

# ENTREPRENEURSHIP EDUCATION: SURVEY OF TWO UNIVERSITIES IN BOTSWANA

M. Lekoko <sup>a</sup>, E.M. Rankhumise <sup>b</sup>, P. Ras <sup>c</sup>

<sup>a, b, c</sup> Department of Management and Entrepreneurship,

Tshwane University of Technology, Sate Artillery Road, Pretoria West, South Africa.

<sup>b</sup> Corresponding author: Rankhumiseem@tut.ac.za

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**Abstract:** Entrepreneurship education is topical in many universities. This offering is imperative in preparing learners to be job creators instead of being job seekers. This paper aims to assess the state of entrepreneurship at the two universities in Botswana and to evaluate how students feel about entrepreneurship education in the context of giving a good grounding for starting own businesses after graduation. Data were collected through structured questionnaires to measure students' perceptions of the effectiveness of entrepreneurship offering at the two universities. The results show that at the two universities, teaching strategies involves lectures, group and individuals assignments. The strategies used seem not to be aligned with the current trend of teaching entrepreneurship education. This paper provides valuable insight on the appropriateness of the teaching strategies used.

**Keywords:** Entrepreneurship Education, Nascent entrepreneur, Production means, Entrepreneurship, teaching strategies.

## INTRODUCTION

The study of Entrepreneurship as a subject in higher education institutions is one of the interesting and challenging areas of research for governments, institutions of higher learning [1]. Entrepreneurship concept is a developing field with a burgeoning importance in the global business setting. As result of this development, there has been an increased need for entrepreneurship courses that come from students from different Higher education institutions. Therefore, Higher education institutions have a challenge to cope with what the students need in order to prepare them to be more entrepreneurial. According to [2] there a need to train and educate young people in the field of entrepreneurship and by

so doing, they will be encouraged to become job creators instead to job-seekers once they leave educational system. Entrepreneurship education in the development context is regarded as a way to equip people with innovative enterprise skills to understand the opportunities in the environment, while at the same time; nascent entrepreneurs set the pace in the economy of forging new entrepreneurial activities [3]. Based on the background, the main purpose of this paper is to determine whether the teaching and assessments methodologies used in the two universities are appropriate in developing students of becoming nascent entrepreneurs.

## Theoretical perspective on entrepreneurship education

This section of the paper reflects on studies conducted in various countries to understand how they view entrepreneurship education in particular to its contributions towards encouraging nascent entrepreneurs to start their own businesses.

Entrepreneurship is regarded as an elusive concept. Scholars bring different perspectives of what is meant by the concept entrepreneurship. Some authors associate it with new business development, combination of other production factors. In the context of this paper, entrepreneurship is defined as the implementation of production means through: (i) introduction new products and new methods of production; (ii) opening of new markets; (iii) sourcing new inputs and (iv) when changing organisational structure [4]. To achieve all these important aspects, it is imperative to embark on entrepreneurship education. For sometimes, entrepreneurship has traditionally defined narrowly as education that provides the needed skills to set-up new business venture. This concept is highly debated,

for instance, [2] argue that there are many ways to offer entrepreneurship education and this however, depends entirely on the objectives of education. If the objective of such education is to increase understanding of what entrepreneurship is all about, the best way to operationalise the objective is to disseminate the information through public channels such as seminars and lectures. The other objective is in case there is a need to equip individuals with entrepreneurial skills; the best way to deliver education is by way of industrial training which is more experiential in nature. Finally, if the objective of education is to equip individuals to act as entrepreneurs, more appropriate intervention will be experiments by attempting entrepreneurship out in a controlled environment for instance through simulations and even experiential learning.

[5] identified two areas of entrepreneurship education, namely, (i) education about entrepreneurship - this relates to developing, constructing and studying theories referred to entrepreneurs, the establishment of firms, the contribution of economic development, the entrepreneurial process and the small and middle sized firms. This aspect is more appropriate for the research conducted at the two universities in Botswana. (ii) Education for entrepreneurship. This aspect deals with the current and nascent entrepreneurs with the intent of developing and stimulating the entrepreneurial process, providing all the resources necessary for the start-up of a new enterprise both within and outside an existing entity.

It is evident from the literature that the learning methods employed in entrepreneurship education and training programmes vary considerably and this ranges from lectures, presentations and hand-outs to video and case study-based learning, with group discussion and role-plays [6]. The study of what should be taught and how it should be taught (pedagogies) has dominated interest in many researchers.

According to [3] students who have done entrepreneurship as a major have shown keen interest in becoming entrepreneurs and these students act entrepreneurially in contrast to those other students in initiating their own businesses. This essentially means that entrepreneurship education does play major role inculcating the entrepreneurship spirit among graduates.

Not much is known about effective teaching techniques for entrepreneurship education. [7], research and knowledge about how to teach entrepreneurship remains relative underdeveloped despite the growing demand for more entrepreneurial-oriented graduates [8]. Teaching approaches and methods may involve learning by

doing, immersion in real-life situations, case studies and address by entrepreneurs, or more didactical and conventional procedures whose efficiency could be assessed [9].

### Entrepreneurship education

As the researcher focus more into the literature on entrepreneurship education, it would be helpful to define and understand what is meant by entrepreneurship education. Sherpherd and Douglas (1997) as cited by [10] propose this definition: the essence of entrepreneurship is the ability to envision and chart a course for a new business venture by combining information from the functional disciplines and the external environment in the context of the extraordinary uncertainty and ambiguity which faces a new business venture. This manifests itself in creative strategies, innovative tactics, uncanny perception of trends and market move changes, courageous leadership when the way forward is not obvious and so on. What we teach in our entrepreneurship classes should serve to instill and enhance these abilities.

A study of Entrepreneurship Education in Botswana and the Significance of Institutional Preparation was conducted by Swartland in 2008 and the focus was on Post-Primary Education and Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET). Another study commissioned by the World Bank, identifies and investigates the provision of Integrated Entrepreneurship Education (IEE) in Botswana, Kenya and Uganda. IEE covers the teaching of knowledge and skills that will enable the individual graduate to plan, start and run his/her business, delivered as an integrated part of the curriculum at an acknowledged education and training institution within the national educational system. The study is limited to Entrepreneurship Education (EE) provided to regular, full-time students in General Secondary Education (GSE) and Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) at secondary and post-secondary levels. The study is a review where available documents are supposed to be the prime source of information.

### RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research used a survey instrument to investigate students' perception with regard to entrepreneurship education offered at their respective universities, namely, university of Botswana and Limkwokwing respectively. Survey was regarded as appropriate measure since the researchers were interested in collecting original data for describing population too large to observe directly [11]. The questionnaire for the survey consisted of several sections *inter alia* with demographic of the respondents; respective universities, level of study; and assessments methods.

### Sample and data collection

In collecting data, 400 students were conveniently selected to take part in the survey. In attempt to achieve the objectives of this study, a self-administered questionnaire was used as a data collection tool and closed-ended questions were posed to the respondents. This method allowed respondents to clarify any doubts of any kind and also provide an opportunity for researcher to explain the purpose of the research and in that way respondents were motivated to take part in the research. By administering the questionnaires, a high rate of return of questionnaires was ensured which made a response rate of 81.25%.

### Ethical considerations

In conducting the research, the pro-type ethical considerations as identified by [12] were observed. Firstly, informed consent was obtained from the respondents by using information leaflet which was attached on every questionnaire. The information leaflet outlined the purpose of the research and process to be followed in collecting data. Secondly, the researcher explained the rights of the respondents and they were assured of anonymity since no personal identifiers were used in the research.

### Data analysis

Data were analyzed using Statistical Package of Social Science (SPSS version 18). Data were analyzed at inferential and descriptive statistics level. In terms of reliability, the researchers did not test it due to the fact they used pre-tested questionnaire adopted from Chen *et al* as well as Niyonkuru.

### DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS

This section presents sample realisation and followed by the discussion of the findings at descriptive and inferential level.

#### Sample realisation

Of the 400 questionnaires distributed, 325 were returned and they were all useful for data analysis. From 325 respondents from the two universities, 60.25% of the respondents registered degree programmes, 36.59% were on a diploma level and only 3.15% of respondents were on a certificate level (academic level). A higher number of respondents (60.25%) were in their final year of studies which made them more relevant to the study because they will enter the job market or start their own

businesses. Out of 325 respondents, 65.54% (N=213) were from University of Botswana and only 34.46% (N=112) Limkokwing University. The University of Botswana had a high student enrollment compared to Limkokwing University. In terms of size, the two universities are not the equal; the University of Botswana is the biggest with a high student enrollment.

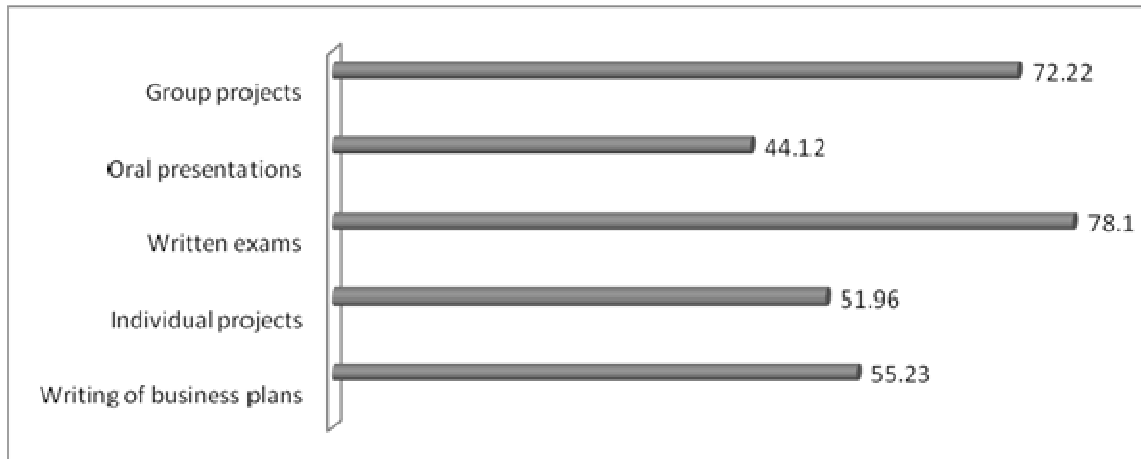
It is evident that lectures and the use of group and individual projects and summative assessments constitute the primary teaching/learning methods that are used to teach entrepreneurship courses in the two universities in Botswana. These points to a deficiency in the teaching of entrepreneurship as mentioned by [3] in their study conducted in Malaysia. In their study they found that less traditional, but more interactive methods, such as a case study, invited guest speakers and interaction with successful entrepreneurs were much less employed [3]. The use of lecture-based educational methods and case studies has been under criticism from entrepreneurship commentators and advocates. For instance, Cooper *et al.* (2004) argue that while the lecture-focused educational methods, using formal lectures and case studies can be praised for their academic rigor, they did not encourage student learning through experience. They further assert that these pedagogical methods encourage the acquisition of analytical approaches relevant in a large firm context, but which leave little room for insight and intuition necessary for an entrepreneurial environment. Indeed, they are not appropriate for entrepreneurship education if they are not associated with active methods.

This reflects the mindset of educators who still rely on passive delivery modes and fail to value the effectiveness of bringing real-life experiences into the classroom through guest speakers [3] This is also evident in the results of this study where students attending entrepreneurship classes are not given the opportunity to develop practical skills and experience entrepreneurship.

The commonly used methods used in entrepreneurship courses in the two universities in Botswana are written exams (78.1%) and group projects (72.22%). The third most commonly used assessment method is the writing of business plans (55.23%). In the context of this study it can be argued that traditional assessment methods still prevail in the two universities in Botswana as they predominantly use written exams and group projects for assessment.

**Discussion at descriptive level****Table 1:** Teaching/learning methods commonly used in the two universities in Botswana

Teaching Methods	Frequency	Percentage (%)	
		Apply	Don't Apply
Lectures	269	84.86	15.14
Individual projects	192	60.57	39.43
Group assignments	240	75.71	24.29
Case studies	129	40.69	59.31
Guest speakers (entrepreneurs)	99	31.23	68.77
Guest speakers (venture capitalist)	39	12.30	87.70
Multimedia exercise	17	5.36	94.64
Role playing	23	7.26	92.74
Written end course exams	201	63.41	36.59
Class participation included as overall marks	81	25.55	74.45
Links with entrepreneurial activities in the university	76	23.97	76.03
Links with entrepreneurial activities outside the university	97	30.60	69.40
Business simulations	97	30.60	69.40
Video cases	23	7.26	92.74
Entrepreneurs interviewed by students	102	32.18	67.82
Writing business plans	143	45.11	54.89
Student oral presentations	131	41.32	58.68
Oral exams	32	10.09	89.91
Course materials available on the intranet	126	39.75	60.25



**Figure 1:** Assessments methodologies

### Discussion at inferential level

**Table 2:** The relationship between name of institution and teaching/learning methods

Nominal variable					
Statement	UB		LIMKO		p-value
	(f)	%	(f)	%	
Individual projects	187	88.21	82	78.10	0.047
Guest speakers (entrepreneurs)	80	37.74	19	18.10	0.007
Written end course exams	150	70.75	51	48.57	0.002
Writing of business plans	70	33.02	73	69.52	0.000
Oral exams	13	6.13	19	18.10	0.017

It appears that entrepreneurship education at the two universities in Botswana is not appropriately developed to effectively equip students with the relevant entrepreneurial skills and competencies that will help them to choose entrepreneurship as a career option. With regard to the imported entrepreneurship education issues such as course aims and objectives, teaching content, methods and assessments methods. It is notable that the curriculum at the two universities in Botswana is primarily based on the theoretical transfer of knowledge rather than on experiential learning, and that the more traditional but less innovative assessments methods are the norm in Botswana. Students at the two universities in Botswana are not effectively equipped with the relevant skills and knowledge to experience real activities involved in entrepreneurship and given little or no practical training for becoming successful entrepreneurs. Although entrepreneurship students have an advantage over other graduates when it comes to understanding entrepreneurial ventures, more efforts should be directed at creating an entrepreneurial culture, orientation and skills, and incorporating entrepreneurship in all educational, development and investment strategies and policies.

The table above shows the results of a Pearson chi-squared test conducted to test the association between the institutions and teaching methods. The results indicate a insignificant relationships between individual projects (p-value = 0.047), guest speakers (entrepreneurs) (p-value = 0.007), written end course exams (p-value = 0.002) has shown a significant association, writing of business plans (p-value = 0.000) high significant difference which indicate that the writing of business plans is essential in the two universities and oral exams (p-value = 0.017) display no association, indicating that programmes conducted at the two universities in Botswana can create room for experiential learning to positively influence students to take on entrepreneurial challenges.

#### IMPLICATIONS OF THE RESEARCH

The paper focused on the students' perceptions about teaching methodologies and assessments strategies used by the two universities. The findings are limited in terms of their abilities to indicate outcomes of the entrepreneurship education. Future research should be extended to other countries, particularly in Africa and this could enable researchers to generalize the results.

#### CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

From the findings it is evident that entrepreneurship education in Botswana is still at inception stage despite the fact that it has been offered for

sometimes. It is noted that in both universities, the dominant teaching methods are lectures, individual and group assignments. There are similarities from the two universities regarding the assessment methods and this is characterised by the fact that they use written examination and group project as a summative measurement. It is further noted that individual projects and the writing of the business plans also emerged as other techniques for assessment methods. As it is evident from the findings, there are still some challenges in the offering of the entrepreneurship education; no practical work is done by students from both universities. Posting of study material is a challenge since only 39.75% stated that the material is place on the intranet. This is worrying due to the fact that as universities they should be ahead in terms of technology.

Based on the findings, the following recommendations are suggested: (a) The two universities should consider curriculum development to include work integrated learning in the entrepreneurship education. It will be much better if entrepreneurship education can be started at secondary schools and this can motivate learners as soon as they begin to study at university level. (b) It will be important for universities to evaluate their entrepreneurship education to determine its effectiveness in terms of teaching as well as assessments methods. (c) Work integrated learning should be enforced in all universities since this can transform experience into entrepreneurial knowledge.

In conclusion, this research has provided important information on the teaching and assessments methods used at the two universities. The findings as such could be used as a starting point for other universities in developing new course offerings in entrepreneurship education.

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