



## Innovative Teaching Methods and Entrepreneurship Education: A Review of Literature

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### Abstract

The objective of this paper is to synthesise through the review of literature the various innovative teaching methods and how they have influenced the practice of entrepreneurship education. The various methods identified are case studies, business plan creation, problem-solving, simulation and games, team based or group discussions, guest speaker, seminars, individual and group projects, role play and lectures with latter being teacher centred while all the former are student centred. It was however, established that no one method can be used solely on its own, hence, the need for collective adoption under a given circumstance. Practically, all trainers, instructors and educators in the entrepreneurship field need to focus both on the design and implementation of entrepreneurship teaching and course programs based on the various aspects in terms of the teaching model(s) being adopted from the perspectives of providing answers to the questions of the why (purposes of the learning), what (contents), how (methods and pedagogies), for whom (audiences, participants), and for which outcomes (assessment) (Fayolle and Gailly, 2008). There are no enough models to conceptually drive the curriculum design and teaching methods of entrepreneurship education (Slattery and Danaher, 2015). The limitation of this study is that not all research work in the area of teaching methods and entrepreneurship education have been reviewed, due to language barriers, cost and time constraints. More research efforts are required to clarify which of the students benefit most from active learning and how to design activities to motivate and increase the understanding level of the students over time and determination of the most relevant 'teaching model' configuration in entrepreneurship.

**Keywords:** Curriculum Design; Entrepreneur; Entrepreneurship Education; Innovation and Student.

### 1. Introduction

The process of taking off on a new venture has been found to be faced with a lot of drawbacks because business decision making is made under conditions of uncertainty, especially with reference to the functional areas (Timmons et al., 2013). Hence, candidates for entrepreneurship require a lot of conceptual and practical skills if they are to confront the challenges involved in the entrepreneurial activities (Gibb, 2002). In the light of this, the studies in the field of entrepreneurship education have placed emphasis on the development of innovative ideas in students to be able to tackle vagueness in circumstances they find themselves (Kailer, 2009). Premised on this is the need to have teaching methods that can better allow students to address the complications involved in new business generation (Biggs, 2003). The entrepreneurship course content reviews have shown that the teaching methods are of various categories such as case study, individual presentation, group projects, formal lectures, seminars, guest speakers, web-based learning, group discussion (Fayolle et al., 2008; Lonappan et al., 2011; Solomon, 2008). Even with the availability of these array of teaching methods, literatures on entrepreneurial education have not been able to provide consensus as to the particular basis for choosing teaching techniques that best suit a given set of students in terms of transfer of the form of entrepreneurship knowhow and motivation for learning in the future (Balan and

Metcalfe, 2012). Therefore, the real issue is finding the most innovative means of managing the learning skills and determining the best correlation between teaching methods and the needs of the students (Lee et al., 2007). This paper is to address the relevance of the various innovative teaching and learning methods that can enhance the transmission of entrepreneurial education and encourage the learning process in the future.

### **1.1 Entrepreneur and Entrepreneurship Defined**

An entrepreneur is an individual that uses the privilege of turbulence, instability, lack and need to create a new item or service or adjusts an existing one for the sole aim of making profit (Bagby, 1988). In a more similar manner, Herbert and Link (1989) posit that an entrepreneur is a personality that possesses some comparative advantage due to access to sound information or different viewpoint about a situation or opportunities to enhance his/her decision making activities. Therefore, being an entrepreneur confers on an individual the grace to seize the opportunity at ones' disposal to establishing or attaining a goal over a given time period, though not without the skills, knowledge and motivation required for such an endeavour.

Entrepreneurship has been defined by Emmanuel (2010) as the ability and readiness of a person to create a new investment prospect, develop a venture based on this and manage it effectively for social benefit or making of profit. In a like manner, Timmons (2011) defines entrepreneurship as a complex process that demands decision making across all the facets of embarking on a new line of business under uncertainty in a dynamic and world-wide socio-technical environment. Nevertheless, according to European Commission (2011) entrepreneurship is both a life-long and life-wide experience, hence, the best means to learning and combining experience with official educational endeavours. Apart from being viewed as the fourth element of production, more resources and time is being devoted to research efforts on entrepreneurship. Thus, recent literature refers to it as the most persuasive economic dynamism ever experienced globally (Cumming et al., 2014; Kuratko, 2013). Consequently, entrepreneurship has to do with the determination of openings and opportunities in business in terms of one's current situation and connecting up the various resources in a creative manner to meeting a particular need for an eventual compensation. Conceptually, entrepreneurship has to do with examining opportunities, acquiring resources and creating and sustaining the venture over time (Gottlieb and Ross, 1997). The skills involved with entrepreneurial activities are classified as business management, personal and technical entrepreneurial skills (Kuratko, 2013).

### **1.2 Entrepreneurship Education (EE)**

The idea for the teaching of entrepreneurship education was first mooted in Japan at the Kobe University by Shigeru Fijji way back in 1938 and it has since then gained recognition in American universities and colleges and other parts of the world with courses being mounted for it (Alberti et al., 2004; Honig, 2004; Karsoon, 2003). Entrepreneurship education may be expressed as the development of behavior, attitudes and capacities and according to Fayolle (2009) all of the several efforts at boosting entrepreneurial attitudes, skills and mind-sets for the purpose of addressing issues like creativity, innovation, business start-up and generation of ideas culminate in entrepreneurship education. In other words, entrepreneurship education is the genuine intervention by administrators and educators in the life of the participants to overcome challenges in the corporate global business environment (Isaac, Visser, Friedrick and Brijlal, 2007). In this case, the participants are exposed to further attributes, capabilities and skills necessary for them to implement the learnt knowledge within the framework of creating new trade (Cheung and Chan, 2011). Chinnoye and Akinlabi (2014) affirm that entrepreneurship education can be enhanced if: the students are involved in the teaching and designing of the curriculum for EE, there is a regular evaluation of the programme to validate students' learning, behavior and attitude, EE can be made a multi-disciplinary course and entrepreneurial week and awards are organized to arouse the interest of the students in entrepreneurial programs. Despite its popularity as an area of study in the universities, there have however been arguments at different fora as to whether entrepreneurs are born or made or whether entrepreneurship can be a subject of study at any level at all. The observations notwithstanding Kuratko (2003) asserts that it can be a course of study while Fayolle et al., (2008) argue that temperament and talent can be learnt. Before now, Jack and Anderson (1998) opined that entrepreneurship education can take the form of either arts or science with the latter focusing on the acquisition of basic skills required for starting up a venture which are teachable while the former emphasizes on the innovative side of entrepreneurship which are tacit in nature. Therefore, entrepreneurship education is about the objectives, contents, audiences and pedagogical techniques (Fayolle et al., 2008).

The fundamental outcomes of entrepreneurship education comprise of generating the environment for responsiveness, information and understanding about the concept and practice of entrepreneurship, to cultivate personal entrepreneurial skills, manners and attitudes, to create personal assurance and capability, to have understanding of an entrepreneurial means of living, to entrench entrepreneurial philosophies, to stimulate students toward entrepreneurial livelihood, to understand business innovation processes, to appreciate broad entrepreneurial competencies, to develop important technical business know-how, to encourage personal relationship and networking skills, to brace-up for self-employment, to have a mind-set for new ventures, and to exploit

institutionally-owned IP (Hannon et al, 2006). In another dimension, Azizi (2009) suggested that the long-term outcomes of entrepreneurship education comprise of transformation in behaviour, support system, culture and impact on business generated by the young ones.

The breakdown of the motives for entrepreneurship programs requires an in-depth evaluation of the various audiences for entrepreneurship education (Lonappan et al, 2011). These audiences are made up of students from different social and economic backgrounds with varying degrees of attachments to entrepreneurial activities, thus, the programs designed for them differ too, as they may fall into the categories of graduate business students, science related students, literate personalities, instructors and PhD students. On the other hand, those who have firm belief about their business acumen, those that are practitioners and professionals with focus on their areas of interest as well as those without any pursuit and genuine venture would have teaching or learning modes designed in a different version.

## 2. Teaching Methods in Entrepreneurship

In order to be able to fashion out the teaching methods in entrepreneurship education, attention must be given to the course objectives, which according to Jamieson (1984) are: education about (enlightenment of students on entrepreneurial procedures and features of entrepreneurship), education for (exposure of student to creation of ventures they can lay claim to) and education in enterprise (practical exposure of participants to their own ventures). Furthermore, some other specific objectives identified includes enlargement of entrepreneurial intentions (Kailer, 2009) and entrepreneurial self-efficacy (Peterman and Kennedy, 2003). According to Mwasalwiba (2010) teaching methods can be categorised into two in terms of being traditional and innovative. The traditional or passive has to do with formal lectures in the classroom while the innovative or active (action-based) is that which involves the participation of both the student and instructor or teacher.

### 2.1 Traditional

Under this method, Gibb (1993a,b,c) reiterates that the characteristics are teacher centred ( being the only expert, key role player for feedback), students have passive roles, written texts are used for learning, no immediate goals assessment, mistakes are not encouraged, note taking is allowed for, and a well organised learning environment accompanied with a timetable. To further buttress this view, Fiet (2000a,b) asserts that this method is adopted because it requires less cash outlay and also very easy for discharging responsibilities by the teacher. It is nevertheless, agreed that this method is less responsive to activating the required attributes for entrepreneurial activities, such that students are only prepared to go and look for jobs rather than creating employment (Arasti et al., 2012). Therefore, if entrepreneurship is to be career oriented, it will require the adoption of more active or action based or innovative methods that can encourage questioning, examination and discussions on practical terms with real life entrepreneurs.

### 2.2 Innovative

Bennett (2006) has explained the innovative methods as those that demands the teacher to stimulate learning and encourage students to rediscover themselves in terms of their abilities, knowledge and attitude. Thus, the features as identified by Gibb (1993a,b,c) are that students: learn from one another, are practical conscious, debate and exchange ideas, are guided to make self-discovery, exposed to informal and flexible learning atmosphere, learn from their mistakes and by solving problems. Therefore, these methods are students centred. However, these methods are costly and may not be in conformity with the university curricula (Mwasalwiba, 2010). The various innovative learning methods are computer simulation of business games, role play, business plan development, personal and group projects. Others are visitation to entrepreneurs, new business creation, workshops, group discussions, case study (Mwasalwiba, 2010; Arasti et al., 2012). In furtherance of the above views, Jones and Iredale (2010) suggested that entrepreneurship education demands experiential learning styles, creative problem solving and learning by doing to arouse the interest of the students. Wheadon and Duval-Couetil (2014) in their review of literature assert that the tools for experiential learning in entrepreneurship education program are business plan, creation of new ventures by students, getting advice and working with fruitful entrepreneurs, use of computer simulations, participation in behavioural simulations, scanning of entrepreneurial environments, participation in 'real life' events and engagements in field trips or viewing the video clips of existing new ventures.

#### 2.2.1. Business Plan Development

This is viewed as the most prominent learning activity in entrepreneurship programs and courses (Henry et al., 2005) as it gears up the process for business development. This method can be used to link up the learning objectives required for entrepreneurship education as it addresses the issues related to a given business product, presence of the market, competitive edge, financial strength and the peculiarities of the group engaged to take the required actions. Despite its relevance in ensuring experiential learning, research efforts in this area is still not

significant in terms of the specific learning objectives and the associated outcomes with respect to new start-ups (Wheadon and Duval-Couetil, 2014).

### **2.2.2. Team Based**

According to Michaelsen and Sweet (2008) the team based learning is a tool for collective learning whereby students are made to have access to learning materials in advance of the main class teaching exercise. In this case, they are allowed to choose personal multiple-choice test based on the suggested content, after which the team is exposed to the same test with the adoption of the 'scratch and win' cards to generate feedback immediately. Nevertheless, this method requires that every team relates with other teams on their contributions on a constructive basis.

### **2.2.3 Entrepreneur Presentations**

The entrepreneur presentations is a method that has been recommended by a number of specified educators according to Dominginhos and Carvalho (2009) being that which entails the invitation of real life entrepreneurs to narrate their experiences in business during luncheon workshops and this involves telling stories to reveal their experiences in relation to those of others which are really not a function of those experiences derived from within the walls of the classroom. This type of learning method could be very boring because it has to do with the talking from the guest teacher or facilitator and feedback at times are not received to assess performance.

### **2.2.4 Case Studies or Project-Based Learning**

Fry et al (1999) define case studies or project-based learning as complex examples which is an insight into the context of a problem as well illustrating the main point, but Davies and Wilcock view it as a student centred activities based on topics that portrays theoretical under pinning in an applied circumstance, whereby tasks are predominantly determined by the teacher who also doubles as the supervisor, while the students are expected to generate solution to problems with the teacher providing the lectures to assist the students in carrying out the activity or students depending on previous knowledge base to support themselves. This method in the views of Mustoe and Croft (1999) has been established to have the following contributions: the bridging of the gap between theory and practice, ensures active learning, encourages the acquisition of important skills (communication, time management, problem-solving and team work), lecturers find teaching and learning enjoyable and challenging, and enhances the understanding of the topic by the students, thus, the urge to learn. They have found the drawbacks to include, additional work load, incongruent discussions, withdrawal of students from participation for fear of suggesting inadequate solutions and every member of the group not being effectively involved.

### **2.2.5 Problem Based Learning**

The problem based learning according to Savin-Baden (2003) indicates that problems are normally made available by the staff while the instructor facilitates, with the attention being on management of the problem not necessarily on provision of exact solution and there are no specific precipitated lectures involved.

### **2.2.6 Games**

According to Tasnim (2012) a great number of researches have indicated that the use of active or innovative methods like games, web based and video clips as well as simulations are valuable teaching methods. It has been agreed that application of games and other activity based instruments in class promote collaboration, interactivity and active learning (Reuben, 1999). Even though there are less researches to investigate the effect of games on students learning, the study by Hake (1998) show that in interactive engagement format classes, students were able display more advanced problem solving skills. Other benefits of the games and interactive techniques are that they enable the students to make use of the vocabulary of their discipline to aid collaboration, accountability and interdependence, thus, becoming socially compliant (Mills and Cottel, 1998). Games ensure the effective transfer of learning, in that they are used by the students to be more participative and active in more productive sense (Cruickshank and Telfer, 2001). The setbacks for the usage of games includes, underutilisation in the classroom, time taken to adapt it for usage by the teachers, persuasion of other stakeholders of its actual and potential rewards, the acceptance of its inclusion in the curriculum by the teachers, its wastage of precious teaching time (Kirriemuir and McFarlane, 2004).

## **3. Contributions and Implications**

This study has shown that there are varying types of teaching methods categorised under two broad headings of traditional (passive) and innovative (action based) methods. However, literatures on entrepreneurial education have not been able to provide consensus as to the particular basis for choosing teaching techniques that best suits a given set of students in terms of transfer of the form of entrepreneurship knowhow and motivation for learning in the future (Balan and Metcalfe, 2012; Rahman, Adedeji, Uddin and Rahaman, 2017). The need for effective debriefing

to creating circumstance and activity for reflection on the outcome of the method(s) adopted need be evolved (Tasnim, 2012). The innovative methods emphasised on participants as those who see efficient EE programmes propelling them as active learning agents, working in groups, embarking on real activities and inter-relating with others and their surroundings effectively (Yu and Man, 2007). Nevertheless, Jones et al, (2013) opine that intangible and tangible learning are really acquired in programs that develop consciousness for enterprising attitude, self-employment, and development of personal skills, hence the need for a holistic integration of all aspects of personality and totality of entrepreneurship theories which jettison the parochial acceptance of one approach above another (Yontef, 2012; Fayolle and Gailly, 2008). Practically, all trainers, instructors and educators in the entrepreneurship field need to focus both on the design and implementation of entrepreneurship teaching and course programs based on the various aspects in terms of the teaching model(s) being adopted from the perspectives of providing answers to the questions of the why (purposes of the learning), what (contents), how (methods and pedagogies), for whom (audiences, participants), and for which outcomes (assessment) (Fayolle and Gailly, 2008). Coincidentally, there are no enough models to conceptually drive the curriculum design and teaching methods of entrepreneurship education (Slattery and Danaher, 2015).

#### 4. Limitations

The limitations of this study is that not all research work in the area of teaching methods and entrepreneurship education have been reviewed, especially those not written in English language which had hampered the degree of understanding. Further still, access was denied in terms of inability to retrieve good and relevant journal articles from the various websites because of the high fees to be paid. The time constraint was also a factor as little time was allowed for within the short time frame given and the need to satisfy the requirements of so many other competing assignments.

#### 5. Future Research

Since it has been established that no one method can be able to satisfy the need for bringing about the required results and again that consensus has not been reached as to definition of concepts and the application of the methods, then, further studies are needed to fully explore the impact of active learning on students. More research efforts are required to clarify which of the students benefits most from active learning and how to design activities to motivate and increase the understanding level of the students over time. Other areas of focus could be in terms of integration on a longitudinal basis the timing element in the learning process of entrepreneurship; determination of the most relevant 'teaching model' configuration in entrepreneurship; investigation of the teaching methods that will suit the peculiar needs of the different audience for entrepreneurship training.

#### 6. Conclusion

This paper has involved a review of different articles and monograms as well of books to be able to identify what the various innovative teaching methods are as well as their benefits and shortcomings in order to further enhance their application in promoting entrepreneurship as a field of study. The various methods include case studies, team or group discussion, business plan creation, guest speaker, individual and group projects, problem-based learning, games and simulation of business ideas, role play, seminars, and visitation to sites or firms. Literatures on entrepreneurial education have not been able to provide consensus as to the particular basis for choosing teaching techniques that best suits a given set of students in terms of transfer of the form of entrepreneurship knowhow and motivation for learning in the future (Balan and Metcalfe, 2012; Rahman et al, 2017). Despite the attendant benefits, there are still areas where more research efforts are required to clarify which of the students benefits most from active learning and how to design activities to motivate and increase the understanding level of the students over time. Other areas of focus could be in terms of integration on a longitudinal basis the timing element in the learning process of entrepreneurship; determination of the most relevant 'teaching model' configuration in entrepreneurship; investigation of the teaching methods that will suit the peculiar needs of the different audience for entrepreneurship training. This study was limited by the inability to access highly rated journals due to cost factor and language barriers.

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