

## THE INFLUENCE OF ENTREPRENEURSHIP EDUCATION ON BELIEFS, ATTITUDES AND INTENTIONS: A CROSS-SECTIONAL STUDY OF AFRICA UNIVERSITY GRADUATES

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### ABSTRACT

**T**he importance of entrepreneurship and small businesses activity to the development of any country cannot be overemphasized; this study attempts to analyze the influence of entrepreneurship education on beliefs, attitudes and intentions of Africa University alumni that graduated from the Faculty of Management and Administration (FMA) who took an elective course of Entrepreneurship and Small Business Management in their final year of study. A cross-sectional survey using self-administered mail questionnaire was used on a population of 438 alumni that graduated between 2009 and 2012; a sample of 60 business graduates ( $X_1$ ) and another sample of 60 non-business graduates ( $X_2$ ) was selected. The study suggests that alumni who took an Entrepreneurial course have high rating scores on most indicators of entrepreneurship. It is therefore recommended that the entrepreneurship education be a core and integral component of the study curricula for all students irrespective of their chosen area of study.

**Key words:** Entrepreneurship Education, Beliefs, Attitudes, Intentions and University Graduates

## 1.0 Introduction

Universities and other institutions of higher learning have realized the growing importance of entrepreneurship activity and small businesses to employment creation, innovation and ultimately economic development as thousands of small companies are being formed everyday (Brown, 1999 and Hatten, 2003). This realization has led to a growing policy interest in entrepreneurship both at the local, national and international level. Timmons and Sinnelli (2006) noted an explosion in small business formation and rapid growth in the number of people choosing to become entrepreneurs. Increasingly, both academics and public authorities view entrepreneurship as a contributor to economic development (Hytti and Kuopusjarvi, 2004) and as one of the best, among other economic development strategies, to accelerate a country's economic growth; sustain a country's competitiveness in facing the increasing threats and in seizing the opportunities offered by globalization (Venkatachalam and Waqif, 2005).

Consequently, most developing countries now view entrepreneurship as a catalyst that spurs national prosperity; a panacea for their development and employment challenges and the government of Zimbabwe, for example, in its National Policy and Strategy Framework for Small, Micro and Medium Enterprises (2002), regards entrepreneurship and the development of the small business sector as crucial for the achievement of broader development objectives such as poverty alleviation, spreading employment to rural areas, improving the situation of women and increasing indigenous ownership of enterprises and investment in the country.

More so, entrepreneurship education is one antecedent that has received substantial attention on the basis of its assumed positive relationship with one's choice to become an entrepreneur (Dickson, Solomon and Weaver, 2008). Courses on entrepreneurship are offered by most schools of management or business and show a pattern of rapidly growing enrolments in recent years (Baron and Shane, 2008) while it was noted that close to 78% of the top US institutions of higher learning have programs that offer courses in entrepreneurship and small business management in their curricula whose structures vary from offering single courses in new business development or business plans preparation to integrated degree curricula that include other course business courses.

Given that the Zimbabwean economy, in the foreseeable future, will not be able to create enough jobs for the many university entrants to the labour market, graduates will increasingly have to develop their entrepreneurial skills and abilities to enable them to deal with life's current challenges and uncertain future (Henry, Hill and Leitch, 2005). Students are now increasingly searching for an education in business that can equip them with the necessary entrepreneurial knowledge and skills to succeed in running businesses or to create a job from seizing existing entrepreneurial opportunities (Brown, 1999 and Henry 2003); this study, therefore seeks to investigate the influence of entrepreneurship education on students' entrepreneurial beliefs, attitudes and intentions with the purpose is to understand whether it is necessary to invest in entrepreneurship education to contribute towards creation of more nascent entrepreneurs.

### 1.1 Statement of Problem

Many Universities and Colleges around the world have also responded to the demand for entrepreneurial graduates by introducing entrepreneurial courses as part of their curricula in an effort to promote entrepreneurship (Postigo and Tamborini, 2002). The assumption is that entrepreneurial education and training will influence inclinations and propensity towards entrepreneurship and hence students' career choice, by positively influencing their perceptions of its desirability and feasibility (Byabashaija, Katon and Isabalija, 2010).

However, there is a need to understand how entrepreneurship education influences students' entrepreneurship propensity; concurring with Kennedy, et al. (2003) that, if programs and policies are to be developed to enhance entrepreneurial behavior and post-education incidence of entrepreneurship, then an understanding of the factors that influence and shape an individual's intentions to go into entrepreneurship is critical. Very little research has been done in Zimbabwe to investigate the relationship between entrepreneurship education and entrepreneurial intentions, beliefs and attitudes of students despite the proliferation of entrepreneurship courses in educational institutions (Mauchi et al, 2011, Mangwende et al, 2011).

Therefore, this study is to investigate the impact of entrepreneurship education in influencing student beliefs, attitudes and intentions towards entrepreneurship; the study contributes to the growing discussion on entrepreneurship education in universities, particularly on entrepreneurial learning outcomes and how they are being achieved.

## **2.0 Literature Review**

### **2.1 Entrepreneurship Education**

Entrepreneurship education refers to a formal structured instruction that conveys entrepreneurial knowledge and develops in students, focused awareness relating to opportunity recognition and the creation of new ventures (Sexton and Smilor, 1997) while Martinez, et al. (2010) defined entrepreneurship education as the building of knowledge and skills about or for the purpose of entrepreneurship generally, as part of recognized education programmes at a primary, secondary or tertiary-level educational institution.

Jones and English (2004) defined entrepreneurship education as the process of providing individuals with the concepts and skills to recognize opportunities that others have overlooked and to have the insight, self-esteem and knowledge to act where others have hesitated. Entrepreneurship education is about transforming ideas into reality and consists of three ingredients, creativity; which is creating all kinds of ideas; innovation; which is finding value in the selected ideas; and entrepreneurship; which is developing a business from the innovative idea. Binks (2005) added that entrepreneurship education refers to the pedagogical process involved in the encouragement of entrepreneurial activities behaviors and mind-set and seeks to provide students with the knowledge, skills and motivation to encourage entrepreneurial success in a variety of settings.

Entrepreneurship education has also been lauded for being able to create and increase awareness of, as well as promote self-employment as a career choice among young people. There has been renewed interest in Zimbabwe in encouraging a culture of entrepreneurship and tertiary education institutions are involved in the process (Mauchi, et al, 2011). Further efforts to incorporate entrepreneurship education are being made through compulsory integration into formal curriculum offerings, vocationalization of the curriculum, skills provision with secondary focus on entrepreneurship and extra-mural programmes.

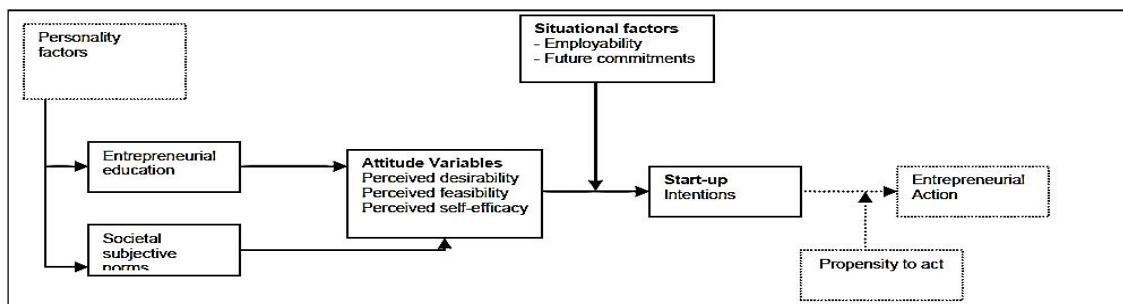
#### **2.1.1 Entrepreneurial Motivations and Intentions**

Entrepreneurial orientation is critical to the survival and growth of firms as well as economic prosperity of nations hence it is crucial for the process of entrepreneurial development to be promoted at societal level of countries. Entrepreneurial orientation is fostered by, among other things, a unique blend of factors such as culture, family, role models, education, work experience and personal orientation. Researchers have focused on a wide array of potential drivers, motivations or antecedents, of entrepreneurial activity (Ahmed, et al, 2010). It is widely acknowledged that individuals who chose entrepreneurship as an alternative career are subjected to various push and pull factors that ultimately determine and shape their chosen entrepreneurial paths (Matlay and Storey, 2003).

Entrepreneurial action is most often intentional. Intentions capture the motivational factors that influence people's behavior and orientation towards a certain disposition- an indication of how hard people are willing to try, how much of an effort they are planning to exert in order to perform the behavior (Ajzen, 1991). Individuals have an intention to act when the action is perceived to be both feasible and desirable. The perception of feasibility has much to do with an entrepreneur's self-efficacy which refers to the conviction that one has what it takes to successfully execute the behavior that is required. People with high self-efficacy tend to perform well. High self-efficacy leads to increased initiative and persistence and thus improved performance whilst low self-efficacy reduces effort and thus performance (Hisrich, et al, 2008).

Byabashaija, Katon and Isabahje (2010) approach singles out entrepreneurial education, personality factors, societal subjective norms and situational factors from the wider spectrum of environmental factors and explores their influence as contributing factors in shaping student attitudes towards entrepreneurship careers. Perceived desirability refers to an individual's attitude towards entrepreneurial action, the degree to which she has a favorable or unfavorable evaluation of the potential entrepreneurial outcomes. For example, creative actions are not likely to emerge unless they produce personal rewards that are perceived as relatively more desirable than more familiar behaviors (Ford and Gioia, 1995).

**Figure 1.0: Conceptual Model**



Source: Adapted from Byabashaija et al (2010)

Peterman and Kennedy (2003) examined the influence of an enterprise education program on perceptions of both the desirability and feasibility of business creation and found a positive effect. The results also indicate that self-efficacy theory is a useful tool for explaining the impact of an entrepreneurial education program. A number of factors can influence individuals' perceptions of, and need for entrepreneurship education and vocational training (Mitra and Matlay, 2004). Prior research has also shown that personality traits have a strong influence individuals' orientation towards entrepreneurship or intentions to start new ventures (Koh, 1996; Mueller and Thomas, 2001; Robinson et al., 1991) but these studies do not consider the moderating effect of higher education (Ertuna and Gruel, 2011).

### 2.1.2 Entrepreneurship Education in Zimbabwe

Despite the Zimbabwean government's desire for the country to have more entrepreneurs who initiate business start-ups, innovate and create new technologies, products and create business opportunities, it is of great concern that the Zimbabwe higher education curriculum does not explicitly promote entrepreneurship and there is a cursory interest among institutions of higher learning. Mauchi, et al (2011) noted that most higher education institutions in Zimbabwe do offer one entrepreneurship course mainly restricted to business students, normally during the last semester of their four year training period and for some institutions taking the course is optional for these graduating students. They further noted in their findings that lecturers

teaching entrepreneurship in these institutions have little or no practical experience in running their own businesses and most have not had formal training in teaching entrepreneurship. Traditional lecturing is the most basic tool used and examination is the main assessment method used by the tertiary institutions. There is lack of support from higher education institutions administration and government as there is no budget for entrepreneurship education hence, no resources to train students effectively.

Consequently, there is an increasing interest in Zimbabwe to encourage a culture of entrepreneurship heightened by, among others, the government's indigenization and youth empowerment programs and the need to address the issue of graduate unemployment, employment creation and reduce dependence on government for grants to alleviate poverty. The Government of Zimbabwe through the Ministry of Small to Medium enterprises introduced a range of policies to encourage educational institutions to develop entrepreneurial education and training programs (Nyoni, 2004).

### **2.1.3 The Influence of Entrepreneurship Education**

Empirical studies exploring the extent to which entrepreneurial education influences the decision to become an entrepreneur are steadily increasing (Byabashaija, Katono and Isabalija, 2010, Muofhe and Du Toit, 2011) and they have mostly found a positive impact of entrepreneurship education courses/programs at universities on perceived attractiveness and feasibility of new venture initiation. Literature reveals that entrepreneurship education creates self-sufficient, motivated and enterprising individuals who leave the education system with skills to start their own business or abilities to create innovation in established organizations. Alumni people, who have participated in entrepreneurship education or training sessions during their education, start more businesses and also have higher earnings (Vestergaard, Moberg and Jorgensen, 2012).

However, most researchers noted an increase in individual self-reported intentions to begin a business after exposure to certain types of entrepreneurship education. The findings can be broadly divided into, direct short-term micro-economic impact and the indirect impact of increasing the entrepreneurial spirit. Generally most findings suggested positive links between intentions to become an entrepreneur and exposure to entrepreneurship education. These findings suggest that entrepreneurship education can influence student entrepreneurship intentions. In some cases the choices to become an entrepreneur and subsequent entrepreneurial careers have been positively correlated to entrepreneurship education (Fayolle, Gailly and Lassas-Clerc, 2006; Dickson, et al, 2008; Matlay, 2008 and Stokes, et al, 2010).

Consequently, Gerba (2012) issued out an entrepreneurship intentions questionnaire to 156 business and engineering undergraduate students in Ethiopia and noted that business students who had undergone entrepreneurship education tend to have better entrepreneurial intentions than those of engineering students who had not taken the course. Education can affect students' attitudes toward entrepreneurship and their entrepreneurial self-efficacy. The added real value to probability of business success caused by entrepreneurial training and that entrepreneurial attitudes and overall intentions to become future entrepreneurs can be triggered from exposure to an entrepreneurial program. In addition to the basic skills of starting and managing a business, entrepreneurship education should create a capacity for imagination, flexibility, creativity, willingness to think conceptually, and the art to see change as an opportunity (Drucker, 1994; Bygrave and Zacharakis, 2000; Timmons and Spinelli, 2004).

There is, however, need to note that the validity, comparability and generalization potential of the research outcomes from the peer-reviewed literature on entrepreneurship education and its influence on university graduates' intentions was cast in doubt due to lack of consensus and convergence on definitions, methodology, concepts and context (Matlay, 2006) thereby limiting their value to inform policy.

## 2.2 Theoretical framework

### 2.2.1 Ajzen's Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB)

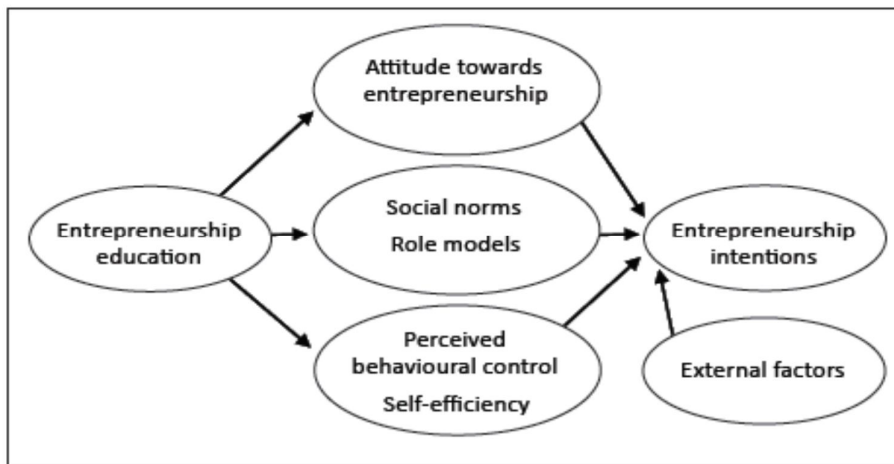
Ajzen's theory of planned behavior (TPB) is one of the most popular, common and influential theoretical frameworks adopted for analyzing human behavior. It is also part of the larger family of intentional models that have been used to explain the emergence of entrepreneurial behavior (Muofhe and du Toit, 2011); figure 1.2 depicts the schematic of the TPB as outlined by Ajzen (1991).

The TPB was initially applied to the area of entrepreneurship by Krueger and Carsrud (1993) who tried to match it for compatibility with Shapero and Sokol's intentions theory; their model explained that entrepreneurship intentions depended in part from external influences on entrepreneurial activity as well as the perceived attractiveness of the entrepreneurial behavior, perceived social norms about entrepreneurial behaviors and the perceived self-efficacy or control for entrepreneurial behaviors all subject to exogenous influences that may play a role in the development of beliefs and attitudes (Fayolle, et al, 2006).

According to Ajzen's theory, the formation of intention is preceded and guided by three variables, namely attitude towards a given behavior, subjective norms and perception of control over the behavior or simply what Muofhe and du Toit (2011), called the behavioral, normative and control beliefs. Attitude toward behavior is the extent to which someone personally positively or negatively values being an entrepreneur while perceived social norms measure social valuation or perceived social pressure to carry out or not to carry out entrepreneurial behavior and perceived behavioral control is defined as the perception of the easiness or difficulty in fulfilling the behavior of interest which is becoming an entrepreneur.

Furthermore, Ajzen (1991) in Muofhe and du Toit, (2011) postulated that, behavioral beliefs produce a favorable or unfavorable attitude toward the behavior; normative beliefs result in perceived social pressure or subjective norm and control beliefs give rise to perceived behavioral control. In combination, attitudes toward the behavior, subjective norm, and perception of behavioral control lead to the formation of a behavioral intention.

**Figure 1.2: The Integrative Theory of Planned Behavior**



**Source:** Adapted from Ajzen (1991) in Muofhe and du Toit (2011)

Dyer's (1994) model of entrepreneurial careers adds role models and education as social factors that influence people's entrepreneurial career intentions. Figure 1.2 integrates Ajzen's model to incorporate other variables identified by other researchers like those identified by Dyer and depicts entrepreneurial education as the independent variable. The integrated model identifies antecedents of entrepreneurial intentions namely; attitude towards entrepreneurship, social norms, role models, perceived behavioral control, self-efficacy and entrepreneurial intentions, as the dependent variables.

### 3.0 Methodology of Research

#### 3.1 Research Design

The methodological approach used in this study is a cross-sectional survey was conducted on Africa University graduates. The purpose of the study is to find the preponderance of the outcome of interest, for the graduates using a self-administered mail questionnaire. To get an insight of the influence of entrepreneurship education on student entrepreneurial intentions a follow-up was made on alumni who graduated from Africa University from 2009 to 2012 through a cross-sectional survey. The research analysed the impact of entrepreneurship education after the students had already been exposed to entrepreneurship and no baseline data was available.

#### 3.2 Population and Sampling

The survey was carried out on Africa University alumni and it targeted the alumni that graduated from the faculty of management and administration in the academic years from 2009 to 2012. A sample of 60 business graduates (15 from each annual cohort) was selected from the total of 325 business graduates ( $X_1$ ) who graduated during the selected period. Another sample of 60 non-business graduates ( $X_2$ ) (15 from each annual cohort) who did not take the entrepreneurship course was selected from a total of 438 alumni from the same period and a convenience sampling strategy was used to select the respondents.

### 4.0 Findings and Discussion

#### 4.1 Descriptive Statistics

**Table 4.1: Contribution of Entrepreneurship to Society (Perception)**

	$X_1$	$X_2$
<b>Employment creation</b>	4.6	3.93
<b>Poverty alleviation and improve welfare</b>	3.83	3.67
<b>Improve competitiveness</b>	3.48	3.48
<b>Assist society by providing goods &amp; services</b>	3.09	2.81
<b>Unlock personal Potential</b>	3.31	3.04

Where  $X_1$ : Business graduates  
 $X_2$ : Non-Business graduates

The results of this question were tabulated in Table 4.1 above indicated that the entrepreneurial class preferred employment creation most, (mean=4.6), as the perceived most important contribution of entrepreneurship to the economy. This was also the highly ranked preference for the non-entrepreneurial class (mean=3.93). Assist society with provision of goods and services was ranked low by both classes (mean=3.09 and 3.04 respectively).

However, both classes understood the importance of entrepreneurship towards employment creation, poverty alleviation, improving competitiveness and unlocking personal potential and helping society in general hence the positive ratings on all the elements mentioned in the question (means >3). It is important to realize that the alumni recognized entrepreneurship's contribution towards job creation and the economy in general. The results show that the new generation positively thinks about alternative ways of creating new jobs, an attitude that comes helpful during low economic periods when employment opportunities are severely depressed.

**Table 4.2: Interest in Entrepreneurship**

	<b>X<sub>1</sub></b>	<b>X<sub>2</sub></b>
<b>Interest in entrepreneurship</b>	4.2	3.0
<b>Ventures Founded Since Graduation</b>	6	2
<b>Probability to Ever Found a business</b>	3.87	2.56
<b>Prefer to be Fulltime salaried Worker</b>	2.52	3.59
<b>Prefer to be a Liberal professional</b>	2.83	3.44
<b>Prefer to be an Entrepreneur</b>	4.04	2.85

Where           X<sub>1</sub>: Business graduates  
                   X<sub>2</sub>: Non-Business graduates

Respondents from the entrepreneurship class showed a very high interest in entrepreneurship (mean=4.2) compared to their non-entrepreneurial compatriots who showed neutrality towards entrepreneurship (mean=3.0). The high interest can be attributed to their exposure to entrepreneurship education, a finding which agrees with Timmons, et al, (2006) assertion that if effective education is provided, including topics on spotting good opportunities, launching a company and expanding it, resource and team management, business plan, marketing, etc. to individuals with interest in venture creation but who do not have confidence in it, their confidence and ability will be increased simultaneously.

Though the period of study was very short for objective conclusions on venture creation, more ventures (6) had been created from the entrepreneurial class in the sample than from the non-entrepreneurial class. Non-entrepreneurial respondents highly rated fulltime salaried worker as their preferred carrier choice (mean=3.59) than being an entrepreneur (mean=1.94) probably because they were not well-equipped to consider self-employment as this increased their risk of failure. The entrepreneurial students indicated a higher probability of starting businesses in the future (mean=3.87) than their non-entrepreneurial counterparts (mean=2.56).

On the effect of entrepreneurship education, alumni from the entrepreneurial class indicated that entrepreneurship education made them start thinking of starting their own firms and some (60%) are entrepreneurial in their work place. The finding indicates that entrepreneurship skills are not only necessary for new venture creation but companies are now increasingly looking for entrepreneurial graduates for corporate venturing or intrapreneurship as a competitive tool.

**Table 4.3: Attraction towards Entrepreneurship**

	<b>X<sub>1</sub></b>	<b>X<sub>2</sub></b>
<b>A career as an entrepreneur is attractive</b>	3.83	3.04
<b>Being an entrepreneur implies more advantages than disadvantages</b>	3.17	2.93
<b>Would like to start a firm</b>	3.43	2.96
<b>Would entail great satisfaction</b>	3.83	3.11
<b>Would rather be in entrepreneurship</b>	3.39	3.85
<b>Admire self-employed people</b>	3.39	2.89

Where           X<sub>1</sub>: Business graduates



**X<sub>2</sub>: Non-Business graduates**

The research showed that entrepreneurial students have immense interest of starting their own new firms as indicated by the large percentage in the sample who indicated positive answers to the statements in Table 4.3. The entrepreneurial class rated all the above statements positively with means >3 and higher than the non-entrepreneurial class as indicated in Table 4.3 above. The level of attitude towards entrepreneurship shown by the alumni evidenced that entrepreneurship education should be advanced in all spheres of education as a survival and evolutionary tool to change our education system from education for employment only but education for job creation. This will equip young Zimbabweans to exploit valuable business opportunities exposed from Zimbabwean government's business affirmative action and empowerment policy thrust and calls for more Zimbabweans to be involved in running the economy as employers and job creators.

**Table 4.4: Social Valuation of Entrepreneurship**

	<b>X<sub>1</sub></b>	<b>X<sub>2</sub></b>
<b>People in environment would approve decision</b>	2.96	3.26
<b>Close Family Approval</b>	2.96	3.00
<b>Friends Approval</b>	2.91	3.11
<b>Colleagues and Mates</b>	2.87	3.00

Where           X<sub>1</sub>: Business graduates  
                     X<sub>2</sub>: Non-Business graduates

The findings show that social valuation for entrepreneurship is not very positive in both samples as can be seen in table 4.4 above; most families and close relatives expect their children to get paid jobs after graduation and are not very keen on self-employment hence the low and negative approval ratings of < 3. This could be so due to perceived risk of failure for those who start their own business and the unstable incomes. Surprisingly the ratings were slightly positive for the non-entrepreneurial class where ratings for family, friends, colleagues, mates and people in the environment positively approved choice to be entrepreneur. This could be attributed to the fact that most respondents in this sample are employed in the public sector as teachers, a profession lowly rated as underpaying in Zimbabwe.

The Global Entrepreneurship Monitor (GEM, 2012) indicated that the entrepreneurship process is a complex endeavor carried out by people living in specific cultural and social conditions. Consequently, the positive or negative perceptions that society has about entrepreneurship can strongly influence the motivations of people to enter entrepreneurship. Societies benefit from people who are able to recognize valuable business opportunities and who perceive they have the required skills to exploit them. If the economy in general has a positive attitude towards entrepreneurship, this can generate cultural and social support, financial and business assistance, and networking benefits that will encourage and facilitate potential and existing entrepreneurs.

Positive societal attitudes reflect entrepreneurial ambitions and societal support. In this case society seems not to value entrepreneurship as a viable alternative to a full-time job. Given this finding, it suggested that society needs to be nurtured to understand that entrepreneurship is important for society and can bring benefits at a personal level. Therefore, positive attitudes about entrepreneurship in an economy can indicate the propensity for people to engage in this activity. In addition, attitudes can signify the extent to which a society may provide cultural and financial support and generate potential stakeholders that could enhance

and assist the efforts of entrepreneurs (GEM, 2012).

**Table 4.5: Entrepreneurial Capacity and Beliefs**

	X <sub>1</sub>	X <sub>2</sub>
<b>Identify and evaluate business opportunities</b>	3.17	2.89
<b>Starting a firm and keeping it working</b>	3.65	2.89
<b>Prepared to start a viable firm</b>	3.30	2.52
<b>Control the creation process of a new firm</b>	3.00	2.93
<b>Necessary practical details to start a new firm</b>	3.61	3.19
<b>How to develop a business plan and an entrepreneurial project</b>		
<b>how to finance (legally) a new business idea/concept</b>	3.57	2.67
<b>high probability of succeeding</b>	2.95	2.85
<b>Risk taker</b>	3.35	3.04
<b>Creative and innovative</b>	3.30	3.15
	3.13	3.96

Where X<sub>1</sub>: Business graduates  
X<sub>2</sub>: Non-Business graduates

As it can be deduced in table 4.5; it summarized responses on entrepreneurial capacity and beliefs of the graduates. All respondents from the entrepreneurial class felt that the course had improved their self-efficacy, equipped them with a better understanding of entrepreneurship and they had gained some skills which include ability to identify opportunities, business analysis and preparation of business plans. The entrepreneurial capacity and beliefs of the alumni was assessed based on a number of parameters like their level of education, whether they had taken the entrepreneurship course, confidence in their capability to identify opportunities, creating a new firm, risk self-assessment and knowledge regarding new ventures. For each statement, a score of >3 was positive while scores <3 were taken as negative

In order to understand the self-efficacy and level of internal locus of control the respondents were asked to rate their capacity for self-assessment. Most of the respondents (90%) rated themselves to be “very good” while the rest (10%) rated themselves as “good”. This showed high confidence by the respondents in their ability and self-assessment, a fact that may correspond to maturity with age and with level of education.

It can be noted that alumni from the entrepreneurial class gave a positive rating of more than 3 for each of the statements except for the one which read ‘I know how to finance (legally) a new business idea/concept. This was probably due to the liquidity problems and the strict credit regime prevailing in Zimbabwe after introduction of multi-currencies and dollarization which make it difficult for most nascent entrepreneurs to qualify for and access credit. As posited by Timmons, et al (1999), sufficient appropriate knowledge of entrepreneurship and intentions of venture creation leads one to create a venture and succeed in it. In short, increased knowledge of venture creation results in increased ability for venture creation. It could be suggested from the above findings that one of the main effects of entrepreneurship education is increased confidence in venture creation.

The findings like, results of most recent researches, show that entrepreneurship education often stimulates motivation for venture creation (Gerba, 2012; Matlay, 2008; Dickson, Solomon and Weaver, 2008 and Muofhe and Du Toit 2011). One of the most important roles of education today is preparing students for the future success and to eventually become effective leaders in a competitive world. One pertinent objective of this study was to establish whether exposure to entrepreneurship education at the University increases the intention of students to create ventures. According to Kruger (1993), entrepreneurial intention reflects the state of mind that initiates people to opt in favor of self-employment rather than choosing traditional salary based employment to concur with Kruger (1993) alumni who had taken entrepreneurship course reported higher entrepreneurship intention (mean=3.65) than the non-entrepreneurial alumni who have not taken

entrepreneurship course (mean=2.89).

**Table 4.6: Entrepreneurial Intent and Signs of Entrepreneurial Activity**

	<b>X<sub>1</sub></b>	<b>X<sub>2</sub></b>
<b>Professional goal</b>	3.22	3.11
<b>Effort to start and run own business</b>	3.22	3.37
<b>Create a firm in the future</b>	3.65	2.89
<b>Thought of starting a new firm</b>	3.87	2.93
<b>Started my own business</b>	2.04	1.15
<b>Read a lot of books on entrepreneurship</b>	3.30	2.89

Where           X<sub>1</sub>: Business graduates  
                       X<sub>2</sub>: Non-Business graduates

The results of the study suggest a positive link between entrepreneurial intention and entrepreneurship education showing that entrepreneurship (table 4.6); alumni have stronger entrepreneurial intentions than non-entrepreneurship alumni. This supports the notion that intentions of venture creation and confidence in it can be increased by entrepreneurship education. It is also important to note that the non-entrepreneurship class rated highly (mean=3.37 compared to 3.22) to the statement which read “Effort to start and run own business”. As earlier indicated, most of the respondents from the non-entrepreneurial alumni are employed in the public service either as teachers or administrative staff.

Currently in Zimbabwe, the Public Service pays very low wages due to the economic recession still being experienced in the country. As a result of these low wages, most public servants would like to start their own ventures in order to enhance or supplement their incomes. This shows people may be forced into entrepreneurship by necessity.

## **5.0 Conclusions and Recommendations**

The study suggested that alumni who took an entrepreneurial course have high rating scores on most indicators of entrepreneurship, the findings renders justification and gives some credence to the heightened interest in entrepreneurship education by universities and other institutions of higher learning; the indigenization policy in Zimbabwe which is encouraging youth to start their own businesses seems to also have an impact on the entrepreneurial intentions of the graduates. We recommend that Universities should make entrepreneurship education a core and integral component of the study curricula for all students irrespective of their chosen area of study.

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