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Effect of Entrepreneurship Education on Entrepreneurial Intentions among Graduating Students of Nasarawa State University, Keffi-Nigeria

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Abstract

Graduate unemployment has risen from 6.4% in 2014 to 27.1% in 2020 despite the introduction of entrepreneurship education as a mandatory course in tertiary institutions in Nigeria aimed at encouraging graduates to be self-reliant and less dependent on scarce paid employment. This worrisome situation propelled this study which examined the effect of entrepreneurship education proxied by curriculum, androgogy and university support on entrepreneurial intentions among graduating students of Nasarawa State University, Keffi. Adopting a cross-sectional research design, data were collected with the aid of a structured five-point Likert scale questionnaire from a sample of 93 respondents drawn conveniently from final year students of the institution. Path regression analysis using structural equation modelling (SEM) was employed to test the hypotheses formulated and the results revealed that curriculum has negative but insignificant effect on entrepreneurial intentions while androgogy and university support both have positive effects however, while androgogy showed significant effect, university support showed insignificant effect on entrepreneurial intentions and hence the study concludes that entrepreneurship education influences entrepreneurial intentions among graduating students. Consequently, the study recommends among others that university should encourage business plan competition and individuals with good business plans be funded and supervised by professionals and also, real life experiences be inculcated in the teaching method by way of inviting successful entrepreneurs to give talks and guidance on successful venturing.

Keywords: Androgogy, Curriculum, Entrepreneurship Education, Entrepreneurial Intention, University Support

1. Introduction

Education as the case is being witnessed in the Nigeria of today has gain wide acceptance from the populace with many enrolling in one tertiary institution

or the other ranging from universities, polytechnics to colleges of educations. The situation is not surprising looking at the increased perception of people (especially graduates) of earning a living with certificate(s) after graduation. This perception has endangered Nigerian system of education which continue to witness an increase in the number of applicants for various programs yearly (Deebom & Baridoma, 2017).The resultant effect of which is the high number of graduates turned out by tertiary institutions on a yearly basis , which contributes to an increase in the number of unemployed graduates as though government have no capacity to absorb the number with the little capacity of private institutions further contributing to the menace.

However, graduate unemployment is not peculiar to Nigeria and other developing countries alone; it has remained indeed a global phenomenon for decades hence it has been a common trend in many countries to find graduates of tertiary institutions not able to secure jobs several years after graduation (Twumasi, 2013). According to Deebom and Baridoma, (2017), unemployment is a negative economic matter which poses many harsh social implications which affects every nation and her citizens directly or indirectly. Sadly, the outbreak of the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) has wreaked more havoc in the global business environment, causing nations' economies as well as corporate organizations to crumble thereby forcing them to downsize leading to further loss of jobs and hence, increase in unemployment rate. This situation further emphasized the need for entrepreneurial education among graduates in order to enable them to be self-reliant.

In tackling this negative global phenomenon of graduate unemployment, policy makers and stakeholders in developed countries such as United Kingdom, USA, and Germany, advocated a shift from conventional educational system to one geared towards acquisition of vocational and technical skills to enhance smooth transition into jobs for graduates particularly those of tertiary institutions. This further buttress the fact that education is sacrosanct towards the development of any society as though the goals of wealth creation, poverty alleviation and value re-orientation can only be attained and sustained through an efficient and functional educational system which impacts relevant skills, knowledge, capacities, attitudes and values into individuals (Agi & Yellowe, 2013).

Entrepreneurship education was made compulsory by the federal government in the year 2006/2007 for all students of higher educational institutions (Okojie, 2009) so as to inculcate in students' relevant entrepreneurial skills as well as attitudes and orientation in order to stimulate and foster entrepreneurial intentions as well as career in them thereby igniting self-sufficiency in them (Middleton, 2010). The federal government in 2014 also re-emphasized on entrepreneurship education being compulsory in every tertiary institution however, the aspirations for paid employment and graduate

unemployment has persistently been on the increase as seen in the rise in unemployment rate of the working age population (15-64years) which increased from 6.4% in the 4th quarter of 2014 to 27.1% in the second quarter of 2020 of which 13.3% of the total unemployment rate are graduates and postgraduates (National Bureau of Statistics, 2020).This stirred the need to investigate the effect of entrepreneurship education on entrepreneurial intentions among graduating students of higher institutions in Nigeria with specific attention to Nasarawa state university, Keffi-Nigeria.

The study was guided by the following specific objectives;

i. To examine the effect of curriculum on entrepreneurial intention among graduating students of Nasarawa state university, Keffi.

ii. To assess the effect of entrepreneurship education androgogy on entrepreneurial intention among graduating students of Nasarawa state university, Keffi.

iii. To examine the effect of university support system on entrepreneurial intention among graduating students of Nasarawa state university, Keffi.

Consequently, the study was guided by the following hypotheses stated in null form:

Ho_1: Curriculum has no significant effect on entrepreneurial intention among graduating students of Nasarawa state university, Keffi.

Ho_2: entrepreneurship education androgogy has no significant effect on entrepreneurial intention among graduating students of Nasarawa state university, Keffi.

Ho_3: University support system has no significant effect on entrepreneurial intention among graduating students of Nasarawa state university, Keffi.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Conceptual Review

2.1.1 Concept of Entrepreneurship Education

There exists a need to understand the concept of entrepreneurship before delving into entrepreneurship education. According to Olokundun (2017), entrepreneurship is the process of assembling creative and innovative ideas as well as coping with management and organizational skills in order to effectively and efficiently combine men and materials towards meeting an identified need, thereby creating wealth.

Entrepreneurship education according to Akudolu (2010), is referred to as the acquisition of knowledge, skills and attitude to aid the acquirer confront life challenges in whatever nature it comes and be really able to take decisive steps to realize new trends and opportunities for meeting those challenges in all aspects of human life. Entrepreneurship education is defined as any program or process of

education targeted at motivating entrepreneurial actions and behaviour (Olokundun, 2017).

Fayolle and Gailly (2004) defined entrepreneurship education as any pedagogical programme, associated with instilling entrepreneurial skills and qualities in learners. Similarly, Oduwaiye (2009) and also Keat, *Selvarajah* and *Meyer* (2011) defined entrepreneurship education as the range of lectures, curricular and programmes that seeks to afford students with the necessary entrepreneurial capabilities, knowledge and skills, geared towards the pursuit of a career in entrepreneurship. Acquisition of such knowledge, skills and expertise that relates directly to entrepreneurship processes is necessary and much needed for a successful business startup (Ejere & Tende, 2012). This study defines entrepreneurship education as a wealth of knowledge and experience gathered overtime through a well-defined process of learning in an organized educational setting which is aimed at equipping the leaner with relevant skills to start and grow a business idea. Thus, this study adopts the above definition because it sees entrepreneurship education as a system of training and equipping graduates with skills for socio-economic development.

2.1.2 Concept of Curriculum

A curriculum is said to be a collection of similar courses which are mostly in a special field of study. Kuratko (2009) defined curriculum to mean any instructional and educative program through which the students achieve their goals and aspirations of life which could take the form of an organized interaction of students that is guided by regulations, resources and materials in order to attain the objectives of the education. Henry, Hill and Leitch (2003); Sascha, Walter and Dohse (2009), argued that curriculum and courses of entrepreneurship education are essential sources of entrepreneurial motivation and knowledge. This study defined Curriculum here as a collection of work schemes and guidelines which are directed towards imparting knowledge and skills to selected target persons.

2.1.3 Concept of Entrepreneurship Androgogy

The word androgogy has recently been used as a replacement for pedagogy (referring to persons below adulthood that is below 18 years of age) which refers to the approach and way in which instructors pass on knowledge to students (adults) as well as the strategies they adopt in carrying out their work. In this context, androgogy refers to the strategy employed by lecturers in teaching entrepreneurship education to students in higher institutions.

According to Moses, et al. (2016), entrepreneurship pedagogy is a combination of knowledge and skills imbedded in the instructor, necessary for effectiveness in teaching entrepreneurship. Throwing some element of weight behind this, Krueger Reilly and Carsrud (2000) portrays entrepreneurship

pedagogy as a highly dynamic combination of theoretical understanding and relevant practical skill. They went on to list some of the best practices that can be used in the university in entrepreneurship education pedagogy, which are; internship, mentor and mentee interaction, field trip, the use of model teachers, case studies, students' entrepreneurship conference, experimental laboratories and lots more. Becharch and Gregoire (2006) posited that a well-structured pedagogy should set teaching goals of the courses, emphasize on the knowledge and learning expectations, approaches of course delivery not forgetting ways of appraisals.

2.1.4 Concept of University Support System

The concept of university support systems in the context of entrepreneurship education is seen as that much needed entrepreneurial environment which consists of supporting infrastructures and initiatives such as seed funding, business incubation, patenting and commercialization and so on (Gnyawali & Fogel, 1994). Mahlberg (1996) argued that universities are pivotal in the promotion of entrepreneurship education, particularly because they are the most ideal atmosphere where students' entrepreneurial culture and mindset are shaped and nurtured. Furthermore, Bygrave (2004) posited that universities are at the forefront of entrepreneurship promotion by acting as catalyst that ignites students' entrepreneurial thoughts and behaviours. Universities have been argued to be very relevant in entrepreneurship development among students through the creation of a conducive environment that portrays entrepreneurship in a positive light capable of attracting students' interest in entrepreneurial career (Nasiru, Keat & Bhatti, 2015). The enabling environment provided by universities for students to grow their idea is referred to as university support system in this study.

2.1.5 Concept of Entrepreneurial Intention

According to Dohse and Walter (2010), entrepreneurial intention is seen as the desire of a person to embark on entrepreneurial activities related to self-employment initiatives and new business startups. Literatures such as the works of Kolvereid and Isaken (2006) asserted that entrepreneurial intentions are determining factors for starting up a business by prospective entrepreneurs. This was further buttressed by Krueger, Reilly and Carsrud (2000) and also Krueger (2007) who posited that the theoretical underpinning of entrepreneurial intentions is such that people do embark on business startups as a function of an intentionally planned behaviour rather than a consequence of reflex action. According to this study, entrepreneurial intention is the drive that stimulates business start-ups among individuals.

2.2 Empirical Review

Salihu (2016) examined effect of entrepreneurship education on graduates' business start-up in north central Nigeria. The study adopted a survey research design and data were collected with the aid of a structured questionnaire administered to a sample of three hundred and seventy-five (375) respondents drawn from graduates of twelve (12) tertiary institutions in north central, Nigeria. Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics and logistic regression and the study found that entrepreneurial career aspirations and entrepreneurial culture have significant impact on graduates' business start-up. Likewise, Mohammed, Baburo and Karage (2014) examined the impact of entrepreneurship education on students' job creation ability after graduation. Data were collected from a sample of 300 final year students of the Federal College of Education Potiskum and Federal College of Education Gombe and analyzed using simple percentages and the t-test. The findings revealed that students had no intentions to be self-employed and that the colleges had adequate but not befitting programs to prepare students for entrepreneurship after graduation.

Blessing and Dafe (2014) assesed entrepreneurship education and small-scale business development among students of college of education in Warri, Delta state.Data were collected via questionaire from a sample of one hundred and five (105) respondents drawn from students of the college and analyzed using correlation analysis. The result indicated that there exist a positive and significant relationship between the perception of entrepreneurship education with age and educational attainment. However, the was a negative relationship between entrepreneurship education and marital status. The study concluded that perception of entrepreneurship education increases with age and educational attainment. This study however, considered only perception of respondents towards entrepreneurship education and not how it can stimulate entrpreneurial intentions.

Nkala and Wanjau (2013) examined factors influencing implementation of the entrepreneurship programme conducted in tertiary technical institutions in Kenya. The study investigated the influence of pedagogy, teachers' network with entrepreneurship practitioners and availability of training resources. Using a structured self-administered questionnaire,a census survey of entrepreneurship education teachers in technical training institutions in Nairobi County was conducted. The study revealed that teachers use traditional pedagogical approaches that are not practical oriented which in turn has a negative effect on students as regards entrepreneurial learning and identification of opportunities.

Shirokova, Osiyevskyy and Bogatyreva (2015) assessed different types of entrepreneurial capital provided by universities and their impact on student involvement in entrepreneurship. The study used data from the Global University Entrepreneurial Spirit Students' Survey (GUESSS) as empirical basis for research. Based on the result of a hierarchical regression data analysis, the study concluded

that university initiatives to develop human and social capital influencepositively based on the extent to which students were engaged in innovative entrepreneurial activities.

2.3 Theoretical Framework

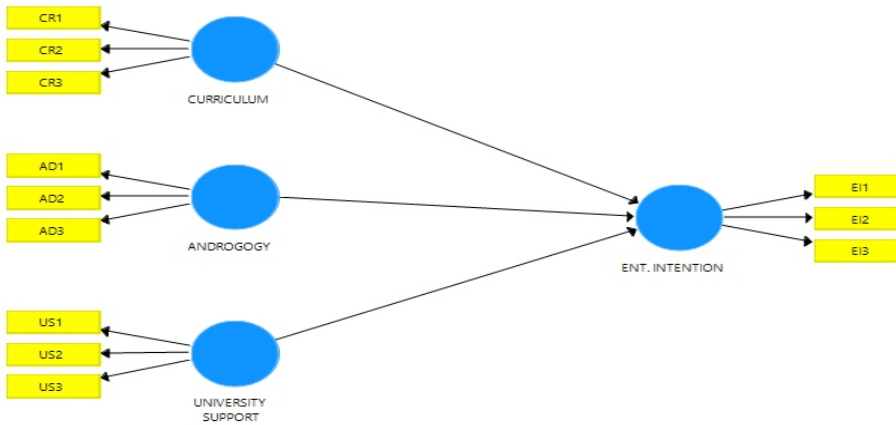
The study was hinged on the risk-taking theory. The risk-taking theory of Richard Cantillon and John Stuart Mill hold that profits accrued to an enterpreneur is the proceeds of his/her risk taking capability. This theory further sees entrepreneurship as a mental education that engineers persons to undertake moderate or calculated risk for which they stand to enjoy stream of profits (Alam & Hossan, 2003). The importance of this theory to this study is such that, it held that entrepreneurship education improves the ability, capability and potentials of the human elements of the nation to undertake risks for which both the individuals and the nation stand to benefit (Salihu, 2016).

3. Methodology

This study adopted a cross-sectional research design employing a survey method. The population of the study included all final year students (2,473) students across seven faculties of Nasarawa state university, Keffi , 2019. The choice of this category of respondent was based on the fact that, all of the members of this group have undergone entrepreneurship education training at least twice at their lower levels in the university. According to Cohen, Manion and Morrison, (2000), the minimum sample size for a relational survey design shouldn't be below thirty (30) and as such, an accessible sample size of 93 respondents was drawn using convenience sampling technique.

A well-structured five-point likert scale questionnaire developed by Olokundun (2017) was adopted and administered to the sampled respondents. Curriculum (in relation to the contents and their relevance), androgogy (in relation to wealth of experience of the tutor and real life issues), university support (in relation to technology patenting as well as seed funding) were used to measure entrepreneurship education against entrepreneurial intention.

Data collected were analyzed using path coefficient regression analysis using the structural equation modelling (SEM) and the model of the regression analysis is specified thus;



Theoretical Model on Entrepreneurship Education and Entrepreneurial Intentions among Graduating Students of Nasarawa State University, Keffi.

4. Results and Discussion

4.1 Data Presentation and Analysis

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	Skewness		Kurtosis	
	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Std. Error	Statistic	Std. Error
CR	93	1	5	3.97	1.229	-.343	.250	-.302	.495
AD	93	1	5	4.22	1.062	-.279	.250	.567	.495
US	93	1	5	4.10	1.143	-.221	.250	.640	.495
EI	93	1	5	4.38	.977	-.752	.250	.828	.495
Valid N (listwise)	93								

Source: Authors' Computation Using PLS-SEM 2021

The table above described the data in terms of the mean, minimum, maximum, standard deviation, skewness and kurtosis values. Curriculum (CR) had minimum and maximum values of 1 and 5 respectively with an average value of 3.97 and a standard deviation value of 1.229. Androgogy (AD) also, had minimum and maximum values of 1 and 5 respectively however; it showed an average of 4.22 along with a standard deviation of 1.062. Similarly, the minimum and

maximum values of university support (US) recorded were 1 and 5 respectively with an average value of 4.10 and a standard deviation of 1.143. Lastly, entrepreneurial intention (EI) recorded an average value of 4.38 with a standard deviation of 0.977 along with minimum and maximum values of 1 and 5 respectively. All the variables had skewness and kurtosis values less than 1 which suggest that the data were normally distributed and hence satisfying the ordinary least square regression assumption especially where small samples (samples < 100) are used (Lumley, Diehr, Emerson & Chen, 2002).

4.2 Common Method Variance Test

Where dependent and independent variables are sourced from a single individual, there is always a concern of the likely presence of bias in their response and as such Harman single factor test was conducted. The result indicated that none of the variables explain more than 50% variance and such signifies the absence of bias in the data.

4.3 Reliability of Study Scale

Table 2: Reliability of Study Scale

S/N	Var.		Factor Loadings	Cronbach alpha	Comp. Reliab.	Aver. Vari. Extra. (AVE)	No of Items
1	**CR**	CR1 CR2 CR3	.907 .862 .894	0.878	0.922	0.798	**3**
2	**AD**	AD1 AD2 AD3	.839 .852 .626	0.826	0.889	0.728	**3**
3	**US**	US1 US2 US3	.795 .801 .751	0.826	0.889	0.728	**3**
4	**EI**	EI1 EI2 EI3	.780 .881 .883	0.779	0.900	0.819	**3**

Source: Authors' Computation Using PLS-SEM 2021

Using Jöreskog (1971) composite reliability, the study tested for internal consistency of the study. All the values fall within the Hair, et al., (2019) rating of good consistency. The Cronbach alpha value were above 0.60 which is the minimum threshold as recommended by Sekaran (2010). To teste for the convergent validity, the average variance extracted (AVE) was used. All the values

were above 0.50 which indicates that the construct explains at least 50 percent of the variance of its items. The variance inflation factor (VIF) was used to evaluate collinearity of the formative indicators. All the VIF values were less than 5 indicate the absence of critical collinearity issues among the indicators of formatively measured constructs (Hair, et al. 2019).

4.4 The Variance Inflation Factor (VIF)

Table 3: The Variance Inflation Factor (VIF)

	VIF
CR1	2.353
CR2	2.773
CR3	2.274
EI1	1.942
EI2	2.112
EI3	1.704
AD1	1.687
AD2	1.687
AD3	1.621
US1	2.110
US2	2.176
US3	1.891

Source: Authors' Computation Using PLS-SEM 2021

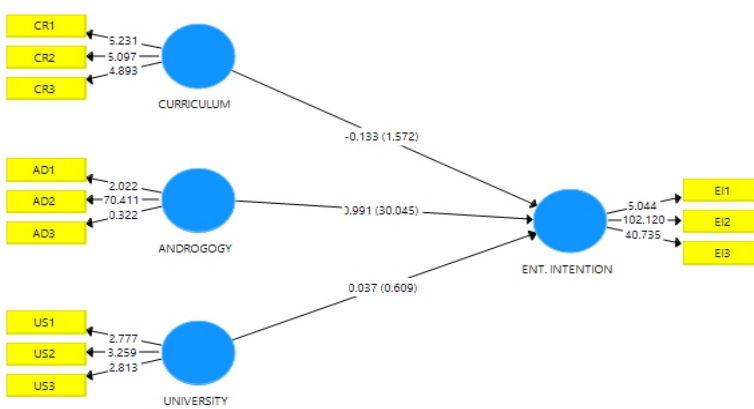


Figure 1: Significance of Factor Loadings and Path Coefficient.
Source: PLS_SEM 2021

4.6 Structural Equation Modeling (SEM)

Table 4: Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) Results

Hypothesis	Variable	Path Coeff.	T-value
Decision	R^2		
		(Beta)	
H_1	Curriculum	-0.133	1.572
Accepted	0.53		
H_2	Androgogy	0.991	30.045
Rejected			
H_3	University Support	0.037	0.609
Accepted			

Source: Source: Authors' Computation Using PLS-SEM 2021

The result above revealed that the overall path coefficient of the model between entrepreneurship education and entrepreneurial intention was found to be significant at 0.05 level of significance as indicated by the r-square value of 0.53 which implies that 53% of the variation in entrepreneurial intention is explained by entrepreneurship education proxied by curriculum, androgogy and university support. The remaining 47% is explained by other factors not included in the study. The result further indicated that androgogy showed the most influential unique factor that measures entrepreneurial intentions while university support had the least value that explains entrepreneurial intentions.

The result from the first analysis showed that curriculum has negative but insignificant influence on entrepreneurial intentions among graduating students. The decision was premised on the t-value which was less than the minimum threshold of 1.964 (β = -0.133, t-value = 1.572). Therefore, the null hypothesis which states that curriculum has no significant effect on entrepreneurial intentions is accepted.

The result from the second analysis showed that androgogy has positive and significant influence on entrepreneurial intentions among graduating students. The decision was premised on the t-value which was greater than the minimum threshold of 1.964 (β = 0.991, t-value = 30.045). Therefore, the null hypothesis which states that androgogy has no significant effect on entrepreneurial intentions is rejected.

The result from the last analysis showed that university support has positive but insignificant influence on entrepreneurial intentions among graduating students. The decision was premised on the t-value which was less than the minimum threshold of 1.964 (β = 0.037, t-value = 0.609). Therefore, the null hypothesis which states that university support has no significant effect on entrepreneurial intentions is accepted.

4.7 Model Goodness of Fit (GoF)

Sequel to the need to validate the PLS model, there is a need to assess the goodness of fit of the model as Hair, et al. (2017) suggested. This study used the standardised root mean square residual's (SRMR). The choice of this index was based on the fact that the SRMR provides the absolute fit measure where a value of zero indicates a perfect fit. The study adopted Hu & Bentler (1998) suggestion that a value of less than 0.08 represents a good fit while applying SRMR for model goodness of fit. The study result indicates an SRMR value of 0.080. This indicates the model fits. Aside the chi-square, the other measure indicates a goodness of fit on the model of the study.

Table 5: Model Goodness of Fit

	Saturated Model	Estimated Model
SRMR	0.080	0.080
d_ULS	0.229	0.229
d_G	0.164	0.164
Chi-Square	163.388	163.388
NFI	0.706	0.706

Source: Authors' Computation Using PLS-SEM 2021

5. Conclusion and Recommendations

The study found and concluded that that curriculum has negative but insignificant effect on entrepreneurial intentions among graduating students. The study concluded that the contents of the curriculum may be outdated and not fit for the current economic and social realities and hence the negative effect on entrepreneurial intentions. The study also concluded based on the positive influence indicated by androgogy, that the adoption of both theoretical and practical teaching methods in entrepreneurship education classes has increased the desire in students to set up businesses before or after graduation. Lastly, the study concludes based on the findings that university support towards entrepreneurial activities is capable of promoting entrepreneurial intentions among soon-to-be graduates but is yet to be implemented in a manner that will bring out the full effect which explains the insignificant effect indicated in the study finding.

Generally, the study concludes that entrepreneurship education explains to a large extent the desires to set up businesses among graduates or graduating students of Nasarawa state university, Keffi and also serve as a catalyst for developing entrepreneurial intentions among graduating students of higher institutions which could subsequently lead to business start-up after graduation thereby reducing unemployment rate and over reliance on white collar jobs.

Based on the foregoing, the study recommends that:

i. The contents of entrepreneurship education curriculum should be revisited and necessary adjustments made to fit the current trends and challenges of the real world. Likewise, more attention should be given to skills acquisition contents and also the duration be increased to run for a minimum of six (6) months which maybe split across semesters.

ii. Real life practices and experiences be incorporated into entrepreneurship teaching activities by way of inviting successful and notable entrepreneurs to deliver talks and share experiences with students. Notwithstanding, special training be given to tutors assigned to teach such courses.

iii. University management should introduce and encourage business plan competition and the person with the most viable plan be given grants to support him/her as well as provision of supervision by professionals. The university should also encourage innovative students by patronizing their products.

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Appendix: Research Questionnaire (Adopted from Olokundun, 2017)
Students were required to tick the option that best express their level of agreement or disagreement of a statement.

S/N	Curriculum	SA	A	U	D	SD
CR1	Contents of the curriculum are in line with current happenings in the business world					
CR2	The course developed entrepreneurial knowledge in students					
CR3	The course contents raised students' interest towards business start up					
	Androgogy					
AD4	The teaching methods provided a new experience					
AD5	There's a mixture of both practical and theoretical methods					
AD6	The method of teaching provided an opportunity to learn by doing					
	University Support System					
US7	The institution promotes technology patenting and commercialization					
US8	The institution foster entrepreneurship through business start up initiatives					
US9	The university provide an enabling atmosphere for entrepreneurship education thrive.					
	Entrepreneurial Intentions					
EI10	Entrepreneurship students have found solutions to existing problems in business					

EI11	Entrepreneurship students have discovered their talents and the relevant business opportunities					
EI12	Entrepreneurship students have written business plans for their intended businesses					

SA (Strongly Agreed), A (Agreed), U (Undecided), D (Disagreed), SD (Strongly Disagreed).