

AN EXAMINATION ON ENTREPRENEURIAL COMPETENCIES  
BETWEEN LECTURERS OF HIGHER LEARNING INSTITUTIONS  
IN MALAYSIA AND NIGERIA

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This thesis is most importantly dedicated to the Almighty Allah (SWA) who gave me the wisdom, courage and determination despite all family challenges to complete the study. The thesis is also dedicated to the memory of my late parents Alhaji Muhammad Chiroman Wunti and Hajiya Fatima Muhammad. May ALLAH (SWA) reward them with His Rahmah and make Al-Jannatul firdausy as their final abode. The thesis is also dedicated to my wife Lami and children Jamila, Abubakar, Mohammed Arafat, Nana Fatima, Aisha and Abdurrahaman whom their love, understanding, support and prayers inspired me to finish this valuable work.

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## ABSTRACT

The entrepreneurship has emerged over the last three decades as one of the most powerful economic forces the world has ever experienced. To date, the enormous and remarkable international growth in the field of entrepreneurship education focused mostly on course contents or programs and their immediate impacts on students and neglecting lecturers' competencies as well as their relevant educational qualifications as an important determinant to the success of entrepreneurship program. This has justified the need for this study. A quantitative research approach was adopted and a purposive sampling technique was used to determine the sample size of the respondents – lecturers teaching entrepreneurship courses in Malaysian and Nigerian Higher Learning Institutions. The data was captured using structure questionnaire developed based on extensive literature review related to the study. A total of 1150 questionnaires were administered out of which 620 or 60% were completed and successfully returned by the selected respondents. This represents 237 (68%) from Malaysia and 383 (69%) from Nigeria. In order to achieve the research objectives of the study, three statistical techniques- descriptive statistics, correlations and PLS regressions analyses were employed. Findings from Malaysia showed that entrepreneurial attitudes is found to be most important competencies with the highest mean score of 5.14 which was followed by entrepreneurial skills 5.09 and knowledge with 4.82. Similarly, in Nigeria the result further indicated that entrepreneurial attitude has the highest mean scores rate of 4.89. Knowledge has 4.82 and skill has the lowest mean scores of 4.80. Moreover, a total of nine hypotheses were postulated and tested and the results in both countries showed positive and significant relationships between the independent and dependent variables. However, this study has covered only some selected public universities and polytechnics only. Further study can be conducted on a wider basis that can lead to more general conclusions. Findings from this study has provided the basis for a new model of entrepreneurial competencies on how to develop enthusiasm for entrepreneurship and enterprise culture among students. The outcome of this study will be used by academics, policy makers and students to improve the state of entrepreneurial learning where

entrepreneurship is thought as a key competency and set of skills, knowledge and attitudes are developed in students.

## ABSTRAK

Bidang keusahawanan telah bermula dalam tempoh tiga dekad yang lalu merupakan salah satu aspek ekonomi yang paling berkuasa di dunia. Sehingga kini, pertumbuhan antarabangsa dalam bidang pendidikan keusahawanan banyak memberi tumpuan kepada kandungan kursus atau program dan kesan ke atas pelajar dan kecekapan pensyarah serta kelayakan pendidikan mereka sebagai penentu bagi kejayaan bidang keusahawanan. Kajian ini berkenaan kepada soalan berikut: Apakah kompetensi keusahawanan yang paling penting bagi pensyarah yang mengajar kursus keusahawanan di Malaysia dan Nigeria? ‘bertujuan’ telah digunakan bagi menentukan jumlah sampel daripada responden – pensyarah yang mengajar kursus-kursus keusahawanan di Institusi Pengajian Tinggi Malaysia dan Nigeria. Data yang diperolehi menggunakan soal selidik berstruktur telah dibangunkan berdasarkan tinjauan literature yang menyeluruh. Sebanyak 620 borang soal selidik yang sah telah Berjaya dipulangkan oleh responden di mana 237 responden adalah dari Malaysia dan 383 responden dari Nigeria. Untuk mencapai objektif kajian ini, tiga teknik-deskriptif berstatistik, korelasi dan analisis telah digunapakai. Penemuan dari Malaysia menunjukkan sikap terhadap bidang keusahawanan merupakan kompetensi yang paling penting dengan skor min sebanyak 5.14 diikuti dengan kemahiran keusahawanan dan pengetahuan 5.09 dan 4.82. Begitu juga di Nigeria, kajian sikap keusahawanan mempunyai yang paling tinggi skor min 4.89 yang diikuti oleh pengetahuan dengan 4.82 dan kemahiran mempunyai skor min terendah 4.80. Selain itu, sejumlah sembilan hipotesis di kedua-dua negara telah diuji dan keputusan menunjukkan hubungan yang positif dan signifikan antara pembolehubah bebas dan bersandar. Hasil korelasi di Malaysia menunjukkan hubungan positif yang kuat antara kemahiran ( $r = 0,637$ ), pengetahuan ( $r = 0,642$ ), sikap ( $r = 0,639$ ), tahap pendidikan ( $r = 0,464$ ) dan prestasi pengajaran pensyarah. Di Nigeria, keputusan korelasi juga menunjukkan hubungan yang sederhana antara kemahiran dan prestasi pengajaran ( $r = 0,392$ ), pengetahuan dan prestasi pengajaran ( $r = 0,467$ ), sikap dan

prestasi pengajaran ( $r = 0.525$ ) dan tahap pendidikan dan prestasi pengajaran ( $r = 0,177$ ). Hasil kajian ini adalah konsisten dengan penemuan sebelum ini dalam kerja-kerja penyelidikan keusahawanan dan telah menyumbang secara besar kepada pengetahuan dalam kecekapan keusahawanan. Akhir sekali, kajian ini mencadangkan bahawa semua yang terlibat mestilah bersama-sama berusaha untuk memastikan bahawa semua pensyarah keusahawanan berpendidikan, terlatih dan bermotivasi..

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## LIST OF ACRONYMS

ASUP	Academic Staff Union of Polytechnics
ASUU	Academic Staff Union of Universities
EC	European Commission
EE	Entrepreneurship Education
FME	Federal Ministry of Education
HLIs	Higher Learning Institutions
KLIA	Kuala Lumpur International Airport
MEDEC	Malaysia Entrepreneur Development Centre
MOHE	Ministry of Higher Education
NBTE	National Board for Technical Education
NUC	National Universities Commission
UNESCO	United Nations Education Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNIDO	United Nations Industrial Development Organization

## **LIST OF APPENDICES**

Appendix 1 Personal Interview Questions

Appendix 2 Survey Questionnaire

# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Introduction

The recent economic realities in many developing countries have forced policy makers and the academics to place high priority on entrepreneurial training and development. Entrepreneurship has been recognized as an important cornerstone of a nation's economy because it contributes in immeasurable ways towards wealth creation, poverty reduction, economic growth, innovations and new jobs creation (Ojeifo, 2013). In fact, the role of entrepreneurship to the world economy is generally accepted and highly recognized as the engine driving the economy and society of most nations through creating new industries, employment and wealth creation (Fauziah & Sulaiman, 2012).

The history of entrepreneurship can be traced back to Shigeru Fuji in 1938. Hence, from a modest beginning in recent time, the interest toward entrepreneurship has been increased as an important alternative to professional occupation, especially for the graduates of higher learning institutions (HLIs). Evidence suggested proliferation of new courses throughout the intervening periods especially in the last two decades (Ismail, 2010). The European Commission (2004a) has argued that entrepreneurship is seen as one of the key components to be included in the current educational systems in order to prepare members of the public, especially the youths for successful participation in society mostly in venture start-ups and venture management. It has now become very obvious that careful attention and comprehensive studies are needed with the view to promoting entrepreneurship development especially through education.

According to Menzies and Paradi (2003), the rapid growth in entrepreneurship courses and programs may be due to the belief that the entrepreneurial competencies required for successful venturing can be taught, or at the very least can be improved through entrepreneurial education and learning

process. In recent times, there seem to be a general convergence of opinions among policy makers in the academics that entrepreneurship education results in positive outcomes and increased belief that it is possible to teach entrepreneurship (Chen & Lai, 2010). In an effort to respond to the need to produce high quality workers with the necessary and relevant entrepreneurial skills and knowledge, there is growing evidence to support the view that when people complete entrepreneurship education programs, they tend to be more inclined towards entrepreneurial actions, and sometimes even become more effective and competent entrepreneurs (Shane, 2011). If the entrepreneurship can be formally learned, then it can be formally taught and therefore the domains of education and learning are established together (Lange et al., 2011). The entrepreneurship education programs can readily provide work based learning programs that can subsequently produce favorable learning environment in which entrepreneurial skills and knowledge can be developed.

Currently scholars like Menzies and Paradi (2003), Ojeifo, (2013) and Chen & Lai, (2010) have recognized and appreciated the important roles of educational system especially in the development and promotion of entrepreneurship education programs and activities among higher learning institutions (HLIs). The current educational systems in the two countries (Malaysia and Nigeria) have been charged with the responsibilities of creating awareness of alternative career choice and broadening the knowledge of individuals, equipping them with cognitive tools and enabling them to perceive and develop entrepreneurial competencies (NPE 2007). These entrepreneurial competencies that are necessary for new venture creation and growth can be acquired through education. The uniqueness of student needs and the course requirements entails specific skills and knowledge to match both Gatchalian (2010) and Baba (2013) which reported that competent and experienced lecturers can do the job of promoting entrepreneurial competencies especially amongst the youths. The lecturer can promote entrepreneurial spirit which is basically a pre-requisite for the creation of entrepreneurial society and culture. This spirit is acquired for the overall growth of any nation (Baba, 2013). Thus, academic staff especially those lecturers teaching entrepreneurship courses have some vital roles to play specifically in stimulating and motivating students' involvement in entrepreneurial activities (Nasrudin & Othman, 2012).

Most countries would like to encourage entrepreneurship among students and graduates of higher learning institutions (HLIs) or strengthen their willingness to

undertake some kind of enterprising projects. Universities and polytechnics facilitate the acquisition of appropriate competencies as well as strengthen the entrepreneurial intentions. In order to successfully implement entrepreneurial learning, it is necessary to choose the right and competent lecturers. Lecturers everywhere will have to equip themselves with the necessary skills, knowledge and attitudes in order to meet the needs of their students. The quality of education that students need is too sensitive to be left in the hands of inadequately trained lecturers no matter how small or large the number of the students may be. Therefore, the entrepreneurship education lecturers must have adequate knowledge, skills, attitude and self-efficacy on entrepreneurship courses (Fauziah & Sulaiman, 2012).

To promote entrepreneurship in higher learning institutions effectively, lecturers' competencies must be carefully assessed. This is due to the fact that lecturers, as important role models, must possess requisite knowledge of entrepreneurship to be able to motivate students in developing relevant skills and positive attitude toward entrepreneurship courses. The academic parts of educational services are provided by the lecturers and they must have the skills, knowledge and attitudes required by their students (Michaelowa, 2007). The perceived quality in higher learning institutions can only be enhanced when the lecturers are competent and also willing to improve their teaching performance to their students. In order to successfully implement entrepreneurial learning, it is necessary to choose the best method of teaching and adjust them to the objectives and competencies that the individuals should achieve.

This chapter has presented the rationale of the study. The main aim of this study is to examine and find out the entrepreneurial competencies perceived to be very important for lecturers teaching entrepreneurship courses in Higher Learning Institutions (HLIs) in Malaysia and Nigeria. In addition, this chapter provides the background of the study, gives a brief overview of entrepreneurship education in Malaysia and Nigeria and the problem statement has basically identified the key factors that necessitated why the study is important. The chapter has also defined the research questions and objectives as well as the scope and significance of the study.

## **1.2 The Background of the Study**

Entrepreneurship scheme has been an important component within contemporary economic development of a nation. Its critical role to the economy of nations is now widely acknowledged within the literature such as a major source of innovation, job creation and growth. The European Commission (2003) suggested that entrepreneurship is a major driver of innovative ideas, competitiveness and economic strength of a modern nation. They further emphasized the important role which education has in the development of entrepreneurial mind sets and talents.

In a modern and progressing economy, education is positively related to the level of economic growth and development. An economy that embraced modern teaching techniques is bound to develop at a faster rate. The study has specified growth as a function of the initial level of education. From the societal perspective, both entrepreneurship and educational system have been seen as very important for economic growth (Krueger & Lindahl, 2001). Nowadays, both scholars and policy makers are becoming aware about the importance of the educational system as a panacea for the socio-economic development of a nation. The educational system creates awareness of alternative career choice and broadens the horizon of individuals, equipping them with cognitive tools and enabling them to perceive and develop entrepreneurial opportunities. The system can also help people to develop qualities that are very essential for entrepreneurship, (Reynolds et al., 1999).

Most countries such as Nigeria, Malaysia, India, USA, Germany and many others would like to encourage entrepreneurship education among students and graduates of higher education institutions or strengthen their willingness to undertake some kind of enterprising projects that encourage self-reliance. Universities and polytechnics facilitate the acquisition of appropriate competences as well as strengthen the entrepreneurial intentions in order to achieve the main aims and objectives of teaching entrepreneurial courses. Lecturers everywhere will have to equip themselves with the necessary skills, knowledge and attitudes in order to meet the needs of their students. The quality of instruction that students need is too important to be left in the hands of the inadequately trained lecturers no matter how small or large their number. Entrepreneurship education lecturers must have knowledge, skills, attitude and self-efficacy on entrepreneurship. This study highlights major issues that need to be considered for achieving excellent

entrepreneurial competencies by HLIS lecturers. This study has mainly focussed on identifying entrepreneurial competencies and relevant educational qualifications which lecturers should be able to adopt teaching techniques that can encourage and enhance the entrepreneurial expertise of students. The study further underscores the importance of attitudes of lecturers toward the subject and mastery of pedagogical knowledge that will help them to modify their understanding regarding the subject contents that will be more suitable with students' abilities and background. Moreover, experience lecturers who show positive attitude to entrepreneurship education will be interested in the students and their teaching methodologies will motivate them.

### **1.3 Brief History of Entrepreneurship Education in Different Part of the World**

The importance of entrepreneurs to the national economic system has led to the development of entrepreneurship education in today's educational institutions. The early efforts to establish entrepreneurship training centers and schools began in the 1980s which can be traced back to the United States with increase in the offering of courses and programs. Some developed countries as well as other European countries such as Germany, Italy, Poland, Russia, Poland, and Bulgaria started the development of entrepreneurship education in their educational institutions. Entrepreneurship education has grown and received recognition by many universities like Harvard in the USA and colleges all over the world as an academic field and a major area of academic research (Paul, 2014). Earlier, a leading researcher (Katz, 2003) has developed the most detailed and comprehensive chronology of entrepreneurship education. He included economic and agricultural literature and experiences dating back to 1876. Courses in small business management began to emerge in the 1940s, and first the courses in entrepreneurship in USA at Harvard Business School were taught in 1947. The reality of entrepreneurship education as a force in business schools began in the early 1970s. By early 1980s, over 300 universities were reporting courses in entrepreneurship and small business and by the 1990s the number grew to 1,050 schools, and therefore its real emergence took place in 1980's (Solomon, et al., 2003). According to Vesper and Gartner (2001), a total of 504 US Schools were offering courses in entrepreneurship in the United States of America.

Compared to the evolution of entrepreneurship education in the USA, the field in Europe is relatively new but is rapidly emerging. A recent survey of entrepreneurship education in Europe revealed that entrepreneurship courses remain primary and are confined to electives status at some universities in Europe both at undergraduates and postgraduates levels. Mostly entrepreneurship courses were found to focus on start-ups, business planning, SMEs, business strategy (Dana, 1992).

In the UK, a research conducted by Khan and Almoharby (2007) and cited by Ismail (2010) stated that the programs that have encouraged entrepreneurship in higher learning institutions in the UK are: the New Enterprise Program (late 70's), The Graduate Enterprise Program (1983), and The Enterprise Development Program (1990). In addition, the formation of the National Council for Graduate Entrepreneurship (NCGE) in 2004 is a clear demonstration of intent (Collin et al., 2004). This is one of many UK initiatives that support enterprise. Others include the network of Science Enterprise Centers (UKSEC), National Council for Graduate Entrepreneurship (NCGE) and the Cambridge-Massachusetts Initiative. The University of Birmingham enterprise strategy was developed in 2001 and currently provides the Embedding Enterprise Education (E3) program.

In China awareness rising and skills development approach was developed. This was the approach chosen by Shanghai Jiaotong University. For decades, Shanghai Jiaotong University has built up its strength in science and technology. Based on this perceived competitive advantage, the university introduced entrepreneurship education to raise awareness of self-employment as an alternative option through the commercialization of Research and Development (R&D) outcomes. Moreover, the university organized a student business plan competition and set up innovation funds to support business ventures by students. In terms of Chinese culture, the notion of *guanxi* (or personal network relationship) is the key to successful entrepreneurship and small business development (Gibb & Li, 2003).

Little is known about entrepreneurship education in Africa. However, Kiggundu (2002) postulates that very few African universities offer specialized programs in entrepreneurship and suggests making entrepreneurship an integral part of the African education system. In the same vein, Visser (1997) suggests “realigning places of higher learning” in South Africa given the fact that universities have ignored the methodologies of opportunity identification and the spawning of



entrepreneurial talent. In all evidence, they call for entrepreneurship education to be integrated into the curriculum at African universities. In other words, they recognize that the education system in Africa is lagging behind in terms of integrating entrepreneurship education into the curricula.

### **1.3.1 Entrepreneurship Education in Malaysia**

The interest in entrepreneurship education is closely related to the economic contribution of small firms, especially in the context of job creation and wealth generation (Falkang & Alberty, 2000). Entrepreneurship education is an important national agenda and is pursued relentlessly by various stakeholders in Malaysia. Apart from the increasing number of programs offered at the higher learning institutions, there is also a growing interest in research on entrepreneurship and entrepreneurship education in Malaysia. Entrepreneurship is greatly emphasized and viewed as a major thrust for economic development as outlined in the Malaysia plans and the New Economic Model policy. This stress on entrepreneurship as an engine of growth has led to increase in interest in and research on the area of entrepreneurship and entrepreneurship education (Mason, 2011).

Various policy measures have been undertaken by the government of Malaysia with the aims of achieving the goal of complementing and exposing graduates to the world of entrepreneurship in terms of providing them with relevant skills and knowledge. One populous entrepreneurial policy is known as Malaysia Entrepreneurial Development Policy (MEDP) which was created by the Minister of Higher Education and to be applied at the Malaysian Higher Education Institutes. This policy was created to promote and enhance the development of entrepreneurship more holistically and well-organized among local universities, polytechnics, diploma colleges in country in order to attain these entrepreneurial objectives. In addition, Entrepreneurship Awareness Component (EAC) was also introduced with the aims to bring awareness to students on the importance of entrepreneurship learning and inculcate entrepreneurial values in order to starts at an early stage in the students' learning. As a first cornerstone step, Ministry of Higher Education created entrepreneurial module called Basic Culture of Entrepreneurship Module or Asas Pembudayaan Keusahawanan (APK) which was introduced in 2007 as a compulsory course of two (2) credits for Year 1 in all of Higher Education Institutions in

Malaysia. Concerns about entrepreneurship education in Malaysia were heightened by government's desire to promote small scale and medium enterprises (SMEs), the issue of lowering graduate unemployment and discouraging the general attitude of the graduate to depend squarely on government and other organized private sector for paid jobs (Mazura & Norasmah, 2011a).

In 1975, the MARA Institute of Technology (ITM) established the Malaysian Entrepreneurship Development Centre (MEDEC), to help develop entrepreneurship and train indigenous Bumiputeras. Specifically, the main purpose of the center is to encourage research and publication in the field of entrepreneurship. It also placed much emphasis on the training of entrepreneurship education teachers and students (Dana 2001). The University Utara Malaysia (UUM) introduced an entrepreneurship program targeted for students. The program named Student Enterprise Program (SEP), was developed to increase the number of entrepreneurs in Malaysia by inculcating entrepreneurial values among students. The main aim of the program is to train students to become business entrepreneurs and to allow them to experience real-world practices, to inculcate entrepreneurial skills among students and to train students to be independent and own their business (Mazura & Norasmah, 2011).

The cooperative and Entrepreneurship Development Institute was established and later upgraded in 1993 to become an institution that could assist the development of entrepreneurial activities in Malaysia. One of the objectives of the institution is to produce student entrepreneurs based on acquired knowledge through business program (Ismail, 2010).

In addition, awareness of the importance of entrepreneurship education in academic and co-curricular activities is increasing. This has led to a variety of entrepreneurial training programs in Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) which includes the offering of core academic courses, elective courses, entrepreneurial programs, a Bachelor's of Entrepreneurship, and post-graduate courses. Several universities have a special support structure that serves as centers of excellence for small businesses, providing services to students and SME entrepreneurs. These centers include the Entrepreneurship Development Institute at UUM, Malaysia Entrepreneur Development Centre (MEDEC) at UiTM, Small Business Development Centre at the UPM, Bureau of Innovation and Consultancy (BIP) at UTM, and Innovation and Consultancy Centre at USM. Therefore, it is not surprising that entrepreneurial education is one strategy implemented in the Third Outline

Perspective Plan (OPP 3rd) with a view to increasing the number of skilled human resources as well as fostering the ability to develop and promote technological innovation and business to achieve a commercial and industrial community by 2020 (Norasmah et al., 2012).

Another effort was the establishment of the University Enterprise Networks (UENs) launched on 20 November, 2008, which appears to be the first network managed by the National Council for Graduate Entrepreneurship (NCGE). The UENs aim is to establish a culture of enterprise in universities by providing training, advice and encouragement to students and graduates who want to develop actualize their business ideas or wish to become innovative employees. Each network will be further supported by sponsorship from privately owned companies and Regional Development Agencies (RDAs); which in turn will give students first-hand experience of enterprising workplaces, (Raja, 2011a).

In Universiti Teknologi MARA Malaysia (UiTM), 'Projek Tunas Mekar,' was initiated by the former Prime Minister of Malaysia, Tun Abdullah Ahmad Badawi. The primary objectives of this project are twofold: to expose graduates to the world of entrepreneurship and to improve the performance of small and medium enterprises (SME) in Malaysia. In this project, the academic entrepreneur trains graduates and further equips them with new management techniques. This involves placing them with SMEs as apprentices for a period of between one to two years. In this way they will learn valuable firsthand experience, which will in turn stimulate their interest to concentrate on choosing to become entrepreneurs as a career choice. Thus it seems that the definition of an entrepreneurial university is developed from an entrepreneurial academic perspective, either through developing new firms, organizations and patterns; or developing individual staff academics and graduates to be more entrepreneurial (Raj, 2011).

According to Raja (2011), in Malaysia, most public universities offer entrepreneurship courses as a core subject at the first degree level. The introduction of this course to all students is in line with the education goals of the HEIs, designed to assist the economic development of the country. These are first to develop human potential by providing training in various fields; second is to create a trained group that will later serve as the nation's human capital.

In Malaysian Polytechnics, an entrepreneurship module comprising forty five hours is offered to students as one of the subjects under the Business Studies Program. In

addition, entrepreneurship is also integrated through the co-curriculum module as across sectional discipline in Semester II, for every student, for four hours per semester (Ismail, 2010).

The Higher Education Entrepreneurship Development Policy was launched on 13<sup>th</sup> April 2010 in order to enhance the Entrepreneurship Program. The aim of this policy is to encourage the development of a more holistic and well organized Entrepreneurship Program. The implementation of the policy is aimed at producing graduates from institutions of higher education who have entrepreneurial attitudes and thinking. In addition, the Policy aim is to encourage the development of human capital,. The main goal of this policy is to produce quality human capital consisting of graduates who possess the attributes and values of entrepreneurship (Pastae & Railalenu, 2010). The detail information of Malaysian entrepreneurship education is provided in chapter 2 of this study.

### **1.3.2 Entrepreneurship Education in Nigeria**

The history of Nigerian education system could be traced back to the colonial period, the educational policy then was geared toward serving the interest of the colonial masters in terms of supply of manpower for their effective administration of Nigerian colony and protectorates (Aladekomo, 2004). The policy was aimed at producing Nigerians who could read and write to hold certain positions such as clerks, interpreters, and inspectors, but without any entrepreneurial or professional skill to stand on their own or even establish and manage their own venture. The Nigerian industrial policy that came immediately after independence placed emphasis and concentrated on the establishment of big companies by completely neglecting the development of small scale sectors (Aladekomo, 2004). This neglect invariably means discouraging entrepreneurship at the micro level in Nigeria at the very beginning, although it is considered to be very essential for economic growth and development. The over pressing demand for white collar job for majority of graduates is just an upshot of colonial educational policies reported by Garba (2010).

However, later in the mid-70s, the government, because of perceived importance of small scale industries to the economy decides to focus attention on small and medium sector. Thirteen industrial centers and some institutions were set up to support the activities of entrepreneurs in the small and median industries in the

country. Institutions set up were Nigeria Industrial Bank (NIB), Nigeria Bank for Commerce and Industries (NBCI), Nigeria Agricultural and Cooperative Bank (NACB) etc. In 1981, the National policy on education was developed by the government to link the policy with the issue of self-employment creation with its industrial policy.

Moreover, with the turning out of graduates from various institutions into the labor market, it was realized that if some measures are not taken, there is every tendency that the situation can escalate the rate of poverty and corruption and other social vices especially among the youth (Garba 2010). Hence it was proposed that in the first place, the government should encourage diversification of the economy through adequate support for private establishments and practical acquisition of skills in all higher institutions. It was against this backdrop that the need to redefine and refocus the current system of education with a view to creating and enhancing the supply of entrepreneurship Initiatives and activities was adopted (Akpomi, 2008).

The Federal Government directed all tertiary education regulatory agencies (National Universities Commission, National Board for Technical Education, and National Commission for Colleges of Education) to establish necessary mechanisms for the introduction, development and sustenance of entrepreneurial culture among Nigerian youths. This paved the way for a well-planned and implemented Entrepreneurship Education Program in Higher Education Institutions in Nigeria in the year 2008 when the program took up (Abubakar, 2007).

In line with the federal government's directives on entrepreneurship education, the National Board for Technical Education (NBTE), the supervisory body of all Nigerian Polytechnics, developed the curriculum, teacher's guide and training manuals for entrepreneurship education for the National and Higher National Diploma. The NBTE has in particular designed three courses, Introduction to Entrepreneurship, Practice of Entrepreneurship at diploma level and Entrepreneurship Development at HND level, to all Polytechnics under its jurisdiction. 'Master Trainers' were organized locally and internationally to boost in-house capacity of polytechnics lecturers competencies in the management of the entrepreneurship study centers (ESC) set up (Haruna,2010).

Based on the government directives, whether public or private institution of higher learning, regardless of the department, (engineering, business management, science departments etc.), all the universities and Polytechnics students must take

and pass all entrepreneurship education courses before graduation. Special and comprehensive courses were designed and organized specifically to enhance entrepreneurship education lecturers' entrepreneurial competencies in order to meet the new challenges in the discipline. The detail information about entrepreneurship education in Nigeria is also provided in Chapter 2.

#### **1.4 Problem Statement**

Entrepreneurship has become an important economic vehicle to nation's growth because of its contributions towards wealth creation, employment creation as well as poverty reduction and innovation. Nowadays it is a household name because even the policymakers and academics are talking about its enormous contribution to wealth creation and unemployment reduction. In educational institutions, seminars, conferences and workshops are being organized all over the world specifically to discuss on the important roles which entrepreneurship can play in nation building as well as individual development (Keat et al., 2011). Currently, entrepreneurship is viewed as one of the most important economic strategies to develop country's economic growth and sustain the country's competitiveness in facing the increasing trends of globalization. The greater majority of the people currently attribute the popularity of entrepreneurship mostly to the positive effects it has on many countries as a catalyst that creates wealth and the generation of job opportunities. Countries with higher increase on entrepreneurial initiative indexes tend to show a greater reduction in unemployment rates (Li, 2011).

Entrepreneurship education in higher learning institutions in both developed and developing nations like China, Japan Bulgaria, Indonesia Kenya, Ghana and Nigeria have come a long way since the first entrepreneurship course was introduced in Kobe University in 1938. There was consensus of opinion amongst experts that the purpose of university entrepreneurship education is basically two-fold. Namely, to contribute to the creation and development of entrepreneurial attitudes and motivations for new venture creation as well as developing the skills needed to successfully run and manage new venture profitably. The current increasing demand for higher education and the changing knowledge structures in government and the educational sector, as well as societal demands has given rise to interests towards choosing entrepreneurship as a viable career option in universities and also a

potential remedy to graduates and youth unemployment (Byrne & Fayolle, 2010). New venture creation in a modern economy requires skills and competencies which are presently not necessarily readily available within today's universities.

The recent interests about entrepreneurship education in Malaysia were influenced at least by three important factors, namely;

- government enormous funding allocation for the promotion of entrepreneurship especially for the development of small and medium enterprises;
- the issue of graduate unemployment which had risen to approximately sixty thousand (60,000) which is about 3%; and
- the attitude of current graduates who were seen to be too pampered and too dependent on the government and private organizations for employment (Raja, 2011).

According to Malaysia Education Blueprint 2015-2020, the implication of the rapid increase in the number of higher education institutions in Malaysia is that, each year has witnessed a remarkable rise in the number of graduates from both public and private higher educational institutions. As a result, it is very certain that large number of graduates will seek jobs and, without doubt, not all will be successful because some graduates preferred to get white collar jobs. In addition, some graduates lack the basic skills and knowledge to start their own businesses. As a result, serious attention was paid to entrepreneurial studies because of its enormous importance in supporting the economic drive of the national economy as well as in narrowing wealth differentials in the population. In fact, the discipline of entrepreneurship was recognized as one of the long-term strategies to address unemployment issue among graduates in the country. Moreover, entrepreneurship education is very important in equipping the graduates with a variety of skills and knowledge in order to produce successful entrepreneurs who are not only competitive locally but also globally. To this end, universities and other institutions of higher learning have been given the mandate to play a leading role in inculcating students with the entrepreneurial knowledge and skills that will be useful in their future career endeavors (Keat, 2011).

In Nigeria, the National Policy on Education (FRN 2008) made it clear on the need for functional, relevant and practical for acquisition of appropriate skills and development of competencies as effective equipment for the individuals to live in

and contribute to the development of his/her society. It was on this note that the Nigerian government directed the full implementation of entrepreneurship education in all public HLIs. This policy is intended to provide a long term solution to the problem of graduate unemployment in Nigeria. For example, Baba (2013) reported that about 80% of the graduates in Nigeria find it difficult to get employment every year. Graduates unemployment is rapidly increasing in Nigeria because of the mismatch between the needs of employers and stock of the job-seekers produced by the educational institutions that lack adequate knowledge and skills. It is the candid opinion of scholars in Nigeria such as Isaac (2013) and Baba (2013) that the inadequate entrepreneurial knowledge, attitude and skills on the part of lecturers that has been responsible for producing graduates without adequate entrepreneurial traits to start and manage their own businesses successfully. In order to provide solution to the identified challenges, Ojeifo, (2013) argued that the educational policies in Nigeria should be re-designed with a view to creating and enhancing the supply of entrepreneurial initiative and activities. The bottom line here is to inculcate the spirit of entrepreneurship in the student through education. In fact, this calls for more serious adjustment of policies and new curriculum in line with demand of the present time.

Despite the importance of entrepreneurship education, the effectiveness of the teaching techniques for entrepreneurship as well as the lecturers' disposition and skills are still unknown. For example, Kirby (2002) opined that the teaching of entrepreneurship courses remain relatively underdeveloped, despite the growing demand for more entrepreneurial-oriented graduates. The result of neglecting the teaching aspect is that most of the lecturers of entrepreneurship education do not seem to have the relevant entrepreneurship qualification and necessary competencies to teach the courses. Furthermore, Binks et al., (2006) also argued that understanding and developing entrepreneurship education requires an integrated research and teaching efforts. Peltonen (2008) emphasizes that it is crucial for lecturers to become more entrepreneurial if entrepreneurial learning should be improved among students. Particularly, lecturers need to act in an entrepreneurial way in discovering opportunities and innovatively exploiting them. Entrepreneurship lecturers should apply innovative teaching methods, cope with various challenges of teaching entrepreneurship and engage students in the process and challenges of entrepreneurship learning (Adedoyin, 2010). Furthermore, entrepreneurship lecturers



should have a strong motivation to teach and maintain their motivation through the whole process of instructional delivery (Fiet, 2000). Self-efficacy highly improves teachers' motivation and abilities to teach effectively in educational instructions (Tschannen-Moran et al., 1998).

A research conducted by Ismail (2010) in Malaysian polytechnics indicated that entrepreneurship education teaching approaches appear to be inappropriate and some lecturers do not appear to have relevant skills, knowledge or training. There are so many shortcomings and challenges which the entrepreneurship lecturers are facing. One of them is that entrepreneurship education curriculum are too theoretical and to some extent not effective and need to be improved. There is also poor infrastructural facilities. Added to that is lecturers are not properly trained and almost do not have the relevant entrepreneurial teaching qualifications (Ismail, 2010). In addition, the entrepreneurial course content, pedagogical issues, new learning approaches, characteristics of lecturers, and students all require a comprehensive study to understand (Schieb, 2004).

In general, there are common perceived reasons as to why some graduates of tertiary institutions nowadays are unemployed. This is because according to a study conducted in Malaysia, most universities and polytechnics are not producing “work ready” graduates because the systems are too exams-oriented because lecturers lack relevant competence and practical experiences (Ismail, 2010). Most of the higher institutions of learning graduates were competent theory-wise, but have no sufficient practical exposure. This is because the lecturers teaching entrepreneurship education does not possess the requisite skills and knowledge to teach their students effectively, and hence they do not encourage creativity and practical skills (Shah, 2008).

In a related study conducted in Malaysia by Nasrudin & Othman (2012) it is revealed that only 1.9% of polytechnic graduates chose to be self-employed because curriculum is too theoretical and do not encourage creativity and innovativeness. Above all, lecturers lack knowledge, some are without entrepreneurship skills and the mastery of teaching of entrepreneurship courses. Similarly, Ismail (2011) observed that the lecturers' teaching method is not appropriate and is too abstract and therefore is difficult for the students to understand. Mostly, only entrepreneurship theory is taught, but the practical implications are mostly not discussed in the lectures. Hence, the curricula must equip students with the appropriate skills needed to enable them to compete in an ever-changing labour market demand. In addition,

the curricular must be handled by competent lecturers otherwise the aim will not be achieved. Thus, there is awareness of some general problems with the teaching and the curriculum but research is needed to ascertain exactly what these are from the perspective of the different stakeholders such as students, lecturers and the Ministry Education.

In Nigeria, the ineffectiveness of the teaching entrepreneurship education courses is mostly attributed to the theoretical aspects of the syllabus as well as of lack of qualified and competent lecturers. The course contents in Nigerian universities gave more emphasis on the theoretical aspects and less on the practical skills (Ifedili & Ofoegu, 2011). They further stressed that about 60% of the lecturers teaching entrepreneurship courses in Nigerian HLIs are not adequately trained and do not possess the relevant entrepreneurial educational qualifications to teach the courses effectively. Gabadeen & Raimi, (2012) argued that one of the key issues stifling the growth of the entrepreneurship education in Nigeria is inadequate and qualified lecturers in the field of entrepreneurship to make the course practical, interesting and goal oriented to students. Akpomi, (2009) maintained that for any educational system to be functional and relevant, practical acquisition of skills and the development of entrepreneurial competencies as an avenue to contribute to the development of his society must be emphasized. This means that the quality of instruction at all levels has to be oriented towards inculcating the values of acquisition of requisite entrepreneurial competencies necessary for self-reliance and reducing poverty. This is where entrepreneurship education as a course of study as well as having qualified and competent lecturers with entrepreneurial skills and knowledge must be properly married.

It is very clear from the foregoing statements that there exist wide gap in the implementation of entrepreneurship education in HLIs in Malaysia and Nigeria. This is reflected in the imbalance in entrepreneurship education to produce students with the correct entrepreneurial attributes. Such instances of imbalances in entrepreneurship education are supported by Isaac (2013), Ismail (2010), Gabadeen & Raimi (2012) and Nasrudin & Othman (2010). The quality of the graduates produced by HLIs in both countries will entirely depend on the quality of the lecturers. These researchers further maintain that there is limited research deliberation within core elements of entrepreneurship education especially training programs to enhance lecturers' entrepreneurial competence. Similarly, Van (1991)

suggests that large gaps exist between research, education and entrepreneurial practice. Van (1991) stressed that entrepreneurship education are concentrated on the students and very little is done on the lecturers educational qualifications, their competence and entrepreneurial teaching capabilities. She calls on future researchers to address these gaps. Her view is shared by many eminent scholars such as the Katz (2003), Brush, et al, (2003) and Shane, (2011).

In view of the earlier discussion, it has now become very vital to conduct a comprehensive study on lecturers' of HLIs educational qualifications, teaching competencies and the challenges faced by the teaching of entrepreneurship in order to develop lecturers' entrepreneurial competencies, student learning abilities and the subsequent attainment of HLIs' goals and objectives. Lecturers' entrepreneurial competencies, educational qualifications and their training needs are areas that have not been covered by any modern day entrepreneurial research. One of the major current research issue in the field of entrepreneurship education is to find out to what degree the entrepreneurship teaching program in HLIs can influence students' entrepreneurial competencies and new venture creation (Hytii & Koupusjarvi, 2004; Moro et al., 2004).

Developing an enterprising culture and attitude especially amongst the youths and HLIs graduates requires education and training that will ensure that learners are active and that learning activities involve the use of practical exercises. The European Commission (2011) opined that entrepreneurship education and training require active, learner-centered trainings and learning activities that use hands-on learning opportunities from the real world. This is to ensure that 'learning for entrepreneurship' will enable students to take responsibility for learning to experiment, push boundaries and learn about themselves (Nab and Lans, 2012). The formal education especially in some developing countries like Nigeria has fully imbibed the culture of entrepreneurship (Essia, 2012).

This study therefore presents some of the strategies being used in examining the most relevant entrepreneurial competencies of HLIs lecturers in Malaysia and Nigeria that can assist them in their new role of entrepreneurial learning in addition to their traditional roles. Part of the strategy aimed at promoting entrepreneurial culture among the students in HLIs is the recognition of the importance of working with all academics. Previous empirical studies indicate that higher education has been a poor contributor to graduates' entrepreneurial skills (Allen and Van Der Velden, 2009). This is because

lecturers are considered a weak link in introducing real changes to the experience of students, especially in entrepreneurship education (McCoshan, Witte and Westerheijden, 2010). Other scholars have also noted that students' entrepreneurial motivation and competences can be highly influenced by lecturers' attitude toward self-efficacy in entrepreneurship (Pihie and Bagheri, 2011; Bayraktar, 2011). Any effort at developing students' entrepreneurial competence should therefore take into consideration the competence and attitude of the lecturers in entrepreneurship.

It is in light of this that the study makes a case for a thorough research on entrepreneurship education especially on lecturers' entrepreneurial competence, relevant entrepreneurship educational qualifications and their teaching performance. There are some issues concerning the graduates of HLIs in Malaysia such as rising unemployment among graduates, a mismatch between the skills of graduates and the requirements of employers and the shrinkage of employment in the public sector (Annie & Hamali, 2006). It is strongly believed that the only way to reduce the high unemployment and poverty rates as well as depending on public employment in any country is to equip the students with such needed skills, knowledge and attitudes that would make them truly self-reliant and self-sustaining in the society. This can only be achieved with competent and experienced lecturers as well as relevant educational qualifications capable of enhancing their teaching performance (EC, 2011).

## **1.5 Research Questions**

In order to address the mentioned problems, the following research questions were developed.

- To what extent were the current entrepreneurial competencies among lecturers teaching entrepreneurship courses in higher learning institutions (HLIs) in Malaysia and Nigeria?
- To what extent does entrepreneurial competencies and relevant entrepreneurship educational qualifications can influence the lecturers' teaching performance?
- What were the relationships between the lecturers' entrepreneurial competencies and their teaching performance in HLIs in Malaysia and Nigeria?

- What were the most relevant entrepreneurship educational qualifications needed by the lecturers for teaching entrepreneurship courses in HLIs in Malaysia and Nigeria?
- What were the relationships between the lecturers' relevant entrepreneurship educational qualifications and their teaching performance?
- What were the challenges facing entrepreneurship education program in HLIs in Malaysia and Nigeria?

### **1.5.1 Research Objectives**

In view of the limited research work especially on entrepreneurial competencies among lecturers of entrepreneurship education, this study believes that it is necessary to investigate the entrepreneurial competencies needed by lecturers in teaching entrepreneurship in HLIs and to examine the relationship between these competencies and their teaching performance. Based on that, the research objectives of the study outlined were as follows:

- To determine the entrepreneurial competencies perceived to be important to HLIs' lecturers in teaching entrepreneurship courses in Malaysia and Nigeria.
- To examine the influence of the entrepreneurial competencies and the relevant entrepreneurship educational qualifications of lecturers' teaching performance.
- To examine the relationship between entrepreneurial competencies and lecturers' teaching performance.
- To find out the relevant entrepreneurship educational qualifications needed by the lecturers teaching entrepreneurship courses in HLIs.
- To analyze the relationship between lecturers' relevant entrepreneurship educational qualifications and their teaching performance
- To identify the various challenges facing entrepreneurship education programs.

### **1.6 Research Model and Hypotheses**

The general research model for this study is showed in Figure 3.2 in Chapter 3. This model was built based on the extensive literature in Chapter 2 and pre-determined

variables obtained from interviews on entrepreneurial competencies needed by the entrepreneurship lecturers in teaching entrepreneurship courses. The concept of entrepreneurial competencies needed by lecturers in their teaching work comprises of 3 groups of competencies, skills, knowledge and attitudes. The level of education is also included in the model as part of the independent variables. The teaching performance of the lecturers is considered as the dependent variable. The three main hypotheses of the study were stated below:

### **1.6.1 Hypotheses**

Three main hypotheses were developed in this study. All these hypotheses were strictly based on the available literatures and previous related studies in chapter 2. The hypotheses developed were based on the conceptual model presented in chapter 3. The following three general hypotheses of the study are postulated as follows:

- H<sub>1</sub>: There is a significant relationship between entrepreneurial competencies and entrepreneurial teaching performance.
- H<sub>1a</sub>: There is a significant relationship between skills and entrepreneurial teaching performance.
- H<sub>1b</sub>: There is a significant relationship between knowledge and entrepreneurial teaching performance.
- H<sub>1c</sub>: There is a significant relationship between attitude and teaching performance.
- H<sub>2</sub>: There is a significant relationship between entrepreneurial competencies and entrepreneurial educational qualification.
- H<sub>2a</sub>: There is a significant relationship between skills and entrepreneurial educational qualification.
- H<sub>2b</sub>: There is a significant relationship between knowledge and entrepreneurial educational qualification.
- H<sub>2c</sub>: There is a significant relationship between attitudes and entrepreneurial educational qualification.
- H<sub>3</sub>: There is a significant relationship between entrepreneurial educational qualification and entrepreneurial teaching performance.

## **1.7 The Scope of the Study**

The topic of this study has offered so many research opportunities for the academics as well as students of entrepreneurship education. It has been considered as very important to define its scope so that the study will ever remain very manageable. In the first place, the geographic location of the study is only limited to Malaysia and Nigeria. The study intended to cover all the public universities and polytechnics in Malaysia and Nigeria.

Therefore, the target audience for this study is the HLIs lecturers in Malaysia and Nigeria who are currently teaching entrepreneurship education courses. The study has only covered public universities and polytechnics that fall within the sample frame. It is not practically possible to cover the entire public universities and polytechnics in this current study specifically due to limited resources and time constraint. In view of the above, the sample sizes as well as the sample frame for the studies are clearly defined. The study has used purposive sampling techniques to select respondents from HLIs from Malaysia and Nigeria. The purposive sampling techniques were employed purposely to select the lecturers purely because of their knowledge and expertise in the field of entrepreneurship education. Hence the scope of this study is only limited to the HLIs teaching entrepreneurship courses in public universities and polytechnics in Malaysia and Nigeria. The study explored the entrepreneurial competencies and other related issues of the target audience who are the entrepreneurship education lecturers in Malaysian and Nigerian HLIs.

## **1.8 Operational Definitions**

In order to get a meaningful understanding of the terms used in the thesis, it is very important to provide some useful definitions. The following definitions are therefore provided:

### **1.8.1 Entrepreneur**

According to Timmons and Spinelli (2003), entrepreneur is defined as an innovator or developer who recognizes and seizes opportunities, converts those opportunities into workable or marketable ideas, adds value through time, effort, money or skills,

assumes the risks of the competitive marketplace to implement these ideas and realizes the rewards from these efforts.

### **1.8.2 Entrepreneurship**

Shane and Venkataraman (2007) defined entrepreneurship as “a process through which opportunities to create future goods and services are discovered, evaluated and exploited”. They argue that the field of entrepreneurship involves the study of sources of opportunities; the process of discovery, evaluation, and exploitation of opportunities. Entrepreneurship is about learning skills needed to assume the risk of establishing a business, (Inegbenbor, 2006).

### **1.8.3 Entrepreneurship Education**

Entrepreneurship education is defined as “the structured formal conveyance of entrepreneurial competencies, which in turn refer to the concepts, skills and mental awareness used by individuals during the process of starting and developing their growth-oriented ventures” (Alberti, et al., (2004:5). In other words, entrepreneurship education can be defined as a process of providing individuals with the ability to recognize business opportunities and think in an innovative manner as well as the skills, knowledge and attitudes to act on them.

### **1.8.4 Entrepreneurial Competencies**

It refers to the sum of the entrepreneur’s requisite attributes for successful and sustainable entrepreneurship which include attitude, values, beliefs, knowledge, attitudes and skills, (Cunningham & Lischeron, 1991). It is therefore competencies include those clusters of related knowledge; attitudes and skills which an entrepreneur must acquire through managerial training and development to enable him produce outstanding performance, and maximize profit, while managing a business venture (Iyang, 2009). Competency is a term used extensively by different people in different contexts. To be specific, a competency has its linkage with all the three domains of knowledge, skills and attitude. An entrepreneurial teacher is expected to assist his students in learning of knowledge as well as their understandings and intellectual skills (Izquierdo & Buyens, 2008).



## **1.8.5 Operational Terms**

### **1.8.5.1 Entrepreneurial Skills**

These are skills that enable entrepreneurs to turn their business idea into feasible business opportunities, to start and to grow a business enterprise. It includes creativity, innovation, risk taking, and the ability to take successful entrepreneurial role models and identification of market opportunities (Darroch & Clover, 2005).

### **1.8.5.2 Teaching Performance**

The 'term teaching performance' refers to the conduct of instruction: posing questions, providing explanations, giving directions, showing approval, engaging in the myriad instructional acts that an educator performs in the classroom (Rao 2001).

### **1.8.5.3 Polytechnic Lecturers**

This refers to polytechnic academic staff that are teaching entrepreneurship education courses at Higher National Diploma, Diploma and Certificate levels in polytechnics in Nigeria and Malaysia.

### **1.8.5.4 University Lecturer**

This refers to university academic staff that are responsible for the teaching entrepreneurship education courses at degrees/higher degrees, Diploma and Certificate levels in universities in Nigeria and Malaysia (TRCN, 2010).

### **1.8.5.5 Lecturer**

The term lecturer or teacher is used in this thesis to mean anyone who is doing the work of teaching irrespective of whether the person concerned is teaching in nursery, primary, secondary or any higher learning institutions such as universities and polytechnics. The terms teacher and lecturer can be used interchangeably to mean the same thing (FME, 2009).

### **1.8.5.6 Entrepreneurship Educational Qualifications**

This refers to those academic or professional degrees that enable a person to become a qualified entrepreneurship teacher in primary or secondary schools or HLIs. Such educational qualifications include, but are not limited to, Bachelor degrees, master degrees and PhD (Lucky, 2013).

## **1.9 Structure of the Thesis**

Chapter 1 introduces the concept of entrepreneurship and its socio-economic importance in a modern economy. The chapter also covers the background of the study where entrepreneurship education and its overview in Nigeria and Malaysia are briefly discussed. The research problems, research questions, research objectives, significance of the study and the scope and limitations of the study are fully discussed.

Chapter 2 explains the term entrepreneurship education and its historical development and reviews some theories and models that are relevant to the teaching of entrepreneurship education in tertiary institutions. Entrepreneurial and lecturers competencies are also discussed.

Chapter 3 was specially designed to cover the research methodology of this study. It also covered the research design, research framework, research instruments and sampling techniques. The reliability and validity of the research were fully discussed in the chapter.

Chapters 4 and 5 contained the research findings and research analysis of the data collected from the administered questionnaires from Malaysian and Nigerian HLIs respectively. All collected data were fully processed and professionally analyzed through the use of 3 different statistical techniques namely descriptive statistics, correlations and regressions analyses.

Chapter 6 covered the research discussions from Malaysian and Nigeria data, conclusion and recommendations. It also summarized the research findings and clearly spelt out the differences between Malaysian and Nigerian entrepreneurial policies and programs. The chapter 6 also provided the major lessons Nigeria can learn from Malaysian experience. The chapter concludes by suggesting future research in the field of entrepreneurship. Figure 1.2 below presented the summary of the thesis in a pictorial form.

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