

## Entrepreneurship in Africa, part 2: entrepreneurial education and eco-systems

This issue represents a part of the special issue exploring entrepreneurial dynamics in Africa. The first issue explored entrepreneurial behaviour and small business practice (Jones *et al.*, 2018). This issue presents eight papers examining entrepreneurial and eco-systems issues in an African context. The growth of effective entrepreneurship in Africa is largely dependent on entrepreneurship education being able to develop effective curriculum to encourage entrepreneurial behaviour and attitudes (Kabongo and Okpara, 2018). There is also recognition that existing university provision in African universities requires a mindset change to alleviate societal problems such as graduate unemployment (Baldry, 2016). Existing entrepreneurship education provision and curriculum in Africa remains at the nascent stage but there is an increased recognition regarding the need to enhance pedagogy, curriculum design (Louw *et al.*, 2003) and institutional culture towards entrepreneurial careers (Jones *et al.*, 2013). In addition, the importance of entrepreneurial eco-systems has gained traction in developing world contexts. This has included issues such as cross-university entrepreneurship education provision, development of eco-systems to support business start-ups and provision of seed corn funding (Maas and Jones, 2017). The cultural and regional diversity of Africa plus the inherent infrastructure limitations means that entrepreneurship education provision is challenging and nascent in my cases. The studies offered here provide insights into best practice and emergent behaviour.

Wakkee, Hoestenberghé and Mwasalwiba's qualitative study considers the reasons why Tanzanian graduates do not consider entrepreneurship as an attractive career option despite an unattractive employment market. This study evaluates conversion factors from the actual "functioning" towards the real "capability" allowing them to succeed as a new graduate and discover that social capital itself might act as the critical conversion factor towards an entrepreneurial career. This study demonstrates that many graduates value entrepreneurship as a potential career but not many act upon these blocked aspirations. Actual entrepreneurial capability is only available to a minority of graduates with sufficient agency and access to connections who are able to benefit from technological and financial conversion factors. Most graduates do not benefit from these conversion factors for lack of the necessary social capital to enable access to the relevant legal, tax, financial and cultural systems. Hence, the study argues that social capital itself is a critical conversion factor towards developing entrepreneurial capability.

Mensah and Nyadu-Addo's study examines the entrepreneurship clinic as a viable pedagogy for the delivery of experiential education in entrepreneurship using the case of the Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology in Ghana. The study demonstrates that it is feasible to implement an entrepreneurship clinic pedagogy, irrespective of the cost and time implications that are often associated with experiential educational pedagogies. The study recognises that support from university management, fundraising from internal and external sources and technical support from industry and government agencies are the key to the sustainability of entrepreneurship clinics.

The Anosike's study explores how entrepreneurship education interacts with knowledge transfer and entrepreneurial behaviour in a conflict-inflicted Sub-Saharan African context. Participants exhibited rare forms of innovative behaviour, through their business skills, gained from their involvement in entrepreneurship education. It emerged the conflict was not the major barrier to entrepreneurial intentions. Conflict affected how they made strategic



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decisions regarding downsizing, advertising and future business plans. Consequently, these decisions altered at different junctures because of the conflict and, therefore, defined their coping strategies. The paper advocates a policy shift towards a more collaborative sub-regional approach to tackling the underlying causes of conflict in Sub-Saharan Africa through investment in EE strategies as a driver to economic development. Central to this are *a priori* assumptions about economically disadvantaged populations and their symbiotic relationship with conflict, a phenomenon frequently exploited by armed groups with deviant agenda. Thus, access to employment opportunities benefits disadvantaged populations, thereby plays a decisive role in conflict mitigation.

Hunter and Lean's study examines university pedagogical approaches for entrepreneurial learning undertaken in Kenya and Tanzania. The study proposes a model of entrepreneurial learning where contextual social and economic structures gain relevance through experiential learning. The findings indicate entrepreneurship as a value creation process is a shared assertion but social context informs a construct of learning outcomes, and specifically what characterises an entrepreneur. Entrepreneurial learning is multi-layered and its provision necessitates an engagement with the social context in order to gain relevance for the learners. The learning content enables learners to develop an understanding of the world alongside knowledge of entrepreneurship. Learning tools should be flexible and action-based, to achieve learning for entrepreneurship as opposed to learning about the phenomenon of entrepreneurship. The value creation process only occurs when learning supports the individual and collective capabilities to transform the social context. Meeting job creation and growth aspirations requires universities to work closely with all businesses and the use of innovative learning techniques such as local languages where applicable. These findings offer policy and practice implications for universities and policy makers in curriculum design and inclusive learning methods. The study contributes to a deeper understanding of entrepreneurship education from a social context.

van Klyton and Rutabayiro-Ngoga's manuscript explores how entrepreneurs, banks, the government and alternative lending respond to finance gaps for SMEs. This article considers valuation as a sociological construct where actors use different calculative devices, forming an assemblage that positions valuation of entrepreneurial finance as a contested and socially constructed process. Drawing on the concept of "calculative devices", the study articulates discursive institutional practices embedded within SME lending. The study identifies three triggers in Rwanda grounded in the informal and unincorporated nature of SME governance structure; the lack of capacity to manage their own projects; and normalising language around collateral requirements that marginalised the realities of SMEs; contributing to stagnation for finance. The research provides direction for understanding how calculative devices create new forms of valuation of entrepreneurship in developing countries, particularly when human and non-human actors come together in an assemblage. The study calls for further research to demonstrate the embedded power of valuation practices and the performance of value in entrepreneurial finance.

Atiase, Mahmood, Wang and Botchie's study engages institutional theory to explain the role of institutional factors such as state institutions, financial institutions, utility providers and markets in entrepreneurship development in Africa. To support entrepreneurship development, Africa requires broad financial inclusion and state institutions that are more effective at enforcing contracts. The study highlights the weak, corrupt nature of African institutions that supposedly support MSME growth. The study confirms that effective entrepreneurship development in Africa requires the presence of a supportive institutional infrastructure.

Isaga's study examines the relationship between personality traits and SME performance in the Tanzanian furniture sector. The structural equation modelling approach was used to

simultaneously test the direct and indirect effects of the entrepreneurs' characteristics on SME performance. Personality traits have a significant influence on SME performance through cognitive characteristics. Since entrepreneurial characteristics are considered a driver of a country's economic development and performance, it is hoped that governments and sector associations implement suitable policies and incentives to develop an entrepreneurial culture among citizens. Current knowledge regarding entrepreneurial characteristics and their relationship with SME performance in developing countries, especially Tanzania, is limited. The study suggests that cognitive characteristics are necessary mediators of the link between personality traits and SME performance.

Vershinina, Woldesenbet Beta and Murithi's study seeks to conceptualise the various value dimensions of the Kenyan culture, affect the fostering of entrepreneurial behaviours. Theoretically, the study draws upon perspectives that view culture as a toolkit and use cultural variables provided by Hofstede to examine the links between national culture and entrepreneurial endeavours in an African context. The study is based on review and synthesis of secondary sources on the topic and related areas to understand and advance research propositions on the link between enterprising efforts and national culture specific to the Kenyan context. Several propositions are offered on themes of collective reliance, social responsibility, enterprising, resource mobilisation and political philanthropy to establish relationships, both positive and negative, between values of Harambee and entrepreneurial behaviours. The study offers novel insights into how actors blend both collectivistic and emergent individualistic orientations and display collective identity in the process of mobilising resources and engaging in entrepreneurship. The conceptual framework presented bears a considerable relevance to advancing theory, policy and practice associated with national culture and entrepreneurial behaviour in the African context and has potential to generate valuable insights.

Concluding this editorial, it is rewarding to read the range of emergent practice and experience across the African continent. The growth of entrepreneurship education is a global phenomenon which is evidenced in the emergent academic literature. Currently, the entrepreneurship education literature is considering the development and implementation of new programmes and practices. It is important that such stories are captured and used to inform and enhance future programme delivery and design. Future research must progress to evaluate impact and identifying customised entrepreneurship provision to suit the requirements of specific regions and communities.

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- Maas, G. and Jones, P. (2017), *Entrepreneurship Centres: Global Perspectives on their Contributions to Higher Education Institutions*, ISBN: 978-3-319-47892-0, available at: [www.palgrave.com/de/book/9783319478913](http://www.palgrave.com/de/book/9783319478913)

**Further reading**

- Jones, P., Maas, G. and Pittaway, L. (2017), *Entrepreneurship Education (Contemporary Issues in Entrepreneurship Research, Volume 7)*, Emerald Publishing Ltd, ISBN: 978-1-78714-281-7, available at: [www.emeraldinsight.com/doi/pdfplus/10.1108/S2040-724620170000007013](http://www.emeraldinsight.com/doi/pdfplus/10.1108/S2040-724620170000007013)
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