European Journal of Business and Management
ISSN 2222-1905 (Paper) ISSN 2222-2839 (Online)
Vol.7, No.20, 2015

An Analysis of Entrepreneurship Curriculum Content: A Case study of the University of Zimbabwe Faculty Of Commerce

Dr Takaruza Munyanyiwa
Pro Vice Chancellor Business Development, University of Zimbabwe (UZ), University of Zimbabwe (UZ), Mount Pleasant, Harare, Zimbabwe

Morgen Mutsau
Center for Applied Social Sciences (CASS), University of Zimbabwe (UZ), Mount Pleasant, Harare, Zimbabwe

Abstract
The research investigates the role of curriculum in the development of entrepreneurs in the University environment, focusing on the Faculty of Commerce at the University of Zimbabwe. Curriculum plays a vital part in shaping student development and it is vital to recognise the underlying factors and policy developments both at global and national level which necessitate the paradigm shifts towards entrepreneurial education. These include socio transformation due to globalisation, effects of sanctions, HIV/AIDS, reduced economic activity and high unemployment have necessitated a from the worker oriented graduate to an entrepreneurial mind-set that can create economic value and jobs. This study sought to investigate lecturer perspectives on the current state of the curriculum and determine the extent to which it is aligned to the said paradigmatic shifts in development thinking. The researchers used mixed methods to gather qualitative and quantitative data. The survey questionnaire was used to gather systematic responses from lecturers. The following are key highlights. From the survey 93.3% of the respondents indicated that they are given orientation training for curriculum development in the department; 67.7% disagree that entrepreneurship content undermines academic standards; 68.7% think there is entrepreneurship content; 40% think its adequate). The survey results recommended courses like Entrepreneurial Skills Development, Business Administration, Business Management (twice), Project Management, Project Management and Business Operations Business Marketing, Marketing and Economics to be systematically incorporated from the first year.
Keywords: knowledge management, university industry linkage (UIL), curriculum, entreprenuership

1. Introduction

It has become best practice to acknowledge the context of the 21st century knowledge economy when operating businesses in an increasingly global context. The modern scholar is facing an economic environment whereby the global economic crises, as well as domestic political and economic developments have resulted in low levels of industrialisation and high unemployment. Traditionally universities have been training graduates for the job market when the economy was robust enough to absorb them. However various changes at oorganizational and societal level have generated an exigent need for educational institutions, in this case universities, to assume an entrepreneurship development role (Jarna, 2007). Henry *et al.* (2003) also notes that as the role of entrepreneurship increases, so does the need for education. The increasing role of education creates a need to align the curriculum to the requirements of entrepreneurship. This notion is supported by Jack and Anderson, (1999) who make an overt challenge to universities and course planners to generate a balanced practitioner capable of grasping intricate academic concepts on entrepreneurship and acquiring management skills thereby overtly pursuing an entrepreneurial approach in the development of their careers.

In the context of this research, emphasis is placed on the nature of the curriculum in light of the role of the university in economic development. Zimbabwe has also taken an overt thrust in psychomotor skills development in the education sector and curriculum reform meets both the requisite educational reform and the imperatives of the knowledge economy. There has also been a corresponding shift in government policy with the introduction of the Zimbabwe Agenda for Sustainable Socio Economic Transformation (ZimASSET) that promotes entrepreneurial skills and education for sustainable economic development. (GoZ:2013) This thrust is coming on the background of increased unemployment levels estimated at close to 90% and industry utilisation of 34%. (Finscope: 2012)

2. Literature Review

The interest in entrepreneurship education dates back to the late 1950s and early 1960s underpinned by well-known studies in entrepreneurship by McClelland's Achieving Society (1961) and Collins, Moore and Umwalla' s The Enterprising Man (1964) were published. Isaac, Visser, Friedrick and Brijlal (2007) define Entrepreneurship education as purposeful intervention by an educator in the life of the learner to survive in the

business world. Schumpeterian and Austrian definitions of entrepreneurship argue that it is possible to train potential entrepreneurs to identify opportunities but difficult to teach them to the art of creating opportunities. Saks and Gaglio argue that the ability to recognize opportunities remains virtually non-teachable.

The last decade has seen the growth of entrepreneurship education in stature and numbers as a popular and innovative part of the business curriculum (Welsch (1993). A call for all academic institutions, such universities is increasing urging development of appropriate educational programs (Laukkanen, 2000). Entrepreneurship education develops and stimulates entrepreneurial process, providing all tools necessary for starting new ventures (Postigo and Tomborino, 2002).

Entrepreneurial education empowers graduates with skills that will enable them to engage in income generating ventures if they unable to secure employment (Bassey and Archibong, 2005). According to study be Wilson, Kickul and Marino (2007) entrepreneurship education could increase student's interest in entrepreneurship as a career. Sexton and Kasarda (1992) opines that entrepreneurship education lacks an accepted paradigm or theories which can assist the trainer and educator to include material which will as Timmons (1994) report: a) convince students to become actively involved in entrepreneurship; b) understand the dynamic nature of the world of entrepreneurship; and d) slow down the reality shock of the real world by means of formal or informal tuition.

As the call for the development of pragmatic entrepreneurial education debate is abound as to whether entrepreneurship can be taught or not or entrepreneurs are born (Rae and Carswell (2001) and Shepherd and Douglas (1997). Katz (1991) highlights the need to identify the most effective way of to manage the teachable elements and fit with student needs and teaching techniques. Jack and Anderson (1998) views the teaching of entrepreneurship as a "science" and "art" where the former relates to the functional business skills and the later to the creative aspects of entrepreneurship which are not explicitly teachable. Researchers in the area of entrepreneurship agree on the need to shift emphasis on the "scientific" to the "artistic" and creative teaching of entrepreneurship (Shepherd and Douglas, 1997).

Sexton and Kasarda (1992) highlight four main objectives of entrepreneurship education as: i) prepare participants for career success ii) increase their capacity for future learning iii) realize participants' personal fulfilment and iv) contribute to society. Johannissson (1991) identify learning objectives – develop the know why (developing the right attitudes and motivation for start-up); Know how (acquiring the technical abilities and skills needed to develop a business); know who (fostering networks and contacts for entrepreneurial ventures; know when (achieving the sharp intuition to act at the correct moment); and know what (attaining the knowledge base and information for new venture development) aspects of entrepreneurial learning (Lee & Wong, 2005).

Gartner and Vesper (ibid) augmented that the skills and knowledge required to understand business entry differ from skills and knowledge required to comprehend the operations of an ongoing business (business management). Kao (1994) opines that the current management model of teaching does not apply to entrepreneurship, hence the need to have specific curricula and training programs that needed for entrepreneurship education. Courses such as development of new organizations, new products, and new markets must form the basis of an entrepreneurial education whilst business management courses must emphasize the knowledge and skills required for business practices (Lee & Wong, 2005).

Bechard and Toulouse (1998) provides a comprehensive of entrepreneurship programs are developed. Four perspectives are captured: 1) program can be developed from perspective of educators, where curriculum is defined based on the expertise of educators; 2) based on students needs taking into account individual learning requirements; 3) entrepreneurship syllabus can be analysed from the view point of those who design them. A view that considers the key learning/teaching objectives as the anchor of entrepreneurship curriculum; 4) evaluators of program can influence curriculum allowing evaluators to make adjustments to the program contents according to pre-set criteria for program quality and effectiveness (Lee & Wong, 2005).

3. Methodology

The researchers chose mixed methods for the investigation into the character of the curriculum in the UZ faculty of commerce in terms of its capability to promote and foster entrepreneurship. The research sought to answer the following questions:

1. Who is responsible for generating curriculum content?
2. What standards do they use to generate the curriculum?
3. What mechanisms are in place to monitor and regulate curriculum content?

4. Is there any established provision for entrepreneurship training and development in the faculty curriculum?
5. What kind of re-orientation is required to embed entrepreneurship training in university curriculum implementation?
6. What kind of balance is required for academic programmes to be adjusted without distorting other academic standards?

Andrew and Halcomb (2009) defined mixed methods as the collection, analysis and synthesis of quantitative and qualitative data within the same research project. Mixed methods is typically used "to explain phenomena that are complex and multifaceted" (Andrew and Halcomb, 2009:viii) This concurs with de Jong (2003) who describes typical complex phenomena typically holistic which may include respondents' intentions, subjective experiences, changing and varying attitudes, and different cultural components. For example considering Gartner's taxonomy of entrepreneurs, or Schumpeter's creative destruction concept, entrepreneurship becomes a very complex subject of study. Thus in order to capture the various nuances that characterise entrepreneurship education and their effects on students requires a methodology which is accordingly versatile.

For the processes of data collection, the researchers used two principal instruments: (i) the survey questionnaire and (ii) the key informant interview guide. Prior rapport was developed with the faculty lecturers and administration who made arrangements for the access to the students in the faculty. Using a system of systematic random sampling, with the assistance of lecturers in the faculty the questionnaires were distributed and returned when the students were in class. Final year students were chosen because of their experience through the years and because they have reached the end of their academic career and are entering a market with record levels of unemployment as of 2014. The questionnaires were collected and processed using statistical analytical software. (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS)

Senior lecturers with the longest experience were selected for a separate process of key informant interviews due to their unique knowledge of the curriculum development process. After that, there was an analysis and juxtaposition of the quantitative and qualitative data. For the purposes of mixed methods, Sechrest and Sidani (1995:78) point out that the qualitative and quantitative frameworks "describe their data, construct explanatory arguments from their data, and speculate about why the outcomes they observed happened as they did." Thus from the triangulation process, the researchers were able to elaborate on the statistical data from quantitative analysis using the complimentary qualitative data from the interviews.

The use of mixed methods produced both qualitative and quantitative data. The quantitative data took the form of descriptive statistics of essential elements derived from the close ended questions on the questionnaire. The qualitative responses from the open ended questions were analyzed using the frameworks developed by Wolcott (1994) whereby the richest data was captured as verbatim excerpts allowing "informants themselves seem to tell their own stories." The data was thus treated, in light with empirical methods, as fact (Wolcott 1994:10). Sandelowski (2000) also reiterates that distortion is minimized through thematic clusterisation of the frequently recurring responses and then commentary instead of simple translation. In some cases, the qualitative data was provided in the form of single word answers which are clusterised and quoted as is.

4. Data Analysis

There are some data which has been collected using the 5 point Licket scale questions. A reliability test was conducted on them and the results are shown below.

Case Processing Summary

		N	%
Cases	Valid	14	87.5
	Excluded[a]	2	12.5
	Total	16	100.0

a. Listwise deletion based on all variables in the procedure.

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.561	4

The Cronbach's Alpha reading is 0.561 (6 in round figures) shows that the data has a high level of internal consistency. Below are the detailed demographic and other statistics.

The first set of data in the section below showcases the demographic attributes of the respondents. The gender profile of the lecturers was such that Male 56.2 % were male and 43.8% female. In terms of statistics by position, the department comprised 1 Chairperson, 1 Professor, 3 Senior Lecturer and 10 Lecturers making a staff compliment of 16. The mean number of years the lecturers have taught is 11.5; the median 11.0 and the mode 10.00. Thus the average lecturer had a sufficient amount of time and experience in the department to understand the system. The range was however 12 as the lowest was 4 years and the highest 16.

Some 93.8% of the lecturers indicated that they went through orientation while 6.2% said they did not. Regarding curriculum design, 93.3% said they were oriented while 6.7% said they did not.

61.5% of the lecturers indicated that curriculum is reviewed over 1 to 3 years, 15.4% said review takes place over 1 to 4 years while 23.1% said review takes place over 1 to 5 Years. The variations seem to demonstrate departmental differences.

This data was complemented by the qualitative data whereby the researcher asked respondents what guidelines they used during course selection. The department appears to have a lot of influence as shown in the qualitative data. The respondents noted that the curriculum review process is done departmentally. The lecturer collaborates with the departmental board, through a system of departmental board meetings. "A meeting is organised at unit or departmental level in which each lecturer outlines proposed changes and improvements." Another interesting finding within the departmental context is the influence of the previous course outline for the reviewed curriculum which provides a critical knowledge trail for auditing.

Another view showed that the process was done by the individual lecturer. The most elaborate response came from a lecturer who said "The lecturer simply reviews the curriculum and adds or alters partial content as he or she sees fit." Other brief responses like "The lecturer does it on his or her own" and "The lecturer does that alone" confirmed the practice. Thus there are different standards for curriculum review in the faculty. The final view was the influence of the "external examiner and students evaluation inputs. Both these views confirm the statistics immediately above.

Besides confirming the procedural and stakeholder participation above, the qualitative data also showed that the greatest influence seems to be industry reflected in the various responses. Instruments like industry consultations enabled the faculty to track the "current industry requirements" which are then reviewed "in comparison with current curriculum." Thus in varying forms, respondents mentioned items like 'inputs' or 'views' of industry which are often expressed as practical relevance. Another elaborate response summed up these components saying "Lecturers look at the needs of industry and develop the curriculum accordingly."

Asked for the presence of a mechanism to measure changes in curriculum requirements, 71.4% said yes and 28.6% said no. The corresponding qualitative question sought to extract the specific mechanisms used to measure curriculum shifts. The changes in curricula appear to be influenced a lot by the trends in industry. Some respondents mentioned "Trends in industry" while others expressed it as "the comments from industry" and yet others mentioned "The need to satisfy the needs of the economy." All the responses point to industry trends as sources of benchmarks. Another key and related source of benchmarks is "Students industry performance" which is reflected in "Industry attachments assessment". Other key sources of benchmarks are student evaluations (mentioned twice) and external examiners (also mentioned twice). Peer evaluation also appeared to an important source of benchmarks. Finally one lecturer said "Courses are reviewed by external examiners who have relevant experience and knowledge in the field." One said "none and another "Not Sure"

On the question of whether the introduction of Entrepreneurship Training Violates Academic Requirements, 18.8% strongly agreed, 12.5% were neutral, another 12,5% disagreed while 56.2% strongly disagreed.

Combining the "disagreed" and "strongly disagreed" categories results in an aggregate of 67.7% of respondents who generally do not agree that introducing entrepreneurship training violates academic standards.

31.2% of respondents "strongly agreed" that the existing curriculum has entrepreneurship content, 37.5% agreed, 6.2% was neutral, a further 6.2% disagreed while 18.8% strongly disagreed. Combining the "agreed" and "strongly agreed" categories gives an overall score of 68.7% who agree on aggregate on the presence of entrepreneurship content in existing curriculum.

On the qualitative side, one question sought to identify the course content which is related to entrepreneurship in the current syllabus. It emerged that there was one course in 'Entrepreneurship'. Regarding finance, Financial Appreciation, Sourcing Capital was identified. Another related cluster of courses revolved around planning for business which were Business Plans development, Business Development, Business Development skills, Project Proposal Writing, Research and marketing, Marketing, Market Structures. Another cluster of courses were related to operational aspects which were: Business Management, (twice), Operations Management Business Studies (fourth year); Business Performance Analysis; Appraisal; Project appraisal; Business Environment Appraisal; and Project Management. Another gave a blanket response saying "All management courses". Another indicated that "The whole course is entrepreneurship and small business management". Two industry related courses emerged which were "Tourism Operations" and "Food and Beverages." One outlier mentioned "None".

Yet another question was concerned about what the respondent regarded to be the most critical skills and core competencies to groom entrepreneurs out of the students. The first theme to be captured revolved around issues of finance. The respondents mentioned that the students should be taught around possible sources of finance, Financial Management (mentioned twice) Financial Planning and Financial Analysis. Thus financial skills in their various forms are an important entrepreneurial skill which is deemed to be very important.

Another theme which emerged was the need for practical experience. One respondent said "Apart from teaching them, students need to be engaged in practical assignments and projects to give them practice." Others just cited "attachment to entrepreneurial organisation," was important for them to get business exposure. Others advocated for more practicals for students and the enhancement of practical aspects of the curriculum. Thus the respondents expressed the need to transcend the current thrust on theoretical knowledge.

Business skills emerged as a generic category reflected in Business Strategies and Business Management (twice). Proposal writing is a need reflected in the responses calling for "Project formulation and implementation." The following of business trends, writing a marketing plan and general marketing have also been emphasised.

Another key recommendation was the aspect of public relations skills, public presentation, communication and Networking (mentioned twice). Some of the responses were rather unstructured and included items like Production Plan, passion, self-motivation, taking initiative, creativity and "common sense." One of the most interesting was "Content on entrepreneurship" which showed that the current may not be sufficient for the purpose. Another outlier response was "These are not necessary."

Regarding the adequacy of the entrepreneurship training content in the current form of the curriculum, 13.3% strongly disagreed, 26.7% disagreed, (aggregate 39% in disagreement) while 20% was neutral; 26.7% agreed and 13.3% strongly agreed (aggregate 40% in agreement). Thus there is almost an equal number of people who agree and disagree on the adequacy of the current curriculum for the purposes of entrepreneurship training. Having surveyed the opinion on adequacy of entrepreneurial courses, corresponding qualitative data derived from a question which sought the lecturers' recommendation of foundational courses for entrepreneurship. The following courses were recommended: Fundamentals of entrepreneurship (at first year), Small Business Management, and Entrepreneurial Skills Development.

On the financial side, the recommended courses were Accounting, Introduction to Finance, Financial management, as well as Finance and marketing. On the operational side they recommended Business Administration, Business Management (twice), Project Management, Project Management and Business Operations Business Marketing, Marketing (twice), Economics (twice), Business Planning and a generic Management Courses recommendation. Business Research Methods was recommended twice and then IT and Law were also cited. The outlier emerged again as "I cannot recommend any course because I have disagreed."

Beyond the sheer presence of courses and recommendations for missing courses, the last qualitative data derived from a question which sought to extract qualitative data on the guidelines used during course selection. It emerged that the department appears to have a lot of leverage: "Guidelines agreed upon at departmental level" "These can be at departmental level" and "Departmental/Faculty fit". It is more interesting to understand how the department itself goes about the task.

A lecturer said "The course must meet the degree requirements" and "Questions whether the course in suitable for the degree being taken at that time".

5. Summaries and Conclusions

The following section highlights the major findings. Most lecturers go through both general orientation and orientation for curriculum design, which is a good practice. However, within the same faculty there are different (i) time scales and (ii) formats for curriculum review; some doing it individually and others through the board. The department, especially the departmental board has the highest leverage in the creation of curriculum content though the dean and chairman are also involved. Students' input mainly comprises feedback during reviews. The greatest influence however comes from industry feedback and benchmarking. Furthermore, the respondents indicated that they do have instruments for measuring shifts in curriculum like trends, external reviewer and student feedback. Further probe into specific types of industry data and benchmarks may be necessary.

Most of reviews take place in 3 year intervals (61.5%) followed by 5 year intervals (23.1%) and lastly 4 year intervals (15.4%). Statistics also show that lecturers are the most predominant stakeholders in curriculum review (75%) while other stakeholders take a lesser role.

The sources of benchmarks include industry inputs (most influential) and then student evaluations, peer evaluations and finally previous course outlines.

The lecturers identified courses which were deemed to be entrepreneurial in nature which are Entrepreneurship, Business Development among others. The courses which were recommended include 'Entrepreneurship'. In the area of finance, "Financial Appreciation", "Sourcing Capital" was identified. Another related cluster of courses revolved around planning for business which include "Business Plans development", "Business Development", "Business Development skills", "Project Proposal Writing", "Research and Marketing", "Marketing" and "Market Structures". Another cluster of courses were related to operational aspects which were "Business Management," "Operations Management," "Business Studies", "Business Performance Analysis" "Project appraisal," "Business Environment Appraisal" and "Project Management".

6. Recommendations

It is recommended that the faculty create a faculty level committee tasked with creating a comprehensive psychomotor framework for a curriculum that is capable of instilling critical entrepreneurial capabilities among their graduates without violating academic standards from first to final year. A key requirement is for them to identify and develop a change management strategy to implement mindset change among both students and lecturers. The frameworks should also involve inter-faculty platforms to allow students to borrow courses from different faculties which may add value to their desired entrepreneurship career path. More importantly they should undergo a mind-set change exercise to align the thinking of the lecturers towards a cross-cutting developmentally oriented structure.

7. References

Andrew S., and Halcomb E. J., (2009), Mixed Methods Research for Nursing and the Health Sciences, *Wiley and Blackwell*, USA

De Faoite, D., Henry, C., Johnston, K. and Van der Sijde, P. (2003), "Education and training for entrepreneurs: a consideration of initiatives in Ireland and The Netherlands", *Education + Training*, Vol. 45 No. 8, pp. 430-8.

de Jong, H.L. (2003). Causal and functional explanations. *Theory and Psychology*, 13(3), 291-317.

Finscope (2014): Finscope MSME Survey Zimbabwe 2012

Gartner, W. B. (1985). A conceptual framework for describing the phenomenon of new venture creation. *Academy of Management Review*, 10: 696–706.

Government of Zimbabwe (GoZ), (2013), The Zimbabwe Agenda for Sustainable Social-Economic Transformation (ZIMASSET), *National Policy Document*

Henry, C., Hill, F. and Leitch, C. (2003), *Entrepreneurship Education and Training*, Ashgate, Aldershot

Jack, S.L. and Anderson, A.R. (1999), "Entrepreneurship education within the enterprise culture, Producing reflective practitioners", *International Journal of Entrepreneurship Behaviour & Research*, Vol. 5 No. 3, pp. 110-25

Jarna H, (2007), An Entrepreneurial-Directed Approach to Teaching Corporate Entrepreneurship at University Level, *Education & Training* 49.4 310-324

Jones, Colin and Matlay, Harry, Understanding the heterogeneity of entrepreneurship education: going beyond Gartner, *Education & Training* 53.8/9 (2011)

Kolvereid, L. & Moen, O. (1997), Entrepreneurship among business graduates: Does a major in entrepreneurship make a difference? *Journal of European Industrial Training*,21 (4), 154

Noel, T.W. (2001). Effects of entrepreneurial education on student to open a business. Frontiers of Entrepreneurship Research, Babson, *Conference Proceedings*. Babson College

Owusu - Ansah, W. A. (2004). The impact of entrepreneurship education on career intentions and aspiration of tertiary students in Ghana.*A paper presented at the 49th World Conference of International Council for Small Business, 20th to 23rd June 2004*, Johannesburg, South Africa.

Sandelowski M., Focus on Research Methods Whatever Happened to Qualitative Description? *Research in Nursing & Health*, 2000, 23

Schumpeter, Joseph A. (1989), Essays on Entrepreneurs, Innovations, Business Cycles, and the Evolution of Capitalism, ed. R.V. Clemence and introduction by R. Swedberg, New Brunswick, N.J. and London: Transaction.

Sechrest, L., &Sidana, S. (1995). Quantitative and qualitative methods: Is there an alternative? *Evaluation and Program Planning*, 18, 77-87.

Udu, Ama Aka, Handling Entrepreneurship in Tertiary Institutions in Nigeria, *Journal of Management and Sustainability 4.1* (Mar 2014): 189-193

Wolcott, H.F. (1994). Transforming qualitative data: Description, analysis, and interpretation. *Thousand Oaks*, CA: Sage

Dr T Munyanyiwa is a graduate in Management of Organisational Leadership from the University of Phoenix (USA) and currently working as a Pro Vice Chancellor for Business Development at the University of Zimbabwe. He also holds a Masters in Tourism and Hospitality Management (UZ); Diploma in Hotel Management (Utalii, Kenya). His research interests are mainly in tourism, cross cultural management and entrepreneurship. He has teaching experience in Toursim and Hospitality Mangement, Marketing, Research Methods, Dissertation Coaching, Strategic Management, Ethics, International Business and Management.

Mr Morgen Mutsau is a career Knowledge management researcher and consultant. He is pursuing his PhD in University Industry Linkages (UILs). Morgen has studied Knowledge Management at Masters Level (Wits, South Africa) focusing on the Development Bank of Sothern Africa (DBSA) move to become a knowledge institution culminating in the establishment of Knowledge Management Africa (KMA). He holds a study abroad BSc Politics and Administration (UZ), Diploma in International Human Rights (UCT, SA), Diploma in Liberal Education (Bard College, USA) and Indiana University Purdue University of Indianapolis (IUPUI). The study of UILs is a special focus area in the field of knowledge management which concurs with the developments taking place in the nascent 21st century knowledge economy.