

The Youth's Attitude toward Entrepreneurship at the International University of Rabat, Morocco

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Abstract

Purpose: The purpose of this study was to look into factors that affect the attitude of the young people towards entrepreneurship.

Methodology: The research design used was case study method. Data was collected using questionnaires. The validity of the instruments was ensured through constructive criticism from the supervisor. The results and discussions were presented using tables, charts and graphs.

Findings: Parents and guardians of the respondents were found to have a great influence on the choices of courses that the respondents took in the institutions. It also came out that most families of the respondents run businesses at home but majority of the respondents were not involved in the running of the businesses. Lack of finances, long procedures of acquiring businesses licenses and high rates of interests charged on loans to start came out as the main challenges that would influence the attitude of the respondents towards entrepreneurship.

Conclusion: The parents or guardian greatly influence the choice of the students joining the technical courses by contributing in guidance to the students' choice to the career courses they pursued in the institutions.

Recommendations: This study recommends that there is need to start training in technical and entrepreneurship subjects from as early as primary schools to help in cultivating young people's entrepreneurial attitude at an early stage. A similar study including more stakeholders like the parents/guardians to find out their role in influencing the attitude of the young people towards entrepreneurship should be carried out.

Keywords: *Entrepreneurship, businesses, finances, attitude.*

1.0 INTRODUCTION

An entrepreneur refers to a person who comes up with a new thriving and profitable business. (Scott and Marshall (2009). According to Hisrich and Peters (2002), entrepreneurship means the process of coming up with a new business assuming the accompanying risks and obtaining profits, personal satisfaction and independence. It is an innovation to provide social solutions through starting a business, coming up with business innovations among so many other things a person can do to be productive to the economy.

The phenomenon of unemployment has become a global concern and many countries in the world both developed and developing nations are searching for ways to curb unemployment especially youth unemployment (Robertson, Collins, Medeira, & Slatter, 2003). Entrepreneurship has therefore emerged as the most well founded economic influence in the world that would solve the problem of scarcity of jobs (Kutrako, 2005). It is particularly relevant in the development of innovation, competitiveness, job creation and economic growth (Morian, 2006). According to Mohar, Singh and Kamal (2007) the industrialized countries take entrepreneurship as an important way of solving the unemployment problem. They also take entrepreneurship as a way of growing and nurturing people in order to be able to start up successful businesses. The authors add that the less developed countries consider entrepreneurship as a force to move them forward economically. Countries where entrepreneurial skills are increasing, their rates of unemployment tend to reduce. (MEC, 2007). According to Reynolds, Bygrave and Autio (2004), entrepreneurship helps investments to grow by providing knowledge and through coming up with new ideas in business. Additionally, according to the authors, the activity of entrepreneurship provides a wide range of new jobs. Weneker and Thurik (1999) also say that the art of entrepreneurship is a major boost to economic growth.

According to European Commission (2003), among the fifteen member states, Europe has an average of 8.1% unemployment rate and it is 15% among the ascending countries. Thus there is a pressing need for new jobs. Entrepreneurship can be a key method to come up with new employment opportunities which can be quite beneficial to the Europeans' problem of lack of jobs. The survey of the European Commission (2003b), however, shows that out of the 37% Europeans aspiring to become entrepreneurs, only 15% turn these considerations into reality. Countries like Pakistan agencies that make policies have developed a lot of concern about nurturing and developing entrepreneurship. The Higher Education Commission (2008) in Pakistan encourage Universities to develop learners on the ability to think critically. They also encourage them to develop the learners on innovation and having effective communication skills in addition to mastery of subjects (Higher Education Commission, 2008). Universities are therefore required to play their part in the advancement of the nation through imparting new knowledge by coming up with incubation firms, technology parks and make the acquisition of capital more flexible (Rehman, 2008). The financial and academic institutions in India and China have taken the promotion of entrepreneurs and entrepreneurship as a priority. This is partly because it is believed that the growth that the two countries have obtained was made possible by a positive response to calls for setting up business units (The Commission of European Communities, 2005). This commission also highlights that entrepreneurship is key in helping people towards self-sufficiency by creating employment opportunities leading to higher economic status. An international consortium Global Entrepreneurship Monitor Report (GEM) carried out studies to measure entrepreneurial activities in several countries. India and China frequently registered high

entrepreneurial activities (Manimala, 2002). In 2002 SMEs were responsible for about 60% of China's industrial production. This is because they were able to employ 75% of the workforce in cities and towns (China's Small & Medium Enterprises Room to grow with WTO, <http://www.usembassy-china.org>.) This is an indication that such countries have invested a lot in transforming the attitude of its people towards entrepreneurship.

Schaumburg Jeppesen and Langevang (2010) agree that there is a great enthusiasm about entrepreneurship in African countries. They add that most people are pushed to entrepreneurship for lack of salary or wage income. Thus their venturing into entrepreneurship is not by choice or as a result of taking advantage of a business opportunity but they are forced by circumstances to start a business and become self-employed. This is an indication that entrepreneurship activities may not be due to a developed attitude. In Nigeria, entrepreneurship has been taken as a crucial component for the development of economy (Kidane & Harvey, 2009; Nafukko & Muyia, 2010; Kavithat et al., 2013). They gave the reason that entrepreneurship helps in the creation of small and medium scale businesses which provides jobs and this helps in generating income and raising of people's standards of living. They added that entrepreneurship also brings about good usage of human, financial and material resources of a country.

According to Gbadeqeshin and Saheed (2016), African youth have positive attitudes and they are entrepreneurially active and ready to take risks, provided that they can be self-dependent. Due to the importance and role of entrepreneurship in the economy, the federal government of Nigeria through national Universities commission came up with a course on entrepreneurship which had to be done by all undergraduate learners in the country. This was supposed to make the development of a positive attitude towards entrepreneurship easier (National Universities Commission, 2011). The project implementation committee in Nigeria came up with an establishment which was to quicken the development of entrepreneurship education in the universities. This was approved by the Ministry of Education in Nigeria. Its role was to encourage development of effective performance of entrepreneurship among learners, staff and the community as a whole (Nigeria Best Forum, 2011). They hoped this would eventually turn to positive results on attitude change. The general objective of the study was to establish the factors that influence the attitude of the youth towards entrepreneurship in selected public Universities offering technical courses in Morocco.

2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Theoretical Review

2.1.1 The Social Learning Theory

The social learning theory pays particular attention on the development of cognitions interconnected to the expected outcome of behaviour. According to McDonald and Kielsmeier (1970), this theory suggests that a person obtains attitudes by observing other people's behaviours and imitating them. The author adds that the person being observed must be convincing to the observer (Bednar & Levie, 1993). Credibility is largely achieved by creating trust and deep conviction. Observational learning is greater when the objects being observed are seen to be trustworthy and convincing (Zimbardo & Leippe, 1991). According to this theory the opinions that young people hold towards entrepreneurship could have been acquired by observing the society around them in early stages of life. The young people observed that a person who studied and became a doctor, engineer, and pilot, among other professions was hailed and a person who started

a business was not recognized as much or was not taken to be as successful or took long to succeed in life. Thus the young people could have been conditioned to this thought and therefore need to be communicated to and informed in order to have some new learning experience which will make them have a change of attitude towards entrepreneurship.

2.1.2 The Bandura's Social Cognitive theory

This theory propose that people are driven not by inner forces, but by external factors. The theory suggests that human functioning can be explained through the interaction of three factors. These are behaviour, personal and environmental factors. According to Bandura (1997), environmental factors represent influences that come from the surroundings which lead to formation of behaviour while personal factors represents those influences that come from within a person like instincts, drives, traits, and other individual motivational forces. People who have ventured into entrepreneurship and have started businesses are said to be facing many challenges such as poor infrastructure, lack of finances, unsupportive government policies, among other challenges. These could be referred to as the environmental factors. Young people growing up and observing people struggle with these kinds of challenges may develop a certain attitude towards entrepreneurship. If the people struggling later become successful the young people may desire to go through the same and become successful while other young people may feel that the struggle is too much and the results are far from reach and this may make them have a different attitude. This theory is important to this study in that it highlights other factors apart from those within them that would influence the young people's drive towards entrepreneurship.

2.1.3 Ajzen's Theory of Planned Behaviour

This theory assists in understanding how people's behaviour can be changed. Ajzen (1991) explains three factors which are very important in changing behaviour. The first one is the belief and attitude somebody has towards performing the behaviour. This is the judgment of an individual to perform a particular behaviour, the results expected and the effect the outcomes will create (Ajzen, 1991). The theory explains that people will choose to become entrepreneurs if the benefits they expect to get from the entrepreneurial activities is greater than the benefits they expect to get from the best employment they can find in the market. These benefits could be profits obtained from factors like income and independence among others. In relation to this study, a young person will go for entrepreneurship if the venture to be taken has fewer challenges like more income than the employment, less struggles with obtaining licenses, has more independence and as such would make them have a positive attitude towards entrepreneurship.

2.2 Empirical Review

According to the MacMillan dictionary, attitude refers to someone's feelings or opinions about something which is mostly seen through the way they behave. Ajzen (2002) defined attitude as the tendency to respond in a general favourable or unfavourable way with respect to the object of the attitude. Attitude towards entrepreneurship is an important aspect which helps to predict potential entrepreneurial behaviour in future. Young people who have the right attitude toward entrepreneurship will be more inclined to depend on themselves and run their own businesses after graduation rather than being employed (Kolvereid et al., 2006).

Krueger and Carsrud (1993), and Lee, Chen and Chuan (2004) are of the opinion that attitudes of people are precursors to their behavior. Guerero, Riaph & Urbano (2008) agree that attitude towards entrepreneurship is one of the factors that determine the resolve of becoming an entrepreneur. Thus the attitude of the young people towards entrepreneurship was causing a positive or negative feeling towards entrepreneurship. Nabi and Holden (2008) indicate that conditions for entrepreneurship have much improved. They point out that even with this improvement, the business start-up intent among the graduates is relatively low. This raises the question why there is a problem of the young people going into entrepreneurship, even after improvement in entrepreneurial conditions.

According to Bwisa (2011), entrepreneurial opportunity may be defined as a market opportunity or a begging demand waiting to be fulfilled. Entrepreneurship springs from either a real opportunity or an entrepreneur's realization that there is an opportunity which needs to be exploited. It is important to have the ability to recognize these opportunities when they arise and to implement the necessary steps for action. A country that creates a stable economic atmosphere and also has minimal income inequality is likely to generate more entrepreneurial opportunities than one with say 5% of the population controlling 95% of the national income (Bwisa, 2011).

Hisrich-Peters-Shepherd (2009) says that the identification and evaluation of opportunities is quite a difficult task. Most of the good business opportunities do not just come by but they come as a result of an entrepreneur's keen awareness to possibilities or use of ways that point out at potential opportunities. For example an entrepreneur asks questions at events whether anyone is using a product that does not adequately fulfil its intended purpose or one that is leaving some unfulfilled gaps. This person is constantly looking for a need and an opportunity to create a better product. Another entrepreneur always monitors the play habits and toys of the young children. This is her way of looking for any unique toy product niche for a new venture. Whether the opportunity is identified by using input from consumers, business associates, channel members or technical people, each opportunity must be carefully screened and evaluated. This evaluation of the opportunity is perhaps the most critical element of the entrepreneurial process, as it allows the entrepreneur to assess whether the specific product or service has the returns needed compared to the resources required. This evaluation process involves looking at the length of the opportunity, its real perceived value, its risks and returns, whether it matches with the personal skills and goals of the entrepreneur and its uniqueness or competitive advantage in its environment (Hisrich-Peters-Shepherd, 2008). Such an environment could only be realized by people who have been prepared, are alert and have the right attitude to take up the opportunities.

Deakins and Freel (2012) say that for younger entrepreneurs who have inadequate experience, skills and competencies, education could have a key part in providing a favorable atmosphere for formation of business ideas. There is a suggestion that the young entrepreneurs of age up to 30 years are not adequately represented in entrepreneurship because of inexperience, lack of skills, incompetency and lack of finances. They also add that idea formation may be affected by less educational experience and lack of early training. Education should provide situations that stimulate creativity, improvisation and problem solving. In the United Kingdom, keen attention is being paid on business abilities such as problem solving, group work and generation of ideas. Formerly, schemes in the United Kingdom such as the Enterprise Insight initiative, which was designed to highlight the success of young entrepreneurs have had rather limited appeal to success. Creative thinking can also be intensified or limited by the education system. This will affect the

way we view opportunities, not just in our early years in life but throughout the rest of our life as well.

3.0 METHODOLOGY

The research design that was used is case study method. The approach was used in this study because it involves in depth investigation of a single event to explore the causes of underlying principles. The research instruments used were questionnaires, this study used structured questionnaires to seek information from the respondents. The validity of the instrument in this study was ensured through helpful instructions from the supervisor who had a lot of understanding and skill in analyzing the questions. The questions were revised and improved according to the supervisor's advice and suggestions.

4.0 DATA ANALYSIS, FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Demographic Characteristics

Three hundred and two students responded and returned the questionnaires. A hundred and forty eight students did not avail the questionnaires for collection and were therefore not included in the data analysis. 198 (65.56 %) of the students respondents were male while 104 (34.45 %) were female. The females were the minority. This could be interpreted to be as a result of most of the technical courses offered in the institutions are said to be a preference for the males while those said to be a preference for the females are less. The age category with the highest number of respondents is 18 – 23 years with a percentage of 79.49 %. The category of 24- 28 years had a moderate rate of 16.89 %. The age categories of 29- 34 years and 35 years and above has the least number of respondents with a percentage of 2.32% and 1.32% respectively.

4.2 Responses to the Research Questions 4.2.1 Learning

4.2.1.1 Do Learning Systems have influence on the Attitude of Youth towards Entrepreneurship?

The research question was to find out whether the learning systems especially in institutions influence the attitude of the young people in any way. The assumption in this research question was that learning systems could influence the attitude of the young people in either encouraging or discouraging them to go into entrepreneurship. The learning systems in this study pointed at the curriculums used in institutions in passing both academic knowledge and practical skills. The question was to try and examine whether learning systems in institutions have any influence on the attitude of youth towards entrepreneurship in Kenya. The response to this research question is analyzed in table 1 below. The mean of the attitude was 1.2 against learning which was 1.9. This shows a significant difference in the mean. This implies that learning systems have a big impact on the attitude of the young people towards entrepreneurship. The students responded to the questions as follows.

Table 1: Persons who influence the course to be studied by respondents at taking at University

Response	N	%	Cumulative
Parents	124	41.06	41.06
Guardian	98	32.45	73.51
Trainers	23	7.61	81.12
Self	57	18.87	99.99
Total	302	99.99	

From table 1, it can be observed that parents have the highest rating with a percentage of 41.06 % on influencing the choice of courses the students took in colleges followed by guardians who had a percentage of 32.45%. The table also shows that the students had little say in the choice of courses that they took in colleges which had a percentage of 18.87%. From the data above it is clear that influence on the choice that the young people made while choosing the courses came from other people. These people included the parents, guardians and trainers with a total percentage of 81.12%. The young people who took the courses out of their own volition made a percentage of 18.87%.

Table 2: Response on whether respondents had entrepreneurship training in primary or secondary school levels

Response	N	%	Cumulative
Yes	94	31.13	31.13
No	208	68.87.45	100
Total	302	100	

Table 2, shows that a majority of the trainees did not do any technical courses either in primary or secondary school level. This suggests that the trainees only got to do a hands on course the first time at the college level. It is also an indicator that at primary and secondary school levels the learning process did not include hands on learning and that in the majority of primary and secondary schools attended by the trainees there was no component of entrepreneurship included in the learning process.

4.2.2 Culture

4.2.2.1 Does Business Culture have a Role on the Attitude of the Young People towards Entrepreneurship?

The question sought to establish the role of business culture on the attitude of the young people towards entrepreneurship. The assumption was that the business culture where the person grew up in could have a role in molding the young people's attitude towards entrepreneurship. The mean of culture was 1.78 against attitude which was 1.04. This generated the following information as shown in table 3.

Table 3: Respondents whose families have businesses

Response	N	%	Cumulative
Yes	256	84.77	84.77
No	46	15.23	100
Total	302	100	

From the responses given in table 3, it is clear that 84.77% of the respondents came from families that have businesses. Only 15.23% of the respondents did not have businesses in their families. This could give enough reasons for most of the trainees to want to keep businesses and become like their parents or guardians.

Table 4: Respondents who are involved in the family businesses

Response	N	%	Cumulative
Yes	99	32.78	32.78
No	203	67.22	100
Total	302	100	

Table 4 shows that a majority (67.22%) were not involved in the family businesses. This indicates that the culture of entrepreneurship is not cultivated in the young people at an early age thus influencing their attitude towards entrepreneurship. The respondents were asked what role they played in the family business, they gave the following response.

Table 5: Roles respondents play in the family businesses

Role	N	%	Cumulative
Manager	1	0.33	0.33
Non-management	52	17.22	17.55
None	249	82.45	100
Total	302	100	

Out of the respondents whose families owned businesses, only one respondent (0.33%) was involved in the managerial positions and only a percentage of 17.2% were involved in the non-managerial positions. This is an indication that most of the trainees were not encouraged right from their backgrounds and from an early age to appreciate entrepreneurship leading to self-employment.

Table 6: Mean level of entrepreneurial attitude for culture

Culture	N	Mean	SD
I am pursuing a course which will lead me to self-employment because my parents dictated it to me	302	3.14	0.384
I enjoy participating in my parents business	249	2.78	0.483
My parents have succeeded in business that's why I am pursuing a course that will lead me to self-employment	302	3.13	0.446
I am not given a chance to participate in my parents business	302	3.74	0.519
I would choose to be employed so as to be highly regarded the community	291	3.84	0.392
Overall mean	283	3.33	0.498

Table 6 gives the attitude of the respondents concerning questions on culture. It can be observed that overall mean is average (3.33). Most of the respondents not being given a chance to participate in their parents businesses and being regarded highly in the society have the highest mean. Participation in the parents businesses, parents succeeding in businesses and pursuing the course they are taking due to persuasion from the parents had the lowest means.

4.2.3 Social Economic Factors

4.2.3.1 Do the Social-Economic Factors have Any Contribution on the Attitude of the Young People towards Entrepreneurship?

The respondents were asked to use a tick to indicate their level of agreement as it relates to the statements below. The first question was if they started a small business anywhere in Morocco, in their opinion, the following would be the main challenge.

Table 7: Challenges that could influence the attitude of the respondents towards entrepreneurship

Statement	Response	%	Cumulative
Poor Roads	47	15.98	15.98
Lack of electricity	14	4.76	20.74
Poor Communication networks iv) Lack of Finances	10	3.40	24.14
Lack of Support from relatives and local people	90	30.61	54.75
Long Procedures of acquiring business licenses	72	24.49	79.24
High rates of interests charged by financial institutions on loans to start a business	61	20.75	99.99
Total	294	100	0.498

Table 7 clearly shows that the socio economic factors that would affect the attitude of the young greatly would be lack of finances with a percentage of 30.61% and the long procedures of acquiring business licenses with a percentage of 24.49% and high rates of interests charged by financial institutions on loans to start businesses with a percentage of 20.75 %.

Table 8: Mean level of entrepreneurial attitude in relation for social economic factors

Social Economic Factors	N	Mean	SD
These days job vacancies are scarce reason why I am pursuing a course that will lead me to self-employment	302	3.62	1.520
I would not choose to be a business person because of the long procedures people follow to start-up businesses	302	3.66	1.400
Financial challenges would discourage me from becoming an entrepreneur	302	3.32	1.334
Poor communication networks would discourage me from becoming an entrepreneur	302	2.28	1.266
High rate of interests charged by financial institutions would discourage me from going into entrepreneurship	291	3.83	0.970
Overall mean	283	3.33	0.498

Table 8 shows that the mean is average. However factors with the highest mean are high rates of interest (3.83), long procedures of starting businesses (3.66) and scarcity of job vacancies (3.62). Financial challenges had a moderate mean (3.32) while poor communication networks had the lowest mean (2.28). This means that a majority of the respondents agreed that high rates of interest, long procedures of starting businesses and scarcity of job vacancies would discourage them from starting up businesses.

4.2.4 Personal Traits

4.2.4.1 Do the Young People's Personal Traits Have Any Effect on Their Attitude towards Entrepreneurship?

This question was to help find out if the young people's personal traits had any influence on their attitude towards entrepreneurship. The respondents were asked to indicate their level of agreement to the following questions where they were to use the following scales to point out how much they agree with the statements. The response was as shown on table 9.

Table 9: Mean level of entrepreneurial attitude for personal traits

Social Economic Factors	N	Mean	SD
I am very good at making decisions	302	3.72	1.047
When faced with difficulties I look for alternatives	302	3.82	1.158
When I fail in doing something I try the same thing again	302	3.10	1.305

I am able to come up with an idea and turn it into profit	302	3.32	1.471
I love working and I am willing to put more hours in it	302	4.04	0.930
I seriously consider entrepreneurship as career option	302	3.11	1.453
I am not very opportunistic	302	2.87	1.365
I am very creative when it comes to coming up with new ways to generate profit	302	3.63	1.241
Overall mean	302	3.52	

From table 9, the mean is above average (3.52). This shows that most of the young people love working and they are willing to put more hours and effort (4.04), love creating things that are useful to people (3.63), look for alternatives when faced with difficulties (3.82), are very good at making decisions (3.72) and are very creative when it comes to generating new ways of getting profit (3.63). From the same table, it can be observed that the respondents are not very opportunistic, this having a mean of 2.87. According to Wikilund and Shepherds (2003), a person needs to have self-drive and skill in order to be able to take advantage of an opportunity and start a business. Entrepreneurship therefore occurs when an individual perceives an opportunity and has the will and drive to pursue that opportunity (Wolff & Pett, 2006). Thus the respondents need to be trained on ways of identifying entrepreneurship opportunities through having subjects like entrepreneurship education or seminars and workshops on how to identify business opportunities. The other characteristics had moderate means of between 3.10 and 3.45. This would mean that the personalities of majority the young people may not be affecting their attitude towards entrepreneurship in a negative way. This is in agreement with Ciavarella *et al.* (2004) who say that many researchers have taken personal traits as factors that influence and point out entrepreneurial intention in a person.

5.0 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Conclusion

The parents or guardian greatly influence the choice of the students joining the technical courses by contributing in guidance to the students' choice to the career courses they pursued in the institutions. The study also revealed that majority of the students neither did any technical courses nor have entrepreneurship in primary or secondary schools. This means that the attitude of the young people was not developed from a young age by introducing technical courses and entrepreneurship. This could have influenced their attitude negatively. This also cites a gap in the primary/secondary schools curriculums which could also have these subjects. To conclude it was observed that most of the respondents' families owned businesses but the majority of parents or guardians of the respondents were not involving the respondents in their business activities. Majority were not even giving them the non-managerial duties to have an experience. The parents and guardians need to involve their young people in their business activities and this could positively influence them towards entrepreneurship.

5.2 Recommendations

The study recommended that there is need to start training in technical subjects and entrepreneurship from as early as in primary and secondary schools to start cultivating the entrepreneurial attitude at an early stage. The study also recommended that curriculum developers need to include subjects with the entrepreneurial component in the primary and secondary curriculums so that the students can start developing the entrepreneurial culture at an early age. This would include lessons on how to identify business opportunities, coaching the young people's business talents and skills to start influencing their attitude in a learning environment. These subjects should also be made compulsory in all the school levels to ensure none of the students misses on the lessons.

The other recommendation was that teachers and administrators of institutions need to come up with schedules that will incorporate extracurricular activities that will influence the students towards entrepreneurship e.g. invite successful role models to have a talk with the students, allow them to run the institutions' income generating programmes among other activities. The parents or guardians to the young people need to involve them while running their businesses in order to create interest towards the businesses and influence their activities as they grow up.

The personal characteristics of the young people did not seem to affect their attitude towards entrepreneurship in a big way thus the study recommended that this positive aspect about their characteristics should be taken advantage of and coaching and encouragement done to influence their attitude towards entrepreneurship positively.

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Conflict of Interest

Authors declares no conflict of interest.

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