

The role of business competitions,
challenges and simulations
for nurturing graduate entrepreneurs

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The IBM Universities Business Challenge:

A review of entrepreneurial learning and employability skills development

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The project

A review of the IBM UBC 2011/12

- Online questionnaire
- 4 focus group sessions

A review in 4 parts:

- Motivations for participation
- Entrepreneurial learning
- Employability skills development
- Reflections on competition

1. Sample Profile

Gender: 43% female 57% male

University Course :

	Percentage
Business, Management, Marketing, HR, Entrepreneurship, Tourism Management	57
Economics, Statistics, Mathematics, Actuarial Science	12
Finance, Accounting, Banking, Financial Management	22
Sciences and Other	9

Year of study:

	Percentage
Year 1	12
Year 2	50
Year 3	38

1. Sample Profile

Progress in challenge:

	Percentage
Completing Round 1	41
Reaching the Round 2 Semi-finals	45
Reaching the Grand Final	14

Participated in IBM UBC before

	Percentage
No	86
Yes	14

Participated in similar competitions before

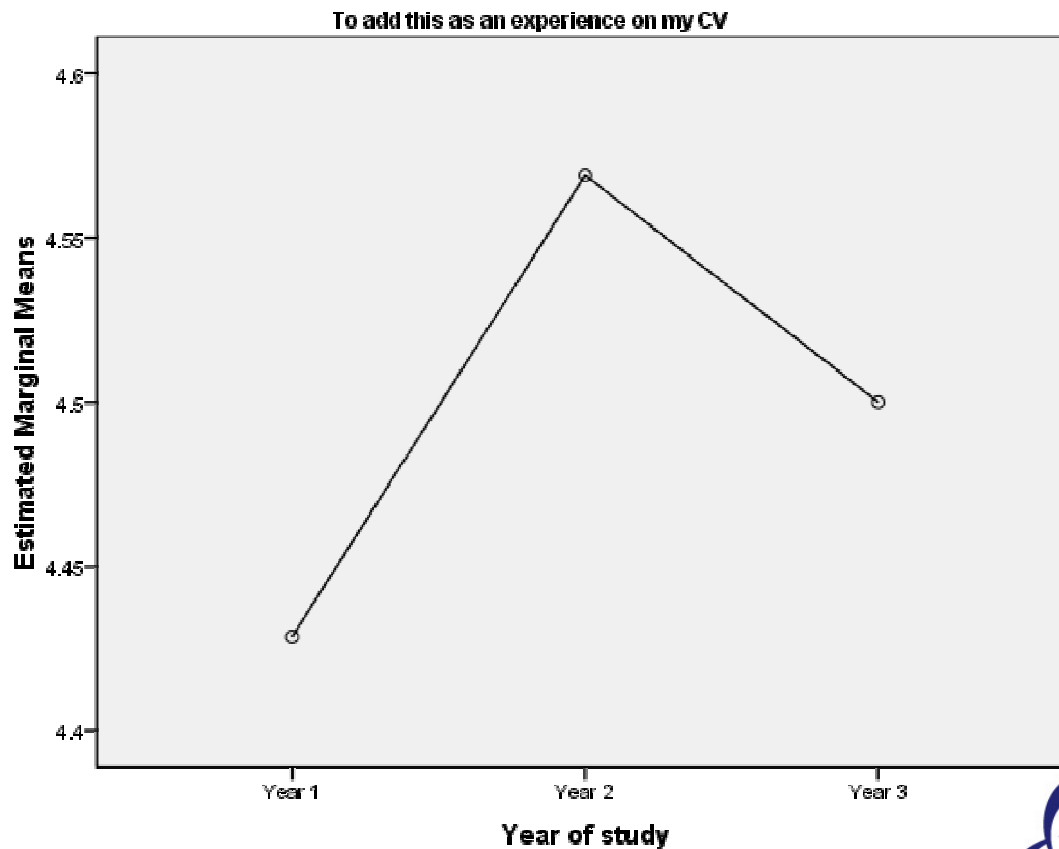
	Percentage
No	84
Yes	16

2. Motivation for joining IBM UBC

		N	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Dev.
1	To add this as an experience on my CV	119	2	5	4.50	.735
2	To test out my own capabilities	119	1	5	4.43	.809
3	To improve my overall business understanding	118	1	5	4.42	.830
4	Opportunity to improve my overall employability skills	119	1	5	4.39	.793
5	Opportunity to meet real businesses	118	1	5	4.03	.995
10	Friend asked me to join	118	1	5	2.50	1.345
11	Expected as part of my course	119	1	5	1.80	1.030

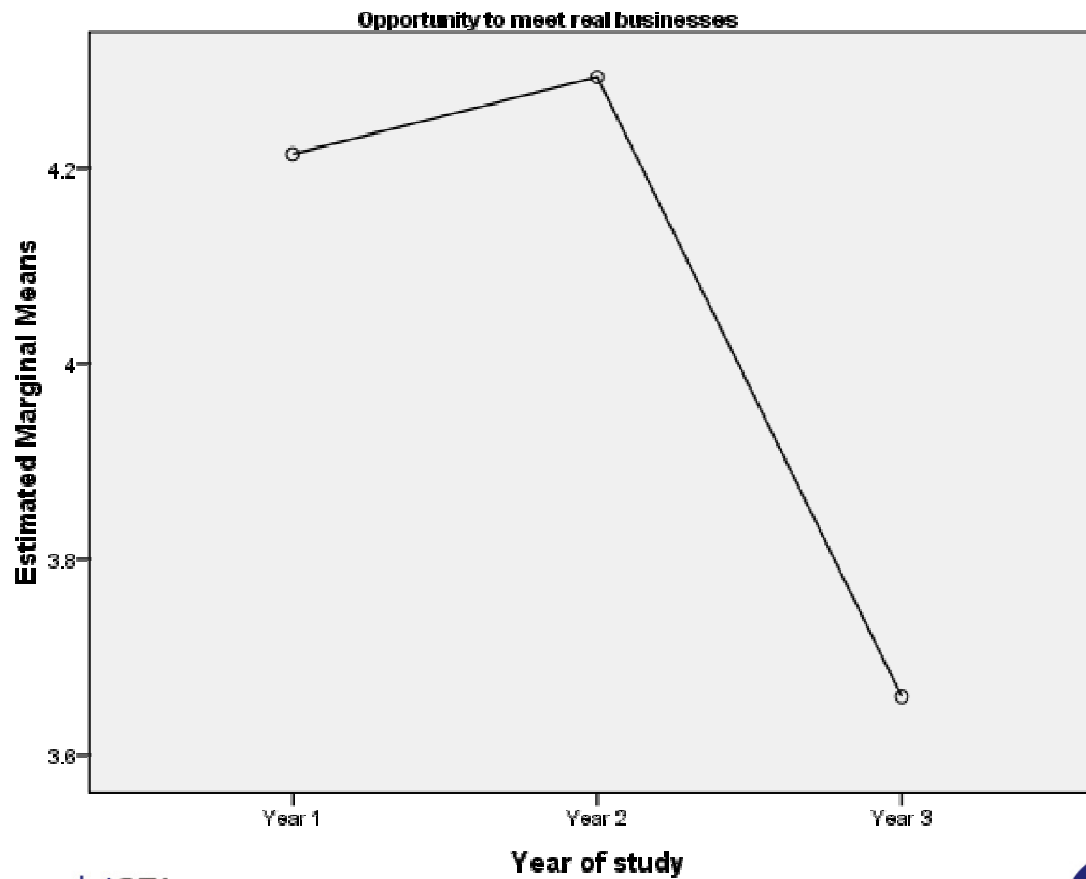
2 Motivation Across Years of Study

To add this as experience on my CV



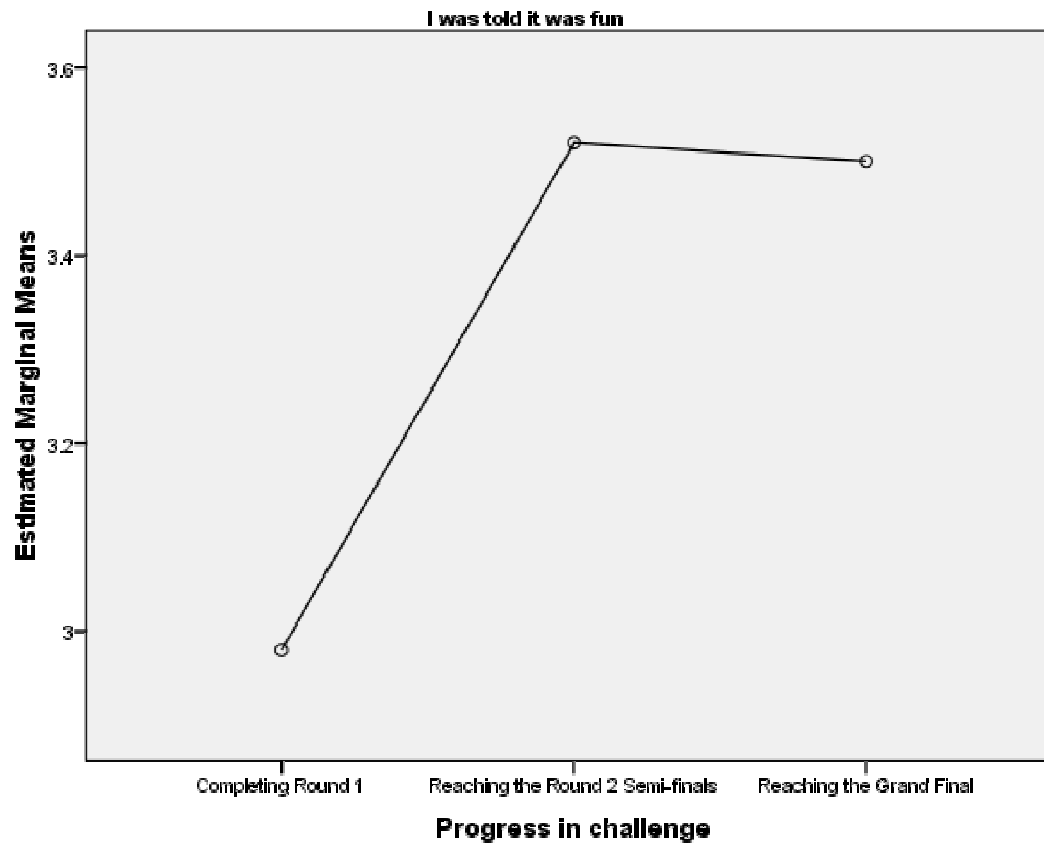
2 Motivation Across Years of Study

Opportunity to meet real businesses



2 Motivation by Progress in Challenge

Social element of competition

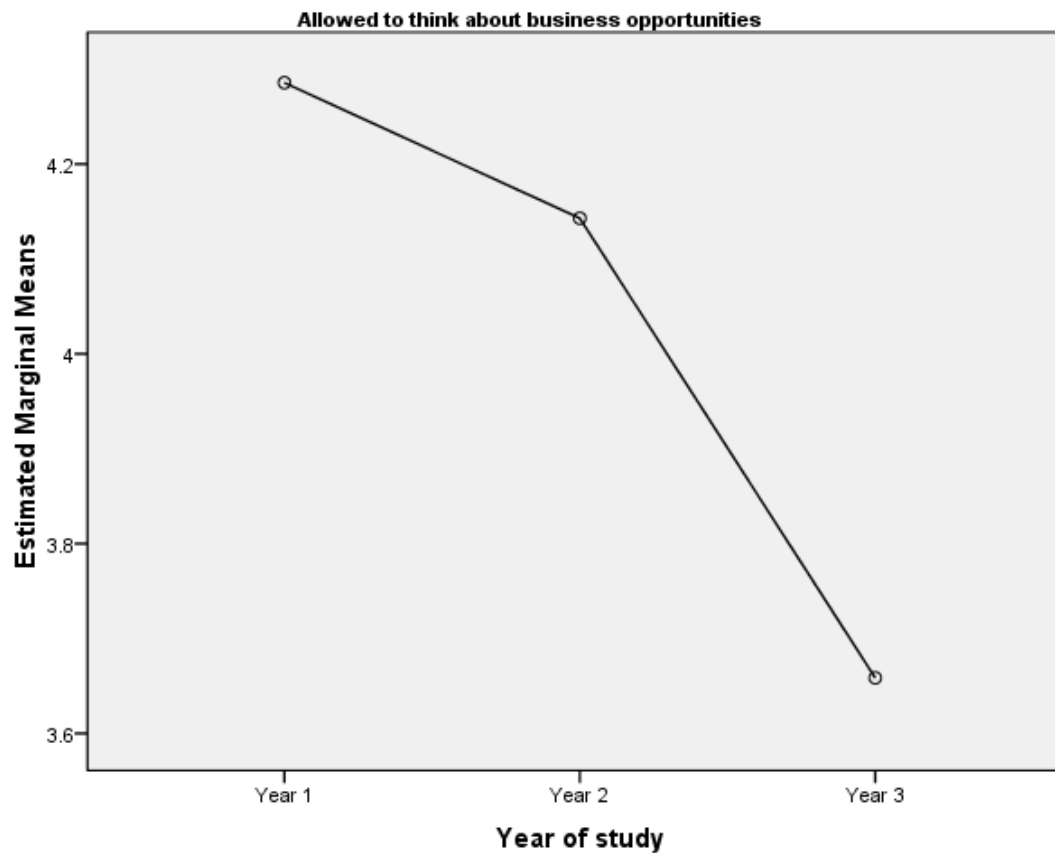


3. Entrepreneurial Learning Outcomes

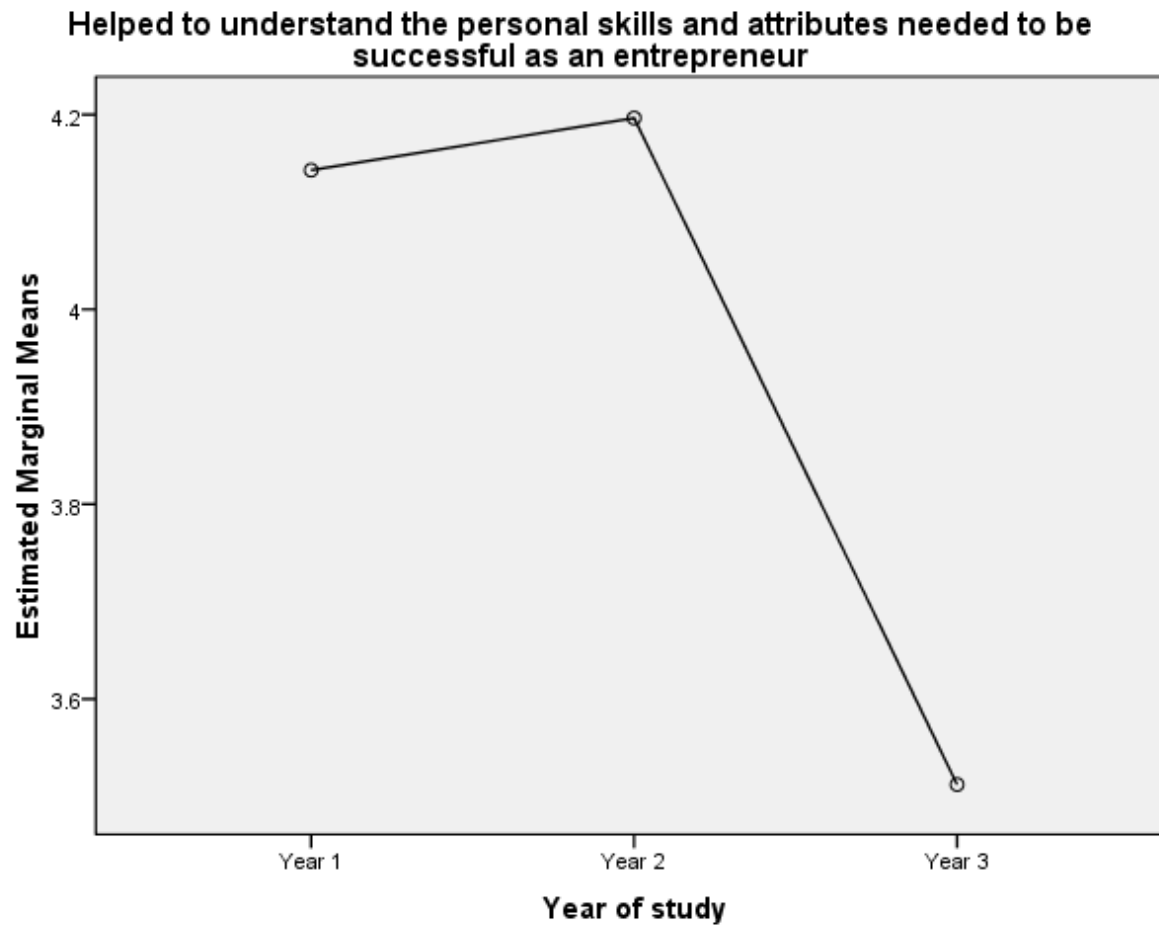
		N	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Dev.
1	Brought more confidence about own capabilities	114	1	5	4.13	.836
2	Allowed to apply academic learning into practice	115	1	5	4.10	.917
3	Allowed to think about business opportunities	115	2	5	4.00	.848
4	Helped to understand the personal skills and attributes needed to be successful as an entrepreneur	115	1	5	3.96	.986
5	Helped to understand what it means to run a business	116	1	5	3.95	.883
8	Helped to gain insight into the experiences of real life entrepreneurs	116	1	5	3.90	.945
9	Made me think about an entrepreneurial career as opposed to a career as an employee in an organisation	115	1	5	3.55	1.208

3 Entrepreneurial Learning by Year of Study

Allowed to think about business opportunities

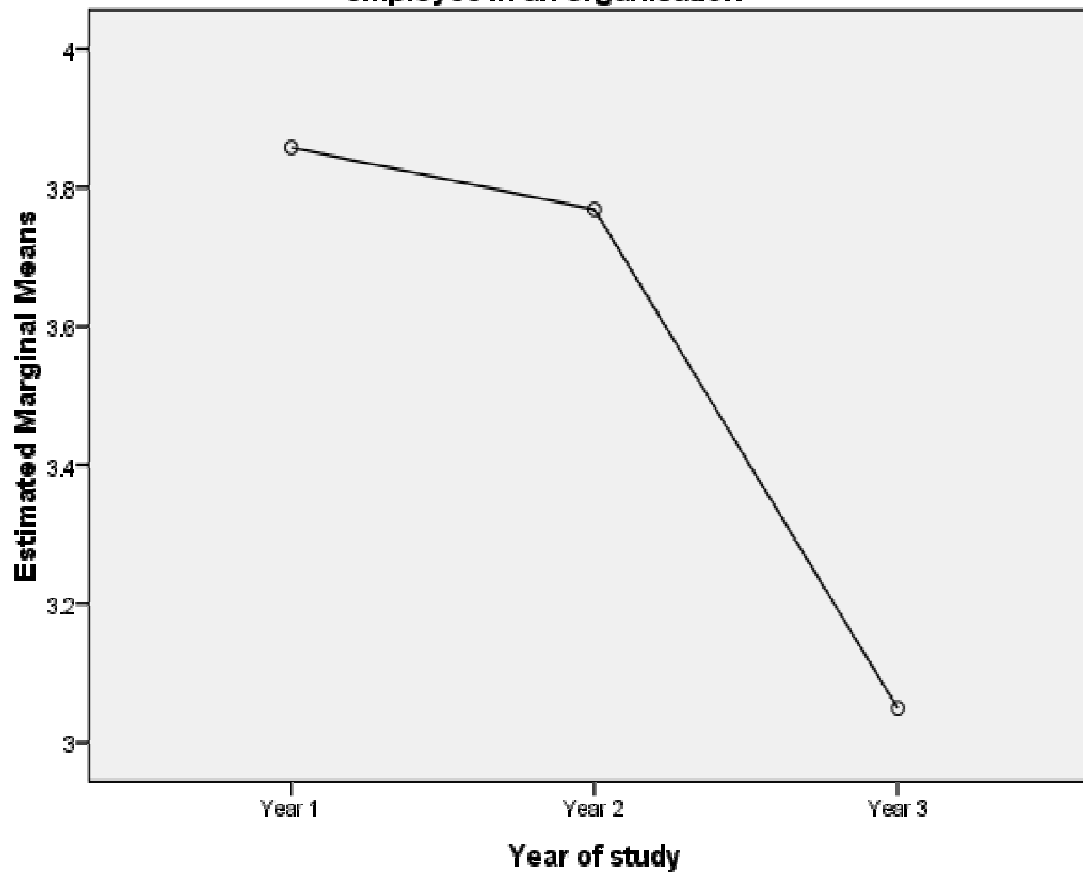


3 Entrepreneurial Learning by Year of Study



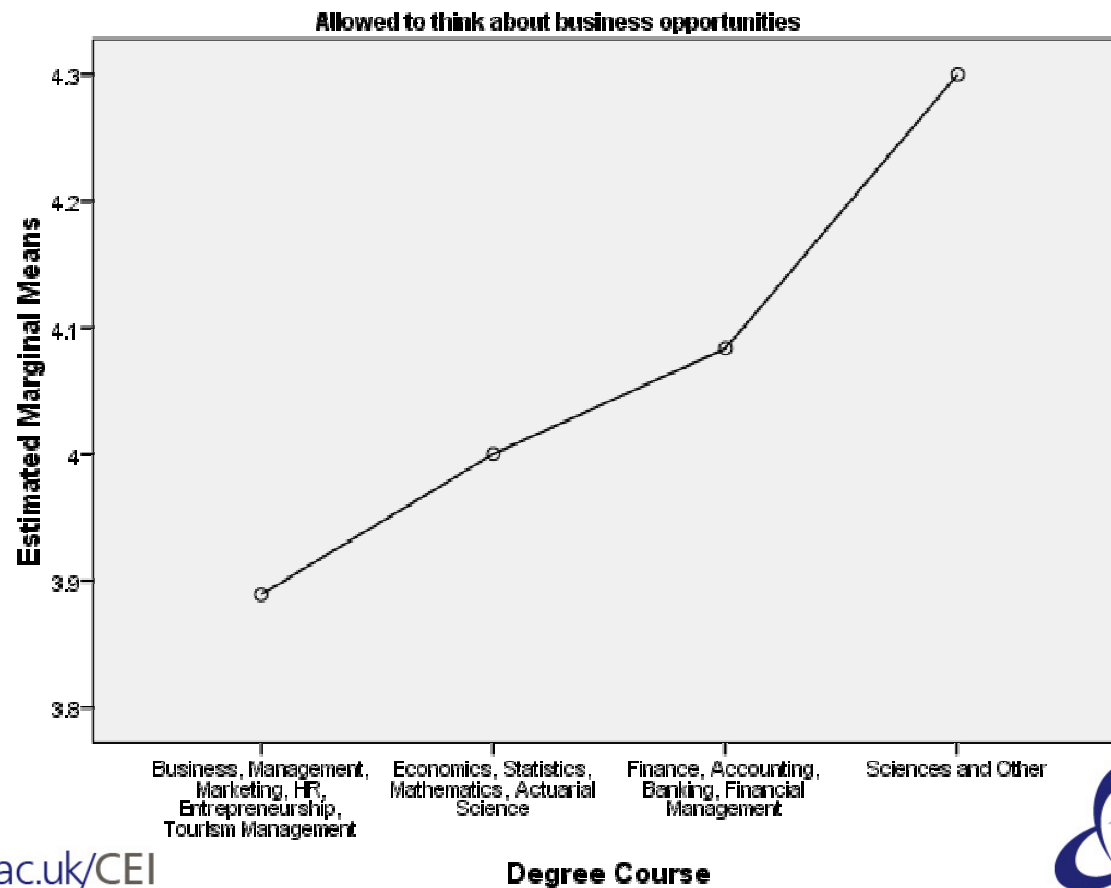
3 Entrepreneurial Learning by Year of Study

Made me think about an entrepreneurial career as opposed to a career as an employee in an organisation

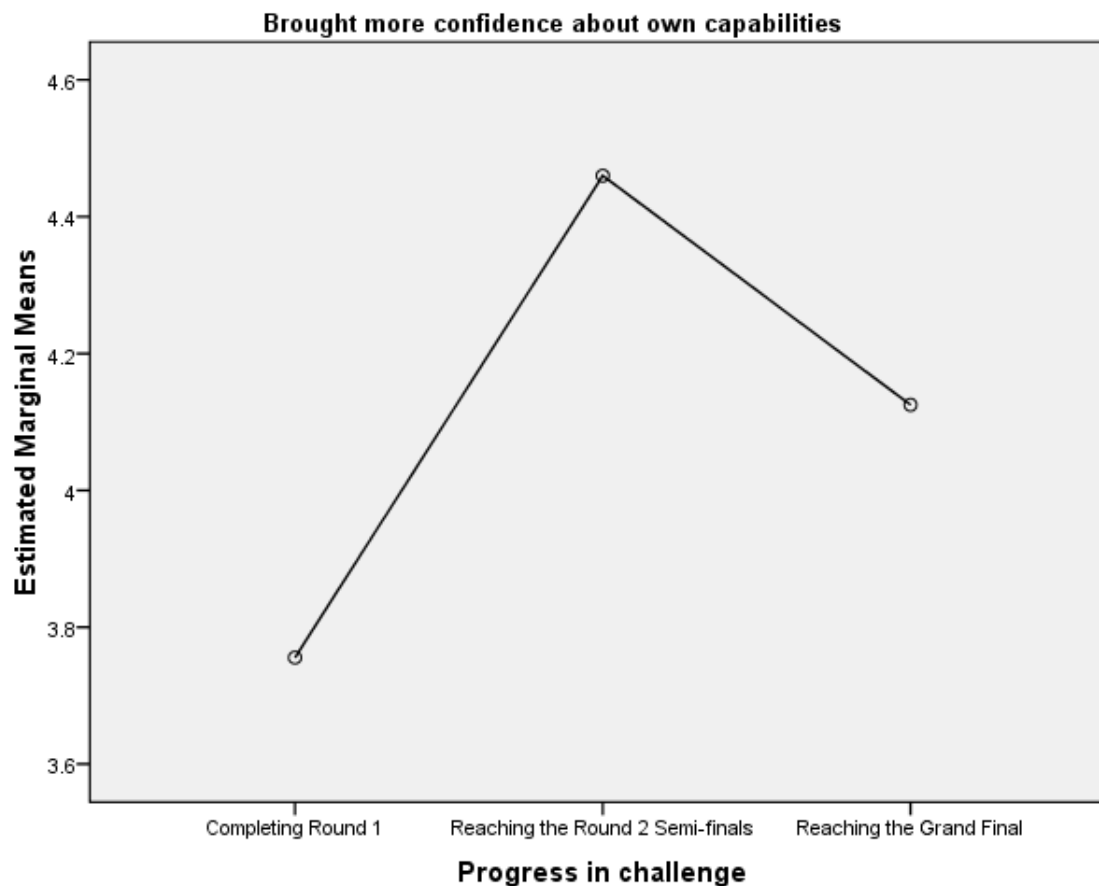


3 Entrepreneurial Learning by Degree Course

Allowed to think about business opportunities



3 Entrepreneurial Learning by Progress in Challenge



4. Employability Outcomes

		N	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Dev.
1	Helped me practice and improve my team working skills	115	1	5	4.44	.703
2	Helped me practice and improve my analytical skills	115	1	5	4.25	.673
3	Helped me practice and improve my planning and organising skills	115	1	5	4.21	.719
4	Helped me practice and improve my innovation and problem solving skills	115	1	5	4.17	.775
5	Helped me practice and improve my financial awareness	115	1	5	4.16	.812
8	Helped me practice and improve my influencing skills	115	1	5	4.03	.755
9	Helped me practice and improve my commercial awareness	115	1	5	3.98	.838

4 Employability Outcomes by Year of Study



4 Employability Outcomes by Progress in Challenge



5. Reflection on IBM UBC

		N	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Dev.
1	Will add IBM UBC to CV as a business experience	114	1	5	4.56	.652
2	I would recommend the IBM UBC to other students	114	2	5	4.54	.654
3	Will mention IBM UBC in future job interviews	115	1	5	4.50	.730
4	Provides a learning experience that cannot be achieved in class	114	1	5	4.25	.793
5	Provided learning that complements what is taught in class	114	2	5	4.04	.745

Conclusions

- Joining strongly driven by employability
- Evidence to support entrepreneurial learning and employability skills development
- Added values seem to be highest in year 2
- Added values seem to drop for year 3
- Reaching semi-finals key for achieving full benefits
- Supports the need for action-oriented learning