

Entrepreneurship Education Key to Reducing Dependency among University Graduates in South Africa

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ABSTRACT The paper sought to investigate the role of entrepreneurship education in reducing dependency among University graduates in South Africa. The paper adopted a quantitative research design, and data was collected using self-administered questionnaire. The study population comprised 13,331 University students at the University of Fort Hare from which a sample of 374 of them was selected using simple random sampling. The paper employed descriptive statistics, Chi-square tests and independent t-test as the data analysis methods. The findings revealed that entrepreneurship education promotes self-independence and self-reliance among University graduates. It also revealed that entrepreneurship education promotes the culture of entrepreneurship among University graduates thereby reducing dependency being experienced among South African University graduates. Recommendations to reduce dependency among University graduates in South Africa using entrepreneurship education were provided for government agencies, institutions of higher learning.

INTRODUCTION

Engaging in entrepreneurial activities is identified as a veritable path to becoming self-employed, and becoming self-employed is a means to providing for oneself and at the same time providing income for others by employing people with the capacity to add value to business (Iwu et al. 2016). Accordingly, Kareem (2015) posited that entrepreneurship takes the center stage when it comes to employment creation, reduction of unemployment and poverty, as well as increasing economic growth of a nation. Kareem added that entrepreneurship boosts productivity through the introduction of new innovations and fast-tracking structural changes, thereby forcing existing businesses to reform and increase competition.

Moreover, Akuegwu and Nwi-ue (2016) indicated that entrepreneurship creates opportunities, provides the needs of individuals, identifies gap in one's immediate environment, community or society at large and brings together resources in an innovative and profitable way to fill gaps. Mkhize (2010) opined that entrepreneurship is the possible solution to the growing problem of joblessness and it would be instrumental in promoting small, micro and medium sized enterprises (SMMEs) in South Africa.

In line with this paper, Cillier (2015) argued that the South African government's continuous provision of social grants to a large proportion of its citizens has created the challenges of dependency being experienced across South Africa today. The South African Institute of Race Relations (2016) added that an increasing dependency syndrome may hamper the country's growth. Hence, state interventions such as social grants can produce damaging consequences. The primary concerns are that these grant beneficiaries may lose the motivation to work to improve their own livelihoods after receiving benefits, or that they will deliberately reduce their work efforts in order to qualify for the grants. Silke (2013) argued that the unexpected consequences of such intervention will be psychological to the extent of encouraging a culture of entitlement rather than entrepreneurship culture.

Furthermore, Global Entrepreneurship Monitor Report (2014) highlighted that the rate of entrepreneurial activities in South Africa is very poor for a developing nation and that attitudes toward starting a business are not very favorable or commendable. Herrington and Kew (2014) added that South Africa ranked lower than other Sub-Saharan African nations when asked about their perception of good opportunities and their capabilities.

In reversing this trend, especially as it affects graduates' unemployment and their dependency on the state for the provision of jobs and other entitlements, entrepreneurship needs to be given serious consideration as the route to societal and global relevance. As Akuegwu and Udida (2008) confirmed that it is the antidote to joblessness, dependency, poverty, insecurity and youth restiveness. Similarly, Lemo (2013) indicated that entrepreneurship is the only genuine pathway to restoration, as it is characterized by sustained job and wealth, and the depletion of dependency among University graduates.

However, for entrepreneurship to produce desired results, it must have a culture, which requires to be developed among university graduates through entrepreneurship education. Chihaha and Agu (2008) posited that entrepreneurship education makes University graduates more entrepreneurial by triggering core traits such as diligence and confidence, risk-taking, decision-making, interpersonal skills and goal setting tendencies to manifest. This implies that even when an individual has no interest in entrepreneurial activities, the same individual can develop entrepreneurship culture having been exposed to the education.

Egunjimi (2012) reiterated that entrepreneurship education is structured to provide functional education for the youth that will enable them to be self-employed and self-reliant, provide the university graduates with adequate training that will enable them to be creative and innovative in identifying lofty business opportunities. He added that entrepreneurship education serves as catalyst for economic growth and development, provides University graduates with adequate training in risk management, feasible business ideas.

Lending credence to this, Oduwaiye (2009) posited that entrepreneurship education assists university graduates on how to develop positive attitudes, innovation and skills for self-reliance rather than depending on the government for employment. In other words, entrepreneurship education contributes to the development of new ventures in order to create jobs and ultimately reduce the level of dependency among university graduates and youths in South Africa. It is against this background that this paper investigated the role of entrepreneurship education in reducing dependency among University graduates in South Africa.

Objectives

The objectives of this paper are to investigate the impact of entrepreneurship education in promoting self-independence and self-reliance, and to determine the impact of entrepreneurship education on entrepreneurship culture among university graduates in South Africa.

Literature Review

Dependency Syndrome

Dependency is defined as an attitude or mentality that a group of individuals cannot solve their own problems or cater for themselves without outside help (Harvey and Lind 2005). They added that dependency syndrome is a negative attitude and must be avoided, for it undermines people's initiative, thereby not motivating individuals to carry out duties on their own. Moreover, it goes against the variety of positive values such as self-independence, self-sufficiency and self-reliance as well as sustainability.

For the purpose of this study, dependency refers to a perceived culture of reliance or dependence on state for welfare services. Bartle (2012) defined dependency as an attitude that places people in a position of not being able to solve their problems without outside aid.

Entrepreneurship

Afriye and Booheme (2014) defined entrepreneurship as the bedrock of innovation, creativity, risk-taking, initiatives, opportunity recognition, employment generation and social empowerment. Mkhize (2010) defined entrepreneurship as a solution in sight to the growing problems of unemployment, dependency syndrome and it is instrumental to the success and growth of small-scale businesses.

Aina and Salako (2008) defined "entrepreneurship as the ability and capability of an individual to devise investment opportunities and utilize the advantages of scarce resources to exploit these opportunities profitably." Mauchi et al. (2011) defined "entrepreneurship as the process of equipping individuals with the ability to recognize commercial opportunities, the knowledge, skills and attitudes to act on them

for the purpose of stimulating employment and poverty reduction.”

Bosma et al. (2012) defined entrepreneurship as an individual's attempt towards self-employment, creation of new ventures and for the expansion of existing business. Summarily, entrepreneurship concerns itself with the creation of newly established economic systems that benefits the general society thereby reducing dependency syndrome (Arbaugh et al. 2008).

Entrepreneurship Education

Entrepreneurship education is defined as system of education that is responsible for equipping individuals with requisite skills, creativity and innovativeness needed to become entrepreneurs (Ediagbonya 2013). It also helps to reduce the number of people who are unemployed by providing them with quality entrepreneurial skills to be self-employed in order to escape dependency on the state and poverty. Anho (2014) defined entrepreneurship education as “an educational system that paves way for the building of good human and personal relations needed to address personal and social challenges such as dependency syndrome.” Olawolu and Kaegon (2012) supported this by defining entrepreneurship education as a program that transforms youths into responsible and enterprising individuals who would become entrepreneurs by exposing them to real life learning experiences where they will be required to think, take risks, manage circumstances and incidentally learn from their outcomes.

A more precise definition is that of Ahmad (2013) who defined entrepreneurship education as “a legitimate program, with the capacity of stimulating consciousness towards self-employment as a career option, and inspires young people to equip themselves with the knowledge, skills and experience needed to acquire a successful business.” According to Adebayo and Kolawole (2013), entrepreneurship education is a specialized training given to students or trainees to acquire skills, ideas, creativity, innovation, managerial abilities and capabilities to engage in self-employment other than settling for paid employment.

Empirical Literature

Several empirical studies that have explored “the degree to which entrepreneurship education affects the decision to become an entrepreneur

are increasing steadily and more often, positive impacts of entrepreneurship education have been found on perceived attractiveness and feasibility of new venture initiation” (Byabashaija et al. 2010; Muofhe and Du Toit 2011). Many other previous studies have also revealed that “entrepreneurship education creates self-sufficient, motivated and enterprising individuals who graduate from higher education with skills to start their own business or abilities to invest innovative ideas in their established businesses.” Hence, University graduates who have taken a course in entrepreneurship education or training during their education tend to start more businesses than those who never participated in any entrepreneurship course or training (Vestergaard et al. 2012).

However, most scholars and researchers argue that there is “an increase in individual self-reported intentions to start a business after considerable exposure to entrepreneurship education.” Their findings revealed that entrepreneurship education is capable of influencing students' entrepreneurial intentions, in some cases their choices to become entrepreneurs (Fayolle et al. 2006; Dickson et al. 2008; Matlay 2008 and Stokes et al. 2010). Moreover, study by Raposo and Paco (2011) found that entrepreneurship education is not only about teaching individuals how to run a business but also about encouraging creative and innovative thinking and promoting a strong and wider sense of self-worth and empowerment.

Furthermore, study by Noel (2001) found that University students who graduated in entrepreneurship scored higher in entrepreneurship intentions and entrepreneurial self-efficacy than University students who graduated in other disciplines. Wilson et al. (2007) revealed that entrepreneurship education serves as a medium that increases students' interests in entrepreneurship career. In addition, study by Owusu-Ansah (2004) on the impact of entrepreneurship education on career intentions and aspiration of tertiary students in Ghana found that most students were motivated to a very large extent to open a business as a result of their exposure to entrepreneurship education and training. Another study conducted in Sri Lanka by Kumara (2012) further revealed that University students who have received entrepreneurship education often develop positive inclinations and beliefs

towards self-employment and entrepreneurship intention to a large extent. Also, study by Hannon (2009) found that a greater percentage of University students surveyed in Ireland, that received entrepreneurship education and training expressed interest in starting their own business in the future. While a lesser percentage of non-business postgraduates that were surveyed reported being interested in starting their own business at some point later in their career.

From the above literature review, these hypotheses were drawn in this paper.

H0₁: Entrepreneurship education is not related to self-independence and self-reliance.

H0₂: Entrepreneurship education is not related to entrepreneurship culture.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

This paper adopted a descriptive approach particularly using quantitative research design. The target population consists of 13,331 registered students at the University of Fort Hare in Alice Eastern Cape, South Africa. Using Raosoft sample size calculator, 374 students were selected as participants for this research and a simple random sampling was adopted due to the availability of the sample frame. Moreover, a self-administered questionnaire was developed and used because of its tendency of yielding the most satisfactory range of reliable data. Most of the statements in the structured questionnaire were culled from the General Measure for Enterprising Tendency Test (GET2 Test) developed by Sally Caird (Caird 2013). The questionnaire was distributed to experts to test the validity before it was administered on the respondents. In testing the reliability of the instrument, the paper employed the internal consistency technique by using Cronbach Alpha Coefficient test for testing the research tool. The questionnaire has a Cronbach alpha value of 0.70 and was rated 5-point likert-type that ranges between 1 =strongly disagree to 5= strongly agree.

Data Collection

The methods adopted in collecting data for this paper were secondary and primary data collection methods. The secondary data were collected through the use of online database sources including Google Scholars, Springer Link,

Wiley, Science Direct, JSTOR, Emerald full text, Scopus, and EBSCO HOST to name but a few. The primary data was collected through the questionnaire administration on the participants selected from four faculties in the University of Fort Hare, which are the Faculty of Management and Commerce, Faculty of Education, Faculty of Science and Agriculture and the Faculty of Social Science. The researcher distributed the questionnaires to the participants and obtained the names and phone numbers of some of the participants to follow up on the completion of the questionnaires.

Data Capturing and Analysis

Data was coded and captured into Microsoft Excel and all the proposed hypotheses were tested and analyzed using some statistical methods such as descriptive statistics, chi-square test and independent t-test. The analysis was completed using the Statistical Package for Social Science, also known as SPSS.

RESULTS

In this section, the key findings of this paper such as the demographic information of the sample are presented. Subsequently the main findings and results relating to the hypotheses of this paper are also presented.

Demographic Information of the Sample

The demographic findings of this research comprises of nationality, faculty, departments, study level, gender and marital status.

The result in Table 1 clearly shows that a large proportion of the participants were South Africans, which comprises of 87.7 percent while 12.3 percent were non-South Africans. This simply means that more students of South African origin participated in this study than the non-South African students. This helped to achieve the objective of this research, since it focused

Table 1: Nationality of the respondents

Nationality	N	%
South Africans	328	87.7
Non- South Africans	46	12.3
Total	374	100.0

on dealing with challenges of dependency among university graduates in South Africa through entrepreneurship education.

The four faculties selected for this research were well represented in Table 2. The result clearly indicates that 39.8 percent of the participants belonged to the faculty of Management and Commerce, 24.9 percent came from the faculty of Social Science, 7.5 percent was from the faculty of Education, while 27.8 percent of the participants were from the faculty of Science and Agriculture, which sums up the total number of the participants in this research. From the result, four faculties were represented in this research and this has helped put to rest the issue of most previous researchers concentrating mainly on management disciplines leaving other disciplines at bay.

Table 2: Faculty of the respondents

<i>Faculty</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>%</i>
Management and Commerce	149	39.8
Social Science and Humanities	93	24.9
Education	28	7.5
Science and Agriculture	104	27.8
Total	374	100.0

The result in Table 3 shows that 5.3 percent of the participants belonged to the department of Development Studies, 11 percent belonged to Industrial Psychology, 7.2 percent was from Information System, 8 percent from Economics department, and 8.3 percent was from the department of Business Management while 4.5 percent of the participants were from Psychology. Another 4 percent of the participants were from the department of Communication, 4.5 percent of the came from the department of Social Work, 5.1 percent was from Political Science. Furthermore, 2.9 percent belong to Sociology department, 3.7 percent belong to Criminology department, and 2.1 percent belong to Physics Education while 1.6 percent was from the department of Mathematics Education. Furthermore, 2.1 percent of the respondents belong to Human Social Science department, 1.6 percent belongs to Science Education, 2.4 percent belong to Geology department, and 1.9 percent was from Crop Science. Another 2.4 percent belong to Geography while 11.8 percent of the participants were from the department of Agricultural

Economics. The department of Microbiology recorded 2.7 percent of the participants; Soil Science had 4 percent of the participants and the Agronomy department had 2.7 percent of the participants. From this table 3. It can be deduced that many departments were duly represented. Therefore, the researcher suggests that entrepreneurship education courses should be taught across all disciplines.

Table 3: Departments of the respondents

<i>Departments</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>%</i>
Development Studies	20	5.3
Industrial Psychology	41	11.0
Information Technology	27	7.2
Economics	30	8.0
Business Management	31	8.3
Psychology	17	4.5
Communication Studies	15	4.0
Social Work	17	4.5
Political Sciences	19	5.1
Sociology	11	2.9
Criminology	14	3.7
Physics Education	8	2.1
Mathematics Education	6	1.6
Human Social Science	8	2.1
Science Education	6	1.6
Geology	9	2.4
Crop Science	7	1.9
Geography	9	2.4
Agricultural Economics	44	11.8
Microbiology	10	2.7
Soil Science	15	4.0
Agronomy	10	2.7
Total	374	100.0

The result in Table 4 depicts that 82.4 percent of the participants were undergraduates while 17.6 percent of the participants were postgraduates. This indicates that a greater number of undergraduate students participated in this research more than the postgraduate counterparts. This will help to identify where improvements are needed in the delivery of entrepreneurship courses in institution of higher learning.

Table 4: Study level of the respondents

<i>Level of study</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>%</i>
Undergraduate	308	82.4
Postgraduate	66	17.6
Total	374	100.0

In Table 5, the result indicates that a greater proportion of the participants were female com-

prising 52.4 percent of the participants, while their male counterparts were 47.6 percent of the participants. From this result, it is clear that there were more female students in the University where the research was conducted. This is in tandem with the demographic profile of the Eastern Cape, where there are more women than men (StatsSA 2012). This serves as a recommendation to the government agencies, and private businesses on the need of using entrepreneurship education to promote entrepreneurship among University graduates especially female graduates, and empower them with requisite skills and innovation for the sole purpose of fighting dependency among University graduates.

Table 5: Gender of respondents

Gender	N	%
Male	178	47.6
Female	196	52.4
Total	374	100.0

The result in Table 6 shows that a large proportion of the participants, which constitute 96.8 percent of the participants, were single, 2.4 percent was married, and 0.5 percent was divorced while 0.3 percent had the status of widow. Since the majority of the participants were single, they can be regarded as youth population, which is the group this research is targeted at; this will also help in achieving the objectives of this research and provide recommendations to the relevant bodies for onward implementation.

Results from Tested Hypotheses

The results in Table 7 indicate final findings of the first hypothesis for this paper, which states that entrepreneurship education is not related

Table 6: Marital status of the respondents

Marital status	N	%
Single	362	96.8
Married	9	2.4
Divorce	2	.05
Widow	1	.03
Total	374	100.0

to self-independence and self-reliance. The table which represents the independent t-test for hypothesis one shows *t-value* of 20.900 and 372 degree of freedom with a probability of .000, which is less than alpha value. Since the P-value is less than 0.05 the null hypothesis is rejected in favor of the alternative hypothesis. This implies that entrepreneurship education promotes self-independence and self-reliance among University graduates. In addition, the assumption of homogeneity of variances was also tested and satisfied through Levene's test for equality $F=87.717$, $P=.000$ this also shows that the p-value is less than 0.05. This also confirms that entrepreneurship education promotes self-independence and self-reliance.

Hypothesis Two Tested Results

The results in Table 8 indicate final results of the hypothesis two of this paper, which states that entrepreneurship education is not related to entrepreneurship culture. The table, which represents

Table 8: Chi-square test for hypothesis two

	Value	Df	Asymp. Sig.(2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	370.110a	19	0
Likelihood Ratio	500.971	19	0
Linear-by-Linear Association	344.226	1	0
No of Valid Cases	374		

Table 7: Independent sample test for hypothesis one

	Levene's test for		t-test for Equality means						
	Equality of variances		t	df	Sig (2-tailed)	Mean difference	Std. error difference	95% confidence interval difference	
	F	Sig						Lower	Upper
Equal variances assumed	87.717	0	20.9	372	0	6.789	0.325	6.151	7.428
Equal variances not assumed			19.31	232.367	0	6.789	0.352	6.097	7.482

Hypothesis two results shows Pearson Chi-square value of 370.110 with 19 degree of freedom and P-value of .000, which is less than alpha value. Since the p-value (probability) of .000 is less than 0.05, the null hypothesis is rejected. This suggests that there is a significant association between entrepreneurship education and entrepreneurship culture. In other words, entrepreneurship education promotes the culture of entrepreneurship. Similarly in Table 9, an independent t-test was also performed to test whether hypothesis two is rejected. As can be seen, the result indicates a t-value 66.710 and 372 degree of freedom with a probability of .000. In addition, the assumption of homogeneity of variances was also tested and satisfied via Levene's F test = 70.559 and P=.000. Since the P-value of .000 is less than 0.05, the null hypothesis is rejected in favor of alternative hypothesis. This suggests that entrepreneurship education promotes entrepreneurship culture.

DISCUSSION

Hypothesis One

As presented in hypothesis one results, the null hypothesis was rejected in favor of the alternative hypothesis, which suggests that there is a significant association between entrepreneurship education, self-independence and self-reliance. This actually means that entrepreneurship education promotes self-independence and self-reliance to reduce dependency among University graduates in South Africa. This finding is buttressed by Nwabufo and Mamman (2015) who opined that entrepreneurship education involves the inculcation of needed skills and knowledge that equips an individual to become self-reliant and self-independence through be-

ing an effective and successful initiator, manager, innovator and risk bearer of business undertakings. Frankel (2014) added that University graduates should be encouraged to acquire skills to be applied into economic activities upon graduation from compulsory entrepreneurial training, while those who are still in the University should be made to receive entrepreneurship courses to prepare them in starting a business after graduation. Frankel believes that this will reduce or silence the challenges of dependency syndrome among South African youths.

Moreover, Djordjevic (2013) supported this findings by stating that entrepreneurship develops the right skills needed for the jobs that are created, whether in formal employment or in entrepreneurial self-employment. It also encourages creative thinking and promotion of a strong sense of self-worth and empowerment to discourage dependency syndrome. Ogundele, Akingbade and Akinlabi (2012) concurred and stated that entrepreneurship education comprises the philosophy of self-reliance such as creating a new cultural and productive environment, promoting new sets of attitudes and culture to tackle future challenges.

Hypothesis Two

Having tested the second hypothesis, which states that entrepreneurship education is not significantly related to entrepreneurship culture. Using statistical tests, the result revealed that null hypothesis was rejected in the favor of alternative hypothesis. This simply means that entrepreneurship education promotes the culture to reduce dependency syndrome among university graduates. This finding is supported by Ngosiane (2010) who revealed that entrepreneur-

Table 9: Independent sample test for hypothesis two

	Levene's test for		t-test for Equality means						
	Equality of variances		t	df	Sig (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence interval Difference	
	F	Sig						Lower	Upper
Equal variances assumed	70.559	0	66.71	372	0	14.014	0.21	13.601	14.427
Equal variances not assumed			61.504	229.887	0	14.014	0.228	13.565	14.463

ship education promotes the culture of entrepreneurship through the formation of entrepreneurial clubs at the various Universities. Schward (2009) added that entrepreneurship education helps in developing skills that generate an entrepreneurial mindset and preparing future leaders for solving more complex, inter-linked, test-changing problems, develop the human capital required for building the generation's societies of the future. They added that entrepreneurship education serves as engine fueling innovation, employment generations, economic growth and social welfare thereby putting an end the problems of dependency among University graduates.

Moreover, Dickson et al. (2008) opined that entrepreneurship education acts as a precondition for the development of entrepreneurship culture particularly in a place where the spirit and culture is very minimal. Adejimiola and Olu-funmilayo (2009) advised that educational system should be refined with a view to creating and enhancing the supply of entrepreneurial initiatives and activities with the bottom line of inculcating the spirit of entrepreneurship in the students through entrepreneurial education programs to eliminate dependency.

CONCLUSION

This paper investigated entrepreneurship education as a for the reduction dependency among university graduates in South Africa. Having tested the two hypotheses formulated in this paper, using the Chi-square tests and independent t-test, the objectives of this paper were achieved as solution to problems identified in this paper. The findings of this paper conclude that entrepreneurship education promotes self-reliance and self-independence as well as entrepreneurship culture to reduce dependency among university graduates in South Africa.

This therefore means that entrepreneurship education can be a solution to real challenges of dependency syndrome faced by South African youths today.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations have been provided and suggested to government agencies and institutions of higher learning, private organizations as well as government agencies. The paper rec-

ommends that the government of South Africa should encourage entrepreneurship in order to tackle the challenges of dependency by putting in place flexible tax and regulatory policies, providing access to capital and legal protection of property rights for SMMEs to flourish. It recommends that government such as Small Enterprise Development Agency (SEDA), Incubation Support Programme (ISP) and other entrepreneurship agencies should work closely with the banks to ease access to finance by SMMEs through the provision of grants to small-scale businesses. Other than provision of grants, government agencies also need to do more, in equipping entrepreneurs with the necessary knowledge, technical know-how and skills needed to grow a business.

Moreover, the paper recommended that the Universities must be outwardly focused with strong engagement with external stakeholders, especially private businesses and industries in providing financial and technical support for the growth of entrepreneurship in South Africa. It also recommends that there is a need for higher education institutions and DHET University curricular in such a way that entrepreneurship education is made compulsory in all disciplines of universities. This will promote the culture of entrepreneurship, promote self-independence and self-reliance and ultimately discourage dependency syndrome among university graduates.

LIMITATIONS

The major limitation of this study was unavailability of funds for transportation and other logistics. Due to this problem of finance, the study was limited to the University of Fort Hare only.

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