




## ENTREPRENEURSHIP A MISGUIDED QUEST: A HIGHER EDUCATION REVIEW

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### ABSTRACT

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Following a successful integration of entrepreneurship into the content-based curricula and the eventual significant growth of Asian economy, Uganda, through its universities joined the movement. The intention was to boost Uganda's economy to a level of generating sufficient jobs, increased incomes, and improved goods and services. While this is a truism, the effectiveness of this intervention is still undergoing empirical testing. This study delved into the effectiveness of this strategy while using Kampala International University (KIU) and Nkumba University (NKU) as study samples. Utilizing a mixed-method explanatory sequential design, numerical data were collected first from 74 undergraduates, followed by interviews with 10 key informants. Results indicated that teaching methods significantly and positively affected students' intended learning outcomes (ILOs) in entrepreneurship since the  $p$  value ( $\leq 0.001$ ) was below the margin of error (0.05) which was the minimum level of probability required in this study to declare statistical significance. But of the three parameters of X, the lecture method did not statistically impact the achievement of ILOs (Sig value = 0.489 > 0.05). In addition, although the interview responses recognised the importance of a balanced entrepreneurship curriculum in predicting students' ILOs, the numerical data did not indicate any statistical significance (adjusted  $r^2 = 0.254$ ). Lastly, teacher quality as part of the predictor variables had a positive and significant impact on the achievement of ILOs in entrepreneurship (adjusted  $r^2 = 0.452$ ), but of the three sub-variables of teacher quality, content mastery and professionalism had a weak impact (Sig. 0.148 > 0.05 & Sig. 0.093 > 0.05).

**Contribution/Originality:** This review covers a plethora of literature related to the instructional efficacy of entrepreneurship as a discipline and its relationship with the economic inclusion, growth, and development.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The notion of integrating entrepreneurship into the university standard and content-focused curricula has spurred much enthusiasm in recent decades. With little knowledge of how standard curriculum is made enterprising, many universities out of genuine excitement have jumped on the bandwagon under the influence of isomorphic mimicry. The confusion lies in practice; some universities seem to assume that entrepreneurship is about producing employable graduates, while others limit the concept's power to empowering students to start their own companies after university education. Whereas these arguments may be valid, they underestimate the predictive power of entrepreneurship in shaping students' actions after university. It would sound reasonable if academics regarded university education as an engagement that prepares students to become more creative, proactive, opportunity oriented, innovative, risk takers and adaptable to the ever-changing culture of work in their specific

specializations without necessarily creating a standalone department or unit for entrepreneurship (Erkkilä, 2000; Gartner, 1990; Gibb, 2002; Ntarangwi, 2021).

Treating entrepreneurship as a distinct subject and using academics with limited or no practical entrepreneurial experience to teach aspiring entrepreneurs is the foundation of confusion and a potential recipe for disaster. The questions of critical concern are; is the content delivered in lecture theatre good enough to make one an entrepreneur after school? Should the teaching of entrepreneurship be limited to academic-based entrepreneurs? What explains the emergence of entrepreneurs without any university education background? All these concerns invite researchers to a conversation, although more often than not are addressed in succinct terms. One incontestable reality is that university education is the gateway to any country's progress. While this is a truism, have countries made progress by using academic-based entrepreneurs to nurture entrepreneurs where the mode of instruction is majorly regurgitating lecturer's ideas? These are much less discussed variables, although very significant at reshaping the world of practice if given attention.

The available empirical evidence drawn from Ugandan-based universities suggests that, the university entrepreneurial space that gives birth to entrepreneurs is in dire straits, and its legitimacy has been highly contested (Cassidy, 2016). In Uganda, education for self-reliance/entrepreneurship was introduced to cut down the rate of unemployment in the country (GEM, 2003; GEM, 2004), although, to date, there seems to be no headway towards solving the problem (Ntarangwi, 2021; Warren, Isaac, & Robert, 2010). Universities have continued to produce entrepreneurs year in year out, even though their ability to think and act as entrepreneurs is questionable. Whereas this may be attributed to the quality of instruction, it should not be forgotten that the myriad uncertainties engulfing the economy do not give a chance to young entrepreneurs to try out anything of economic importance after university. In addition, entrepreneurship graduates find it hard to survive in a society that is predominantly natured to receive job seekers from universities (Ntarangwi, 2021). While one may argue that, universities have not done enough in preparing young entrepreneurs to raise above such uncertainties, it should be remembered that, it is the role of the government to provide a safe and friendly entrepreneurial space that gives graduates confidence to experiment new business options.

On the contrary, Audet (2004) and Davidsson (1995) observed that, the role of a university in shaping entrepreneurs cannot be over emphasized. While the government's involvement in providing a safer entrepreneurial space is critical, the role of a university in this regard is unmatched, although most academics seem unaware of this reality (Gyaviira & Musisi, 2018; Warren et al., 2010). Uganda is infested with ordinary businessmen who, in their own right, refer to themselves as entrepreneurs.

They are riding on the fact that, universities are slumbering, and whatever they produce (graduates) is yet to prove its worth to society (Ntarangwi, 2021). It is pretty interesting that business people with no entrepreneurship background can startup businesses and employ entrepreneurs from universities to run them, even though they eventually collapse with them. In an attempt to understand why things are the way they are in Uganda's context, Ocici (2006) and Wang, Wong, and Lu (2002) attributed this paradox to the poor teaching and learning methods of entrepreneurship in universities, as well as the personal and situational factors all of which are detrimental to the efficacy of the profession. Despite of these unhealthy realities, steps to fix these gaps in entrepreneurship curricula are still very slow across universities.

Where did universities go wrong? Could it be that the teaching-learning methods of the would-be experiential-based discipline are lacking? Could it be true that the entrepreneurship curriculum across universities is not contextualized to the local realities? Is it possible to get out of this mess if for example, entrepreneurship as a learning component is fused into the mainstream curricula instead of treating it as an individual discipline? This study was set out to investigate these critical concerns while paying attention to other aspects that may be of great value to this inquiry.

### 1.1. Problem Statement

Whereas it is widely acknowledged that entrepreneurship as a discipline has contributed immensely to stimulating innovation and competitiveness across Europe and other parts of the world (Ellen & Peter, 2016), in Uganda's case, the evidence to support this claim is sparse and anecdotal. The indisputable reality is that over 20 Ugandan institutions are offering entrepreneurship as a profession at all levels, but no credible evidence is available to claim that the little progress the country enjoys today (6.8% recorded Gross Domestic Product (GDP) as of FY-2019) is a result of this intervention. Although Uganda's GDP has improved since 2010, save for the two years of Covid-19 (2020-2022), the economy is still fragile to compete, generate jobs, increase incomes, and provide products and services to the population in desirable amounts (Ellen & Peter, 2016; Oxfam, 2016). This is in congruence with Ssempala, Ssebulime, and Twinoburyo (2020) whose claims allude to the view that the borrowed monies from the World Bank, IMF, and Exim Bank have in many ways affected Uganda's GDP to persuade one to think that the economy is doing well whereas not. Economic growth and university education are inseparable; therefore, refocusing our energy and resources into university business by way of recontextualizing the curricula to the local realities, empowering academics in all fields by granting them academic freedom and independence, adopting purposeful yet stimulating teaching and learning techniques, extending reasonable funding to researchers, and mindset transformation of all key stakeholders may become a good step in realizing the long-awaited innovation in Uganda's Higher Education (HE).

It is high time that entrepreneurship as a discipline is made an integral component of the mainstream curricula. Treating it as an independent discipline defeats the country's plan of making university education entrepreneurial-oriented. In the same vein, limiting entrepreneurship teaching to classrooms and only to university lecturers and professors with little or no practical entrepreneurial experience, as the case is today, undermines the country's plan of making university education entrepreneurial-based by 2030. There is an urgent need to revisit the teaching and learning strategies, refine entrepreneurship curricula and/or the entire university curricula, and rebuild a sense of learning that is geared towards empowering students for self-reliance.

How can students develop mental resilience and the ability to theorize, imagine and re-imagine when the curriculum and teaching style are in conflict? How can students acquire mental growth when classroom failure is considered as a vice? Through failure, people perfect their game and develop entrepreneurial-oriented skills (Boulay, 2004). Students need to see classroom as a place where they feel safe enough to make mistakes, take risks, engage with opposing ideas, and imagine possibilities beyond the existing ones (Ntarangwi, 2021). It is regrettable that our teaching-learning strategies in universities are not inclined to any of these, yet, at the same time, we dream of making Uganda an entrepreneurial-based economy whilst using HE as the main driver. While using two urban-based private universities (KIU and NKU), the study delved into examining why with its predictive influence on economic growth, entrepreneurship as a discipline has not liberated Uganda's economy.

### 1.2. Hypothesis (H<sub>0</sub>)

The researchers wondered if the poor performance of entrepreneurs after university was not a result of the teacher quality, nature of the curriculum, and teaching techniques hitherto employed and if a refinement of the three parameters would not make a difference.

## 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Although there is relentless debate about the way entrepreneurship as a discipline is delivered in universities, there is little disagreement that entrepreneurship is the gateway to a country's growth and development (Tan & Ng, 2006; Williams, 2013; Wong, Ho, & Autio, 2005; Young & Muller, 2010). Whereas this seems to be the common reasoning across the HE spectrum, there is little effort in the developing countries to make this happen (Fayolle & Gailly, 2008; Ntarangwi, 2021; Tan & Ng, 2006; Zahra, Falavarjani, & Imanipour, 2012). In all fairness,

HE in the developing economies could have heard and gotten the idea of embracing entrepreneurship right (Alberti, Sciascia, & Poli, 2004), but actualizing it is becoming a mammoth task. Universities are struggling to make it happen, but there seem to be no headways. While the struggle to produce practical-oriented entrepreneurs is very much alive, pragmatic researchers still contend that it is not possible to teach entrepreneurship; for them, entrepreneurship is a matter of personality and psychological characteristics. The argument to back up this school of thought is that, talent and temperament cannot be taught (Fayolle, 2007; Fayolle & Gailly, 2008). Although they may be correct in their own right, what is unchallenged is that some components of entrepreneurship are teachable whereas others are not. But the argument is not on whether some components are teachable or not, but rather on how best we can deliver that bit that is assumed to be teachable in a manner that makes graduates entrepreneurial.

In his attempt to examine how entrepreneurship should be taught at the university level Mwasalwiba (2010), submits that the best teaching strategy is the action-based technique that equips learners with the desired skills to make them different and unique in the marketplace after university. Whereas his claim looks reasonable to an idealist, it is obsolete in context. In Uganda's case, for example, universities have trained and released hundreds of thousands in the marketplace with skills that one can regard as reasonable, but after a while, they fade! What explains this paradox is still sparse in the available body of literature. However, Bennett (2006) offered sound reasoning when he said that action-based models only require the instructors to facilitate learning, not to control the learning process, and apply methods that empower students to discover their underlying potential (self-discovery). With this approach, a student is prepared to take risks, engage in opposing ideas, and cultivate opportunities even when the situation does not permit it. This bit is lacking in so many graduates in Uganda.

Although the teaching strategies of entrepreneurship differ depending on factors such as the learning context, teacher caliber, student preparedness to learn, and content, writing a business plan is usually one of the important components in most entrepreneurship classes (Bliemel, 2013; Solomon, 2007). It is assumed that if the planning is done carefully, entrepreneurs increase their chances of achieving their business goals (Hisrich, Peters, & Shepherd, 2010). However, taking this view as a pedagogical "black box" can be regarded as totally a "fool's errand" in the world of practice, for such assumptions simply suggest that such plans are "a work of fiction" (Jones & Penaluna, 2013; Mullins & Komisar, 2009). The wisdom of the occasion suggests that for any business plan to succeed, it must be tested against a range of uncertainties in the business space. Entrepreneurs usually face a lot of uncertainties in their businesses, and therefore, it is impossible to forecast unknown conditions in order to make a detailed plan to deal with so many contingencies in advance (Blank, 2013).

Whereas content is necessary to appreciate the theoretical perspective of any discipline; for entrepreneurship, preparations should be channeled to preparing students to perceive risks as the gateway to successful entrepreneurship. This is not because entrepreneurs prefer taking more risks than other professionals; rather, risks are the source of new opportunities and ideas (Katz, 1995). Similarly, preparing students to know that failure is inevitable in business does not necessarily mean that they will fail in business; instead, it suggests that most entrepreneurs have to experience many failures before they eventually make their way to success (Pilot & Hungler, 1999). Therefore, developing a positive attitude towards failure and learning to manage it whenever it threatens the business, may be the best foundation in getting ready for the years ahead. But given that, most entrepreneurship facilitators themselves dodged risks and chose teaching as their career, it is very hard for them to instill a risk-taking mentality in their students. This may further suggest that, there is a need to extend the teaching and learning of entrepreneurship beyond the four-walled classrooms to the physical world of business entrepreneurs. How amazing would it be for students to engage with the most notable entrepreneurs in the country and beyond! This would not inspire students alone but rather motivate teachers to reconsider their career choices.

A very interesting case to support the extension of entrepreneurship classrooms to the physical world of entrepreneurs is that, in the wake of Covid-19, most medical supply companies in China and the US just overnight changed to sanitizer production (Ashish & Bhatia, 2020). Neither entrepreneurs followed a typical business school

approach when deciding to redirect their businesses: they didn't conduct a long-term market analysis, develop a business plan, or weigh various alternative approaches, as often emphasized in entrepreneurship classes. This swiftness of the mindset is not taught in class, but students usually pick it up if exposed to the world of practice while in school (Ashish & Bhatia, 2020). Whereas this case undermines the role of classroom engagements in shaping entrepreneurs in one way or the other, it should be remembered that, in the developing countries like Uganda, where there is literary no serious entrepreneurs for reference purposes, a theoretical foundation is needed to stimulate learners' interests into the profession.

In Uganda's case, where the effectiveness of the physical world of entrepreneurs is questionable, adopting a problem-based learning model (PBL) in classrooms may indeed help in grooming students into future entrepreneurs (Hanke, 2009; Hung, Jonassen, & Liu, 2007). The PBL model exposes students to problem-solving as well as self-directed learning skills (Samuel, Owolabi, & Diana, 2007), which skills are critical in making up an entrepreneur. In support of this, (Krueger Jr, 2007) maintains that, PBL empowers students to look for problems in their ventures of interest and take cognitive ownership of their actions. Given this claim, one may want to know why universities in Uganda haven't embraced PBL in full amount despite its tested efficacy in preparing the minds for the world of uncertainties. What is exactly wrong with the way entrepreneurs are trained in Ugandan universities?

### 3. METHODOLOGY

In common parlance, methodology in research stands to refer to a scientific way of solving a research problem (Kothari, 2004). It systematically describes the procedures one undertakes to conduct a study (Olive, Mugenda, & Mugenda, 2003), cited in Ssemugenyi, Seje, and Asumwa (2020). This study adopted a cross-sectional survey design that permits data collection at one point in time (Amin, 2005; James & Sally, 2006; Xiaofeng & Cheng, 2020). For proper appreciation of the problem under investigation and the underlying dynamics, data were collected sequentially using the explanatory sequential mixed method, where quantitative data are obtained first before qualitative to reduce the single approach weakness (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007; Subedi, 2016). A structured self-administered questionnaire with 30 items on the style of learning, teacher quality, and content type was sent to the 3<sup>rd</sup>-year students of KIU and 2<sup>nd</sup>-year students of NKU. The instrument was tested for coefficient of reliability and content validity (Crombach's Alpha = 0.85 & Content Validity Index = 0.8) before sending it out to the respondents.

To verify the validity of the quantitative data, structured interviews were held with the purposively selected group of experts on teaching methods, entrepreneurship curriculum, and teacher quality. The interviewees were heads of department (HoD) in full control of entrepreneurship as a discipline, professors/experts of university pedagogy, and entrepreneurs in the real world of practice. These entrepreneurs were used to provide feedback on the quality of students the said two universities produce as one of the ways of verifying whether the curriculum and teaching methods offered are appropriate to the real world of entrepreneurs. The interview sessions of each participant were transcribed to identify patterns, assign codes, and subsequently develop themes (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

#### 3.1. Population

This study purposively targeted third-year entrepreneurship students with a bias of obtaining actual data on how entrepreneurship as a discipline is taught/delivered in classrooms, teacher quality, and content. The study dealt with only the 2018/19 academic year for both year two and three students of KIU and NKU respectively. A total of 52 students was obtained from KIU for this study while 22 from NKU. Given that the total population for students offering entrepreneurship was relatively low, the researcher did not sample the said population for any statistical representation for fear of falling short of sufficient precision.

For the structured interviews, 10 participants were purposively selected based on the specific type of information needed by the researcher. For instance, 2 HoDs (e.g., one from each university) were selected for this study, 2 professors/researchers (e.g., 1 from each university), 4 entrepreneurship classroom facilitators (e.g., 2 from each university), and 2 entrepreneurs in the real world of practice to offer feedback on the quality of graduates universities produce each year in Uganda. The names of the participants were recorded as pseudonyms to avoid inconveniences (e.g., for Teaching Methods (TM) as a theme; there were TMH1 & TMH2 to represent the HoDs; participants TMR1 & TMR2 represented researchers/professors; participants TMF1, TMF2, TMF3, & TMF4 represented facilitators; yet participants TME1 & TME2 were for entrepreneurs). For Curriculum/Content (CR) as a theme; there were CR1 & CR2 for HoDs; CRR1 & CRR2 for researchers/professors; CRF1, CRF2, CRF3, CRF4 for facilitators and CRE1 & CRE2 for entrepreneurs. While for Teacher Quality (TQ) as a theme; there were TQH1 & TQH2 for HoD; TQR1 & TQR2 for researchers/professors; TQF1, TQF2, TQF3 & TQF4 for facilitators; and TQE1, & TQE2 for entrepreneurs.

### 3.2. Inclusion Criteria

These criteria specify the characteristics that people in the population must possess in order to be included in the study (Pilot & Hungler, 1999). For this study, three categories of respondents were considered (e.g., students of entrepreneurship, entrepreneurship facilitators, HoDs, and entrepreneurs from the real world of practice). For the students, only 3<sup>rd</sup>-year students of KIU and 2<sup>nd</sup>-year students of NKU offering entrepreneurship as a profession. For the facilitators, it was only the entrepreneurship teachers; for the HoDs, only those where entrepreneurship as a discipline is housed; and for the entrepreneurs, only those who had a fair understanding of how HE operates.

## 4. FINDINGS

During the preliminary phase of this inquiry, the researcher conceptualized the teaching and learning effectiveness of entrepreneurship as a function of; teaching methods hitherto employed for delivery, nature of the curriculum, and teacher quality. These parameters were further broken down into micro components for easy analysis (e.g., teaching methods into problem-based, lecture method, & experiential learning; Curriculum into learner development, intended & focused, and alignment to national objectives; while teacher quality into content mastery, professionalism, & instructional delivery). Conversely, the researcher used the same parameters to develop data collection instruments (e.g., a self-administered questionnaire & structured interview guide).

**Table 1.** The effect of teaching methods on students' intended learning objectives (SILOs).

| Variables Regressed        | Adjusted R <sup>2</sup> | F     | Sig.  | Interpretation        | Decision on Ho |
|----------------------------|-------------------------|-------|-------|-----------------------|----------------|
| Teaching methods vs. SILOs | 0.303                   | 9.862 | 0.000 | Significant effect    | Rejected       |
| Coefficients               | Beta                    | t     |       |                       |                |
| (Constant)                 | 1.160                   | 3.244 | 0.001 | Significant effect    | Rejected       |
| Lecture method             | 0.084                   | 0.696 | 0.489 | No significant effect | Accepted       |
| Problem-based (PBL)        | 0.351                   | 2.928 | 0.005 | Significant effect    | Rejected       |
| Experiential learning      | 0.290                   | 2.520 | 0.014 | Significant effect    | Rejected       |

As widely agreed that teaching method is a cornerstone to meeting students' intended learning objectives (Anderson & Krathwohl, 2001; Angelo & Cross, 1993; Hattie, 2009; Hattie, 2012; Krell, 2011; Samuel et al., 2007) it is of no surprise that the same stance is maintained in this inquiry. Table 1 indicates that teaching methods significantly and positively affect students' intended learning objectives (ILOs) since the *p*. value ( $\leq 0.001$ ) is below the margin of error (0.05) which was the minimum level of probability required in this study to declare statistical significance. However, it should also be noted that among the three teaching methods regressed, the lecture method

did not significantly affect SILOs (Sig value =0.489 > 0.05). This implies that, although the lecture method is the widely applied teaching method at KIU and KNU, its predictive power to ILOs is low.

To verify the reasonableness of the numerical data in Table 1, interview sessions were conducted with the key informants as a triangulation procedure. The participants had this to say;

*TMH1 submitted that; “the methods of teaching employed primarily dictate learning effectiveness. I find the lecture method boring but very necessary at the moment because content delivery across universities in Uganda is best done using this method. Teachers are familiar with it despite its shortfalls. The PBL and structured experiential approaches are good, but most lecturers lack delivery proficiency in them.”*

*In the same tone, TMH2 mentions that; “it is pretty hard to introduce new methods of teaching to students whose entire education career has been delivered using lecture method. Again, our teachers were taught using the lecture method, and for convenience, they choose it, although a practical teaching technique would befit entrepreneurship as a discipline. The PBL and experiential methods are great but we lack the skills to apply them effectively.*

*TMR1 further comments that; “the delivery of entrepreneurship as an independent discipline should cease. We need to advise the management of our universities, and the National Council for Higher Education (NCHE) on better ways of doing things.”*

*TMR2 mentions, “I am compelled to think that we are not doing enough as professors. Teaching as a component in HE needs utmost attention. I have widely published on this aspect which knowledge benefits other countries. Can we get down to the problem and solve it once and for all!”*

*TMF1, TMF2, TMF3, & TMF4 seem to have a similar position on (TM); majorly, it is the teaching methods that subsequently make our graduates different from others. The content is usually the same across universities but how it is delivered is the game changer.*

*TME1 was of the view that; HE education as a sector is not doing much. “each year we receive graduates from universities into our companies but for them to catch up and fit in the world of competition, we usually subject them to a six-month or one-year upskilling program.”*

*TME2 Re-skilling graduates is now standard across professions. It is one sure way of having a good team. “We invest heavily in this because some graduates lack the attributes that are deemed necessary at graduation. This is not limited to Uganda, but rather a global concern.”*

**Table 2.** The effect of curriculum/nature of the content on achieving SILOs.

| Variables Regressed  | Adjusted R <sup>2</sup> | F     | Sig.  | Interpretation        | Decision on Ho |
|----------------------|-------------------------|-------|-------|-----------------------|----------------|
| Curriculum vs. SILOs | 0.254                   | 1.661 | 0.185 | No significant effect | Accepted       |
| Coefficients         | Beta                    | t     |       |                       |                |
| (Constant)           | 2.029                   | 5.284 | 0.000 | Significant effect    | Rejected       |
| Learner development  | 0.021                   | 0.127 | 0.900 | No significant effect | Accepted       |
| Intended & focused   | 0.066                   | 0.398 | 0.692 | No significant effect | Accepted       |
| Alignment            | 0.219                   | 1.391 | 0.169 | No significant effect | Accepted       |

Whereas decades of research have shown that learning effectiveness lies within the ambit of a balanced curriculum (Marinov & Fraszczyk, 2014; McKimm & Jollie, 2007; Samuel et al., 2007), in this inquiry however, the position is different. Important to emphasize is the fact that respondents recognized the importance of a balanced curriculum. However, they were not convinced if what was delivered to students at the time of this inquiry was good enough. As provided in Table 2, the numerical data show that, when all the three parameters of the predictor variable are taken together have no significant effect on the predicted variable (adjusted r<sup>2</sup> = 0.254). Implying that the parameters of X only explained 25.4% variation in Y. While other factors kept constant, the excluded variables predicted Y by 74.6%. This is justified by the constant value (2.029) with the corresponding t. (5.284) and Sig. (.000) as provided in Table 2.

To increase confidence and generalizability of the study findings, the numerical data were triangulated with the interviews to cross-verify the consistence. They individually submitted as follows;

*Participant CR1 noted that; “although the quality of the curriculum is critical to producing balanced graduates, the curriculum we are offering to them in entrepreneurship is not tailored to the realities in our context as a country. There is a need to refocus it on learners’ abilities, interests, and country’s plan if we are to move forward.”*

*Participant CR2 submits that; “there is room for improvement. We can do better! entrepreneurship as a discipline is not given the platform it rightly deserves.”*

*ParticipantCRR1 & CRR2, on the other hand noted that; “the existing curriculum would be okay if the methods of teaching and learning detailed therein are followed. We don’t find any problem with the content, although we have completely failed to use the curriculum to meet students learning needs.”*

*Participant CRF1 & CRF2, whose observations are similar, noted that; “there is a need to audit the existing curriculum across the board. Something about entrepreneurship as a discipline is not right in the whole of East Africa.”*

*Participants CRF3& CRF4 observed that; “our journey to excellence lies in the curriculum. Let’s fix the existing gaps in the curriculum and change the modes operand. We do not believe in having a stand-alone curriculum for entrepreneurship! Why don’t we make all university programs entrepreneurial-based? As it is right now, one can easily be deceived that only the entrepreneurship program produces entrepreneurs whereas not.”*

*Participant CRE1 & CRE2 mentioned that, “in curriculum development, we need to take part because we are the consumers of what universities produce each year. We are not academics, but our suggestions can be considered in curriculum development. We see a yawning gap between their certificates at graduation and their capabilities. If we work together, we can reduce the theory–practice divide, which is getting wider.”*

**Table 3.** The effect of teacher quality on Achieving SILOs.

| Variables Regressed       | Adjusted R <sup>2</sup> | F      | Sig.  | Interpretation        | Decision on Ho |
|---------------------------|-------------------------|--------|-------|-----------------------|----------------|
| Teacher quality vs. SILOs | 0.452                   | 18.570 | 0.000 | Significant effect    | Rejected       |
| Coefficients              | Beta                    | t      |       |                       |                |
| (Constant)                | 1.211                   | 4.830  | 0.000 | Significant effect    | Rejected       |
| Content mastery           | 0.174                   | 1.464  | 0.148 | No significant effect | Accepted       |
| Professionalism           | 0.187                   | 1.708  | 0.093 | No significant effect | Accepted       |
| Instructional delivery    | 0.481                   | 4.449  | 0.000 | Significant effect    | Rejected       |

The regression results in **Table 3** indicate that teacher quality as a predictor variable explains a change in SILOs by 45.2%. The adjusted R<sup>2</sup> (0.452) with the corresponding *p.* value (0.000) shows that when all the three parameters of X are taken together, have a positive and significant effect on the predicted variable (SILOs). However, while it is a truism that content mastery and professionalism play a substantial role in influencing learning effectiveness, it was discovered during this inquiry that these two variables are the least attended to (Sig. 0.148 > 0.05 & Sig. 0.093 > 0.05). This sounds like reason that an improvement in content mastery and teacher professionalism would automatically improve teacher quality, keeping other factors constant.

Additionally, interview responses were obtained from the key informants to counter-check the validity of the numerical data. They individually submitted as follows;

*Regarding teacher quality (TQ), participant TQH1 noted that; “the teaching force is grounded! They are well equipped with the required teaching technologies and content.”*

*Participant TQH2 in the same tone observed that, “we are proud of our teaching team in the department. We could be having challenges in various areas but their quality is good.”*

*Participant TQR1 noted that; “the teaching team may be good, but they need to undo most of the practices which are already obsolete in the face of the present-day challenges.”*

*Participant TQR2 mentioned that, “a majority of the teachers need to be aligned with the contextual realities. This is not Europe or America, the way some of these teachers do things leaves a lot to be desired.”*



Participant TQF1 noted that, “just like other professionals, there is need to upskill. We are short in some areas. That is true and we need to improve.”

Participant TQF2 submitted that, “honestly I need to improve in so many areas but I receive no support from my HoD in this regard.”

TQF3 & TQF4 consistently mentioned that, “our quality as teachers has a direct bearing on the support this university provides us. We last had a practical-based training four years ago, and since then, a lot has changed in HE space.”

TQE2 & TQE3 submitted that, “the quality of the graduates we receive each year represent the quality of the teaching force. In all fairness, there is a need to adopt a continuous improvement model across universities...where all teachers are continually exposed to new technologies, discoveries, and content in their specific fields. We find gaps between what we do as industrialists in the world of practice and what universities teach”.

## 5. STUDY IMPLICATIONS

Although widespread recognition alludes to the fact that entrepreneurship is the engine driving the economy and society of most nations (Alberti et al., 2004), it seems to be a misguided quest in the case of Uganda. A majority of the participants displayed dissatisfaction regarding how entrepreneurship as a discipline is treated in HE. Results revealed that the understanding of entrepreneurship is limited to employment creation and self-reliance after graduation, although the majority of the entrepreneurship facilitators have neither been entrepreneurial in their careers nor willing to venture into any business. At the time of this inquiry, the facilitators were more into covering their teaching load than delving into the possibilities of nurturing character, resilience, and imagination, among other entrepreneurial traits, into their students. There is no reason to deny why such a learning context would not produce deadbeats.

As provided in Ssemugenyi et al. (2020) that the eminence of a university cannot outmatch that of its academic staff, it is thus important to identify and recruit academics with transferrable traits which learners can use to discover their underlying potential and tease themselves with new challenges. The facilitators' role is to drive learners into a critical thinking space to birth solutions to the myriad economic challenges and spur transformation. It was discovered that students are not sufficiently prepared to meet this entrepreneurial requirement. While this was evident, facilitators attributed this gap to how universities manage their scholarship space. Teaching effectiveness is reduced to sufficient coverage of the content load with little regard to how it is delivered and punctual attendance of lectures. There is apparently little space in the entrepreneurship curriculum to expose learners to the world of practice, appreciate how firms enter and exit the market, and birthing of new ideas leading to economic transformation.

In addition, barriers arising from the epistemic justification that knowledge exists in one's mind and the cultural rigidities which regard teachers as the only source of knowledge have all stiffened the journey from the ordinary teaching approaches to entrepreneurial-based learning. Teachers' monopoly over the teaching-learning processes is indeed a major vice to the growth of entrepreneurship education in HE. Whereas teaching entrepreneurship as a course and/or discipline demands a problem-based learning approach, it was discovered during this study that the lecture method is the widely applied technique. In all fairness, the lecture method is good (Charlton, 2006; Justine, John, & Godfrey, 2013) but it falls short of inculcating a sense of imagination, creativity, resilience, risk-taking, and problem-solving, all of which are major pillars upon which entrepreneurship hinges.

As per the findings, it is necessary to get back to the drawing board to redefine university education and its cardinal purpose. While it is reasonable to claim that entrepreneurship is the gateway to any country's success (Tan & Ng, 2006; Williams, 2013; Wong et al., 2005; Young & Muller, 2010), its delivery was found unconvincing. The definition and implementation of this discipline mimics the Western definitions, yet Uganda's learning context is not yet up to that level. There is total confusion as both the facilitators and learners usually fail to translate the imported curriculum into their context. Failure to recognize that Uganda is not an extension of the West has to a

great deal affected HE. There is a need to answer questions such as; what is our context, how do we want it to be, what kind of curriculum best suits our context, what unique features in our context best define us, and what implications does our context have on HE?

Although the intentions of introducing entrepreneurship as an independent discipline were good, the framers of the concept failed right at the conceptualization phase. They failed to realize that skill-based and/or experiential education was primarily a responsibility of technical colleges in Uganda, not universities. It is of no surprise that university facilitators are limited in the skills of implementing the formal structured experiential teaching and learning processes, yet, some of the courses offered demand such models of delivery. Getting into an honest conversation with the view of refining HE is critical at this point. What if, for instance, instead of seeing university education as skill training for a specific job, we look at it as a platform for a mechanism of change that produces well-rounded citizens who adapt to the ever-changing world of work? Offering entrepreneurship as an individual discipline and creating centers for entrepreneurship as it is in one of the universities investigated is okay but not a sufficient step to addressing the rate of unemployment which the discipline was primarily introduced to solve.

## 6. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Whereas results indicated that teaching methods are a cornerstone to meeting students' intended learning objectives, it was established that the primary mode of instruction (lecture method) has outlived its usefulness. The importance of PBL and the structured experiential models in stimulating learning cannot be over-emphasized, however, the majority of the academic staff were found short on their proficiency. In all fairness, there is no effective teaching without learning (Angelo & Cross, 1993). It is likely that the question of what learning constitutes is never has had a clear answer, although a pragmatic consensus seems to have been reached in practice that learning is "*an act of thinking and doing*". This simply suggests that learning does not occur through memorization and regurgitation of concepts and facts as practice alludes, rather through a guided reflection, observation, and immediate application of concrete experience in the real world. It was further noted that the teaching-learning processes are so much inclined to the lower order level (remembering and understanding) of the Bloom (1956) instead of transcending into higher order levels of evaluating and creating. A great deal to refine teaching processes is sought; elevating HE from a mechanism for change to a mechanism of change where students are empowered to self-actualize and reshape the economic, political, and social systems around them is an appropriate step in getting ready for the years ahead.

Whether entrepreneurship is offered as an independent discipline or integrated into the main curriculum, the challenges of unemployment and economic stagnation will remain if universities continue to rely on imported curricula. It's more of a fiction to trying to align our university teaching and learning processes with countries whose education systems are into transforming the digital economy, aeronautics and space research. There is a need to redefine entrepreneurship discipline within the context of our economic problems and direct the teaching strategies towards empowering students to solve those problems. The public is losing confidence in university education, for graduates have had little impact on the growth of the country's economy. Regrettably, entrepreneurship graduates end up looking for jobs instead of creating them and employing others. Given that the majority of teachers of entrepreneurship have never been entrepreneurs in the world of practice, it is almost impossible to groom students to take risks and try out new possibilities. Higher risk tolerance and an internal locus of control have been found to be characteristics indicative of a successful entrepreneur, although are the least traits teachers demonstrate while teaching. Getting to a drawing board for purposes of establishing what we intend to achieve and how to achieve it, whilst using entrepreneurship as a discipline is necessary.

Provided in this study is the fact that, universities took up the challenge of offering entrepreneurship as a discipline with an aim of producing graduates with ready skills in business creation and full appreciation of how firms expand, contract, and exit. Although this was a good step towards solving the worrying unemployment

trajectory among the youth, the universities seem to have failed to tailor the delivery of the program to contextual realities. Not only is entrepreneurship offered in KIU and KNU, but the primary reason for its initiation in universities was to address the soaring levels of unemployment in the country. While this may have been the motivation, cases of universities producing graduates with little or no required skills are on the rise, yet, the emergency of uneducated entrepreneurs is on the increase. It is advisable that the role of entrepreneurship knowledge and skills acquired in universities be redefined in the economic growth process and the intermediate linkages from entrepreneurial activity to economic progress.

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