-100 |
| 1 | Attendance to lectures | | | | √ | |
| 2 | Participation in analyses of cases | | | √ | | |
| 3 | Attendance to tests | | | | | √ |
| 4 | Participation in practical business planning exercises (done in group of at most 5 people) | | | | | |

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|--|---|---|---|---|
| | 4. 1. Business ideas generation | | | √ | | |
| | 4. 2. Business ideas screening | | √ | | | |
| | 4. 3. Oral presentation of the chosen business idea | | | | √ | |
| | 4. 4. Market assessment | | √ | | | |
| | 4. 5. Marketing planning | | | √ | | |
| | 4. 6. Operations planning | | | | √ | |
| | 4. 7. Organisation and management planning | | | √ | | |
| | 4. 8. Financial planning | | √ | | | |
| | 4. 9. Compilation of all parts of the business plan | | | √ | | |
| | 4. 10. Oral presentation of the business plan | | | √ | | |
| 5 | Attendance in the final examinations | | | | | √ |

Source: Data collected for this study

Summaries of attendance sheets for lectures showed that on the average, the students' daily attendance ranged from 61% to 80%. During the in-depth interviews the researcher explored further on this situation and a number of reasons were provided by students. These included official travels, work-related duties which conflict with the students' attendance to lectures, and social matters. Coming late to lectures is also another impediment to effective teaching and learning. The official time for class sessions is 5.00 p.m. – 8.00 p.m., but some of the students join the class as late as 6.00 p.m. The reasons they provided during the in-depth interviews for late attendance were largely associated with traffic jam especially from the city centre to the University of Dar es Salaam.

Moreover, learning activities like participation in analysing case studies require the students to read cases in advance and come to the class ready for discussion. Only 41 – 60% of them were doing so; the rest tended to come to class unprepared. Another learning activity which is of practical nature is being able to identify business ideas and develop business plans for such ideas. As a matter of enhancing learning from among themselves, the students are asked to work in groups of at most five people. As indicated in Table 3, participation in business planning activities is also weak to some of the students, essentially on business ideas screening, market assessment and financial planning, for which active participation is at most

40%. Some of them, especially those who do not fully appreciate the relevance of entrepreneurship in their career, take this as an opportunity for free riding on the efforts of their colleagues.

Supportiveness of teaching and learning processes for entrepreneurship

Regarding conduciveness of the teaching and learning processes for entrepreneurship at postgraduate level, most of the students (86%, 91% and 83% respectively for the three years) admitted that the learning environment was supportive. The lecture rooms, tables and chairs, lights and cleanliness are of high standard. Nevertheless, the challenge was about fixed tables which were not friendly for group discussions, especially for practical- oriented activities like business planning and analysis of case studies.

The findings obtained from analysis of qualitative data which was collected from SAUT and TUDARCo did not show different patterns from what was obtained from UDDBS. Students had similar remarks on major issues about the relevance of entrepreneurship training in their career as well as personal endeavours. This further informed the researcher that this phenomenon is widely shared by students in the MBA evening classes in Tanzania.

Discussion of the Findings

The findings presented above provide evidence that more effort is needed in order to enhance the impact of entrepreneurship education on Tanzanian postgraduate students. Starting with findings about the first objective, it is motivating to observe that over 80% of the respondents appreciate entrepreneurship education. Even though, it is important to delineate why some of them do not appreciate it. The first argument is about the nature of participants. It is apparent that the MBA evening programmes in Tanzania are designed to enable students to combine work and study. The University of Dar es Salaam (UDSM) Postgraduate Prospectus (UDSM, 2010, p.73) categorically states that “the target groups for the programme are working individuals with a variety of backgrounds (including management, engineering, architecture, natural science, law, medicine, development studies and general social studies)”. It is, therefore, not surprising that information patterns from analysing qualitative responses regarding relevance of entrepreneurship in their career showed that some students had different expectations, including just gaining academic credentials for promotion at their work places. The findings corroborate the literature about entrepreneurship, which argues for differences between ‘entrepreneurship’ and ‘intrapreneurship’ (Antoncic & Hisrich, 2001). The difference is attributed to the observation that entrepreneurs are people who use entrepreneurial behaviours in founding and managing their own ventures while

intrapreneurs are employees who apply those behaviours in managing enterprises or institutions in which they are employed (Amo & Kolvereid, 2005). For those employees, different terms have been used instead of entrepreneurship, including intrapreneurship, intrapreneuring, corporate entrepreneurship and internal corporate entrepreneurship (Antoncic & Hisrich, 2001). Going with this distinction, it seems that the majority of students who register in the MBA evening classes require more of intrapreneurial than entrepreneurial knowledge and skills.

The second objective aimed at examining the level of participation of the students in learning processes about entrepreneurship. It is apparently noted that an entrepreneurial career is considered a low status option to some people and can only be accepted after failing to acquire jobs in government institutions and large enterprises. We can infer that is why some students do not put more efforts in learning entrepreneurship. Teaching and enabling such students to think out of the box is therefore a challenge, which entrepreneurship trainers need to innovatively overcome. This argument concurs with Dana (2001) and the World Bank (WB, 2018) who observe that a key prerequisite to training people is to understand them, their cultural values, historical experience and mindset. This suggests that even other socialisation institutions like the family, religious and lower educational institutions have a role to play in making entrepreneurship socially attractive and acceptable.

In line with the third objective, the findings indicate that the environment in which entrepreneurship teaching and learning processes take place constitute another category of key factors as Mandel and Noyes (2016) noted. Classrooms with fixed chairs and tables do not provide an appropriate sitting arrangement for group discussions. Likewise, class sizes of over 30 students do not provide an opportunity for all students to actively participate in group work and oral presentations. This breeds an unhealthy situation because personal involvement in the learning process is essential (Kolb, 1984), and is even more important for entrepreneurship education where creativity and innovativeness are among the major learning goals. For instance, Wickham (1998) simply defines a skill as knowledge which is demonstrated by actions and that entrepreneurial skills are those which enhance entrepreneurial performance. Thus, what comes out of the synthesis of the situation at hand suggests that in order to produce MBA graduates who can have an impact in the economy's entrepreneurial performance, the teaching and learning environment as well as the processes involved have to be more participatory. The learners have to be taken through Kolb's (1984) experiential learning cycle and while doing so, as Dana (2001) observes, learning facilitators should enable learners to reflect upon themselves, the current situation, their history and culture.

Short of that, as Nieman (2001) observes, learning institutions might be claiming to provide entrepreneurship training while in the actual sense what is provided is only business management training.

Moreover, regarding what should be done, findings of this study concur with the World Bank (2019) that one of the recent developments in enhancing entrepreneurship training is adoption of innovative teaching approaches (WB, 2019). This argument is based on the view that entrepreneurs are exceptional learners, learning from everything including customers, suppliers, competitors and from their own experiences by doing and making mistakes (Smilor, 1997). For instance, a study by Qunlian (2011) concerning difficulties and countermeasures of university graduates' entrepreneurship in China suggests the use of various methods in training which include the use of mentors from the industry, who are experienced entrepreneurs and intrapreneurs. These can add value by working hand in hand with university lecturers and teams of students. In line with Gibb (2011) and Ahmad (2013), those mentors can lead to better results in enhancing entrepreneurial knowledge, skills and motivation of the learners to take the first steps.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Informed by the above findings and discussions about perceptions of Tanzanian postgraduate students about the relevance of entrepreneurship education in their career, the following conclusions and recommendations can be made. First, many of these students who are registered in the MBA evening class appreciate the importance of entrepreneurship education and therefore Tanzanian universities have to continue providing postgraduate students with entrepreneurship knowledge and skills. However, given that many of these students are already employed in various organisations, their dedication in learning entrepreneurship is limited because they do not envision becoming entrepreneurs in the very near future. The study recommends that greater effort should be focused on providing them with knowledge and skills which they can apply as intrapreneurs in the organisations they work for, rather than expecting them to become entrepreneurs by establishing their own enterprises.

Secondly, the study has observed that participation of some of these students in learning entrepreneurship is irregular, despite that they are expected to come to the university after work hours. Some of them come late to classes, with various excuses. This adversely affects entrepreneurship teaching and learning processes. The study recommends needs assessment to be conducted again for the sake of accommodating current developments, in which among other things, the time of starting lecture sessions needs to be reviewed. For instance, instead of the present

arrangement whereby sessions start at 5.00 p.m., the possibility of starting lecture sessions at 6.00 p.m. should be explored. The present arrangement was made many years ago when traffic jam was not as serious as it is these days in Dar es Salaam city.

Thirdly, most of the students registered in the MBA evening classes are comfortable with the teaching and learning environment. However, there are things that limit effective and efficient participation of some of the students. For instance the fixed structures such as tables in some of the classrooms do not provide a conducive sitting arrangement for group discussions and analysing cases. Likewise, large classes do not support active participation of some of the students. The study recommends that since learning about entrepreneurship involves acquisition of both entrepreneurial and business management skills, the teaching and learning environment has to be appropriate for achieving such purposes.

Fourthly, following the theoretical underpinning that entrepreneurship is learnt from a combination of various teaching and learning styles, including concrete experiences, reflective observations, abstract conceptualisation and active experimentation – mechanisms for using these combinations should be put in place in order to maximise learning outcomes. For instance, where possible, the use of guest speakers and study visits to entrepreneurial ventures would motivate the learners to acquire the entrepreneurial qualities of the owners and managers of such entrepreneurial ventures. These initiatives will likely enable all categories of learners, viz. activists, reflectors, theorists and pragmatists to benefit from entrepreneurship education.

The article contributes to advancing the *experiential learning theory*, practice of teaching entrepreneurship to postgraduate students and policy on design and implementation of entrepreneurship programmes in post socialist economies. However, since this study did not take into account gender issues and their effects on entrepreneurial behaviours, future research should also explore such issues, to see whether male and female students have different perceptions on the subject matter.

References

- Ahmad, S. Z. (2013). The need for inclusion of entrepreneurship education in Malaysia primary, secondary and tertiary education institutions. *Education and Training, 55*(2), 191-203.
- Allan, I. S. (2018). Entrepreneurship training and self-employment choices of graduates: Experience from selected Tanzanian universities. *Business Management Review, 21*(2), 14 - 29.
- Allan, I. S. (2019). Entrepreneurship training and innovative pedagogies of mitigating perceived challenges of business start-up capital to university graduates. *Papers in Education and Development, 37*(2), 158-179.
- Amo, B. W., & Kolvereid, L. (2005). Organisational strategy, individual personality and innovation behaviour. *Journal of Enterprising Culture, 13*(1), 7 - 19.
- Antonicic, B., & Hisrich, R. D. (2001). Intrapreneurship: Construct refinement and cross-cultural validation. *Journal of Business Venturing, 16*, 495-527.
- Bagachwa, M. S. D. (1994). *Poverty alleviation in Tanzania: Recent research issues*. Dar es Salaam, Tanzania: Dar es Salaam University Press.
- Baumol, W. J. (1983). Toward operational models of entrepreneurship. In Ronen, J. (ed.) *Entrepreneurship*, (pp. 29-48). Lexington, MA: Lexington Books.
- Bruyat, C., & Julien, P. A. (2000). Defining the field of research in entrepreneurship. *Journal of Business Venturing, 16*(2), 165-80.
- Cone, J. (2007). *Teaching entrepreneurship in colleges and universities: How (and Why) a new academic field is being built*. Kansas City, MO: Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation.
- Cooper, D. R., & Schindler, P. S. (2003). *Business research methods* (8th Edition). Irwin: McGraw-Hill.
- Dana, L. (2001). The education and training of entrepreneurs in Asia. *Education and Training, 43*98/90, 405-16.
- Deakins, D., & Freel, M. (1998). Entrepreneurial learning and the growth process in SMEs. *The Learning Organisation, 5*(3), 144-55.
- Falkang, J., & Alberti, F. (2000). The assessment of entrepreneurship education. *Industry and Higher Education, 14*(2), 101-8.
- Fiet, J. O. (2000). The pedagogical side of entrepreneurship theory. *Journal of Business Venturing, 6*(2), 1-24.

- Gibb, A. A. (2002). In pursuit of new enterprise and entrepreneurship paradigm for learning: Creative destruction, new values, new ways of doing things and new combinations of knowledge. *International Journal of Management Reviews*, 4(3), 233-69.
- Gibb, A. A. (2011). Concepts into practice: Meeting the challenge of development of entrepreneurship educators around an innovative paradigm. *International Journal of Entrepreneurship Behaviour & Research*, 17(2), 146-165.
- Gibb, A. A., & Hannon, P. (2006). Towards the entrepreneurial university? *International Journal of Entrepreneurship Education*, 4, 73-110.
- Henry, C., Hill, F., & Leitch, C. (2005). Entrepreneurship education and training: Can entrepreneurship be taught? Part I. *Education and Training*, 47(2), 98-111.
- Higgins, D., & Elliott, C. (2011). Learning to make sense: What works in entrepreneurial education? *Journal of European Industrial Training*, 35(4), 345-367.
- Honey, P., & Mumford, A. (1986). *Learning styles questionnaire*. Maidenhead, UK: Peter Honey Publications Ltd.
- Jarvis, P. (1987). *Adult learning in the social context*. London, UK: Croom Helm.
- Jones, C., & English, J. (2004). A contemporary approach to entrepreneurship education. *Education and Training*, 46(8/9), 416-423.
- Jones, C., & Matlay, H. (2011). Understanding the heterogeneity of entrepreneurship education: Going beyond Gartner. *Education and Training*, 53(8/9), 692-703.
- Kaijage, E., & Wheeler, D. (2013). *Supporting entrepreneurship education in East Africa. Report for presentation to stakeholders*. Nairobi, Kenya: University of Nairobi.
- Kolb, D. (1984). *Experiential learning: Experience as the source of learning and development*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.
- Lafuente, E. M., & Vaillant, Y. (2013) Age driven influence of role-models on entrepreneurship in a transition economy. *Journal of Small Business and Enterprise Development*, 20(1), 181-203.

- Mandel, R., & Noyes, E. (2016). Survey of experiential entrepreneurship education offerings among top undergraduate entrepreneurship programs. *Education and Training, 58*(Issue 2), 164-178.
- Mars, M. M., & Garrison, S. (2009). Socially-oriented ventures and traditional entrepreneurship education models: A case review. *Journal of Education for Business, 84*(5), 290-296.
- McClelland, D. C. (1961). *The achieving society*. Princeton, NJ: Van Nostrand.
- Miller, A. (1987). New ventures: A fresh emphasis on entrepreneurial education. *Survey of Business, 23*(1), 4-9.
- Mkala, M., & Wanjau, K. (2018). The role of training resources in implementation of entrepreneurship education programme in technical training institutions in Kenya. *Business Management Review, 21*(2), 1-13.
- Mmuya, M., & Chaligha, A. (1992). *Towards multiparty politics in Tanzania*. Dar es Salaam, Tanzania: Dar es Salaam University Press (1996) Ltd.
- Nieman, G. (2001). Training entrepreneurs and small business enterprises in South Africa: A situational analysis. *Education and Training, 43*(Issue 8/9), 445-450.
- Nyerere, J. K. (1967). *Education for self-reliance*. Dar es Salaam, Tanzania: Government Printer.
- Nyerere, J. K. (1968). *Ujamaa – Essays on socialism*. Dar es Salaam, Tanzania: Oxford University Press.
- Nyerere, J. K. (1974). *Freedom & development*. Dar es Salaam, Tanzania: Oxford University Press.
- Nyerere, J. K. (1978). *Crusade for liberation*. Dar es Salaam, Tanzania: Oxford University Press.
- Qunlian, H. (2011). The major difficulties and counter-measures of current university graduates entrepreneurship in China. *Journal of Chinese Entrepreneurship, 3*(3), 228-239.
- Raffo, C., Lovatt, A., Banks, M., & O'Connor, J. (2000). Teaching and learning entrepreneurship for micro and small businesses in the cultural industries sector. *Education and Training, 42*(6), 356-365.
- Rogers, A. (1996). *Teaching adults* (2nd Edition). Buckingham, UK: Open University Press.

- Schumpeter, J. A. (1934). *The theory of economic development*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Smilor, R. W. (1997). Entrepreneurship: Reflections on a subversive activity. *Journal of Business Venturing*, 12(5), 341-421
- .Stanworth, M .J. K., & Curran, J. (1976). Growth and the smaller firm: An alternative view. *Journal of Management Studies*, May, 95-110.
- Stewart, K. L., & Felicetti, L. A. (1992). Learning styles of marketing majors. *Educational Research Quarterly*, 15(2), 15-23.
- Tennant, M. (1997). *Psychology and adult learning* (2nd Edition). London, UK: Routledge.
- Thomas, A. S., & Mueller, S. L. (2000). A case for comparative entrepreneurship: Assessing the relevance of culture. *Journal of International Business Studies*, 31(2), 287-301.
- Tripp, A. M. (1997). *Changing the rules: The politics of liberalisation and the urban informal economy in Tanzania*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.
- UDSM (2010). *University of Dar es Salaam Postgraduate Prospectus 2010/2011-2011/2012*. Dar es Salaam, Tanzania: Dar es Salaam University Press (1996) Ltd.
- Ulrich, T. (1997). An empirical approach to entrepreneurial learning styles. Paper presented to the Internationalising entrepreneurship education and training, IntEnt97 Conference, Monterey Bay, California, June 25–27.
- URT (1984). *Economic and Organized Crime Control Act, 1984*. (ACT No. 13 of 1984). Dar es Salaam, Tanzania; The Government Printer.
- URT (1986). *The economic recovery programme*. Planning Commission, Dar es Salaam, Tanzania: The Government Printer.
- URT (1999). *The Tanzania Development Vision 2025*. Planning Commission, Dar es Salaam, Tanzania: The Government Printer.
- URT (2003a). *Small and Medium Enterprise Development Policy*. Ministry of Industry and Trade, Dar es Salaam, Tanzania: Business Printers Ltd.
- URT (2003b). *National Trade Policy*. Ministry of Industry and Trade, Dar es Salaam, Tanzania: Business Printers Ltd.

- URT (2017). *Tanzania Inclusive National Entrepreneurship Strategy*. Prime Minister's Office, Dar es Salaam, Tanzania: National Economic Empowerment Council (NEEC).
- Wangwe, S. M. (1996). *Employment papers 7: Economic reforms and poverty alleviation in Tanzania*. Geneva, Switzerland, ILO Employment and Training Department.
- Wickham, P. A. (1998). *Strategic entrepreneurship: A decision-making approach to new venture creation and management*. London, UK; Pitman.
- Wobst, P. (2001). *Structural adjustment and inter-sectoral shifts in Tanzania: A Computable general equilibrium analysis*. Research Report 117. Washington, D.C. International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI).
- World Bank (2018). *World Development Report 2018: Learning to Realise Education's Promise*. Washington, DC: World Bank.
- World Bank (2019). *World Development Report 2019: The Changing Nature of Work*. Washington, DC: World Bank.
- Yin, R. K. (2003). *Case study research: Design and methods* (3rd Edition). Thousand Oaks, California: SAGE Publications.