

The role of entrepreneurship education on student entrepreneurship development at the University of Venda

By

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Submitted in fulfilment of the requirement for the degree,

MASTER OF COMMERCE IN BUSINESS MANAGEMENT

In the

Faculty of Management, Commerce and Law

At the

UNIVERSITY OF VENDA

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2025

DECLARATION OF COPYRIGHT OF WORK

I, Mashimbye Zanele, hereby declare that the dissertation titled **“The role of entrepreneurship education on student entrepreneurship development at the University of Venda”**, Submitted for the Master of Commerce in Business Management at the University of Venda, is my original work and has not previously been submitted to this or any other institution of higher education. I also affirm that a thorough list of references is used to identify and recognise all sources mentioned.

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ABSTRACT

Entrepreneurship is recognised as a tool to reduce unemployment, poverty, and other socio-economic challenges facing South Africa. To respond to these challenges, higher education institutions in South Africa have implemented entrepreneurship courses, training programmes and competitions to promote student entrepreneurship development. Entrepreneurship education encourages individuals to start their businesses upon graduation, rather than seeking and relying on employment. However, research on the role of entrepreneurship education is limited. Hence, this study aims to investigate the role of entrepreneurship education on student entrepreneurial development, at the University of Venda. This study utilised qualitative research design to achieve the following objectives: to identify the factors of entrepreneurship education that contribute to student entrepreneurship development; to identify the challenges of entrepreneurship education that hinders student entrepreneurship development and to develop strategies to enhance entrepreneurship development to better support student entrepreneurship development. The targeted population comprised University of Venda student-entrepreneurs who participate in entrepreneurship education programmes, and those who are registered for entrepreneurship courses. A convenience sampling technique was used to select 10 students and data was collected through semi-structured face-to-face and telephone interviews according to the research objectives. The collected data was analysed thematically using Atlas.ti version 8.4. The analysed data answered the research questions in-line with - the factors of entrepreneurship education that contribute to student start-ups; the challenges of EE that hinder student entrepreneurship development, as well as strategies to improve entrepreneurship education. The results revealed that some of the benefits of entrepreneurship education are - students gained entrepreneurial skills, mindset, and access to resources through entrepreneurship programs, however, challenges arose due to the course focusing more on theory than practical learning. The recommendations made include the suggestion that the University of Venda should collaborate with private companies and government to create internship opportunities for entrepreneurship students to gain hands-on experience. This study is among the first to have managed to identify the beneficial factors of entrepreneurship education; the challenges, and the strategies to enhance entrepreneurship education. This study was conducted at the University of Venda

which means the results may not be generalised in other universities. The researcher, however, further recommends that similar studies can be conducted in other universities to find out any similarities or differences in the conclusions, thereby enlarging the literature on the topic.

Keywords: Entrepreneurship education, Entrepreneurship, Student entrepreneurship development, Factors, Challenges, Strategies

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

EE: Entrepreneurship education

HEIs: Higher Education Institutions

STEP: Student Training and Entrepreneurship Programme

NYDA: National Youth Development Agency

SEDA: Small Enterprise Development Agency

SEFA: Small Enterprise Finance Agency

TIA: Technology Innovation Agency

FET: Further Education and Training

NEF: National Empowerment Funds

UYF: Umsubovu Youth Fund

SCT: Social cognitive theory

TPB: Theory of planned behaviour

Enactus: is an international nonprofit organisation dedicated to inspiring students to improve the world through entrepreneurial action

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

First and foremost, I would like to thank God for motivating me throughout my academic journey.

This study would not have been possible without the support, guidance, and encouragement of many individuals to whom I am deeply indebted. I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude to all those who contributed to the completion of this research.

I would like to express my sincere appreciation to my supervisor, Dr. L.G Nkondo and my co-supervisor Dr. V Mampheu, for their unwavering support and guidance throughout this journey. Their patience, comprehensive feedback, and dedication have been instrumental in the successful completion of this study.

A special note of thanks goes to my mentor, Dr. Anyway Mikioni, whose role in my academic development has been invaluable. I am deeply grateful for his mentorship, generous advice, and the knowledge he shared with me throughout the course of this study.

I would also like to extend my gratitude to all the participants who took time from their busy schedules to be part of this research. Their insightful input made this study possible.

Lastly, I would like to express my deepest appreciation to my loving family for their constant support and encouragement. Their emotional and financial support have made it possible for me to pursue and complete this academic milestone.

DEDICATION

This project is dedicated to my late mother, Joyce Mashimbye. Even in your final moments, you never stopped believing in my potential. Your love, faith in me, and the values you instilled continue to shape the person I am becoming. Not a day goes by that I do not long for your wisdom, your comfort, and your encouragement and most of all your presence. I carry you with me in everything I do, and I hope to make you proud with every step I take.

To my father - Thompson Mashimbye, and my siblings - thank you for your unwavering support, for sacrificing so much, and for always standing by me. Your strength and guidance have been my anchor through life's many storms. I am deeply grateful for your love and the countless ways you continue to show-up for me.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

1.1 Introduction and background

Unemployment is a common challenge for both developing and developed countries, and it has been on an upward trajectory, after the Covid-19 pandemic (Shah, Amjed & Jabooob, 2020). The Covid-19 pandemic devastated South Africa and left many people without jobs (Malebane, 2024), causing, for instance, graduates from higher education institutions (HEI) to face hurdles in pursuing their desired careers (Ameliah & Jatnika, 2024). According to Iswati and Hastuti (2021), this is because employers now evaluate HEI graduates based on their value-added skills and talents, in addition to their academic qualifications. Various policies and tactics have been used globally to minimize unemployment (Shah et al., 2020). Entrepreneurship is now widely recognised as a tool to reduce unemployment since it focuses on individual self-employment and is crucial for a country's economic development (Al-Lawati, Kohar & Suleiman, 2021), making it one of the most popular alternative solutions to the unemployment problem (Shah, Amjed & Jabooob, 2020). Many countries, including South Africa, however, have the problem of developing new entrepreneurs and influencing people's attitudes towards entrepreneurship, although policymakers have implemented a variety of policies and techniques to encourage entrepreneurship (Shah, Amjed & Jabooob, 2020).

One of the strategies is to provide entrepreneurship education to enhance the level of competence and interest in the concept of entrepreneurship (Shah, Amjed & Jabooob, 2020). Entrepreneurship education is divided into two categories - academic entrepreneurship education programmes and entrepreneurship training programmes. The training programmes are mostly practical, concentrating on building knowledge and skills in preparation for starting a business; on the other hand, academic entrepreneurship programmes are mostly theoretical focusing on the construction of knowledge and skills for entrepreneurship (Tshehla, Chodokufa & Costa, 2020). Higher education institutions promote entrepreneurship by providing entrepreneurship courses, and incubations, as well as implementing training programmes (Hassan, 2020). Entrepreneurship education and training among university students as well as the promotion of related activities, are becoming more significant in many countries,

including South Africa (Serpente, Bolzani & Grimaldi, 2025; Lopez, Noguera & Urbano, 2025; Ngobese & Beharry-Ramra, 2025).

Universities in most countries, as part of their curriculum, integrate entrepreneurship theoretical courses and practical programmes to shape students' entrepreneurial intentions and mindset and provide them with necessary knowledge and skills. This is supported by Gupta, Sharma and Rajput (2023) who alluded that the objectives of entrepreneurship education are to teach students to develop ideas, skills and managerial abilities, capacity for self-employment, as well as to encourage them to explore business as a career by cultivating positive attitudes towards entrepreneurship. Many empirical studies indicate that students who participate in entrepreneurship training programmes are more likely - to start new enterprises, have higher entrepreneurial intentions, and be more successful in spotting opportunities - than other students (Sousa, Silva, Couto & Bacelar-Nicolau, 2017; Mei, Lee & Xiang, 2020; Cohen, Hsu & Shinnar, 2021).

According to Sobh, Younis & Keshta (2025), entrepreneurship education is crucial for building the skills and information needed by entrepreneurs to capitalise on business possibilities. Additionally, entrepreneurship education impact students by boosting their - market awareness, creativity, invention, and the capacity to acquire resources and commercial skills (Radebe & Vezi-Magigaba, 2021). Universities, currently, are playing a crucial role, not only in teaching but also in implementing numerous programmes and activities to promote entrepreneurship (Sousa et al., 2017). South Africa is making significant progress in encouraging entrepreneurship, through courses and training programmes, due to the high unemployment rate, among graduates (Ncube & Lekhanya, 2025).

1.2 Context of the study

Offering of entrepreneurship education has risen globally over the past two decades (Byun, Sung, Park & Choi, 2018). It is one of the fastest-expanding topics, with significant interest in its capacity to combine contemporary business practice with academic theory (Ratten & Usmanij, 2021). The realisation of this phenomenon, in solving developing challenges has led to its global expansion, however, although the focus was originally on the formation and operation of businesses, in recent decades, the attention has also broadened to entrepreneurial skills, attitudes and behaviour

(Jardim, Bártolo & Pinho, 2021; Valencia-Arias, Arango-Dotero & Sánchez-Torres, 2022). There is a distinct focus on education's transformational role in society, particularly, small businesses' role, hence, educational stakeholders have shown an increasing interest in entrepreneurship education, particularly in higher education (Martinez-Gregorio, Badenes-Ribera & Oliver, 2021; Shah et al., 2020; Lv, Chen, Sha, Wang, Huang & Huang, 2021).

Over the last two decades, there has been a fast expansion in the availability of entrepreneurship education globally, supported by governments' eagerness to create programmes that support and develop entrepreneurship, in higher education (Bell & Bell, 2020). Education towards entrepreneurship, therefore, has been developed and implemented worldwide to cover students from all levels of education, as a way of preparing and enabling them to create jobs and solve various emerging social and economic issues, such as poverty, social exclusion, and low socio-economic condition of large portions of the population (Jardim, Bártolo & Pinho, 2021).

South Africa is a developing country that has been experiencing unemployment challenges (De Lannoy, Graham, Patel & Leibbrandt, 2020; Wakefield, Yu & Swanepoel, 2022; Ntsamvisi, 2024), thus, the government's determination to remedy the nation's youth unemployment through the promotion of entrepreneurship (Bux, 2016). The Department of Higher Education has integrated entrepreneurship courses into the curriculum in higher education institutions, to help students acquire entrepreneurial knowledge and skills so that they can become self-employed rather than seeking jobs. Entrepreneurship as an instrument to reduce unemployment is recognised worldwide, including South Africa (Ncube & Matlala, 2024), however, the critical question is: *How can entrepreneurship education influence entrepreneurship development amongst students?*

This study will focus on entrepreneurship education's significance in student entrepreneurial development.

1.3 Research Gap

Entrepreneurship education has been focused and deliberated upon in many studies, for instance Shah, Amjed & Jaboo (2020) ; Bell & Bell (2020); Jardim, Bártolo & Pinho (2021). Few studies, however, have been conducted to evaluate the effectiveness of entrepreneurship education, even though it is ranked highly-relevant topic in many

countries' policy agendas (Overwien, Jahnke & Leker, 2024). A study by Handayati, Wulandari and Soetjipto (2020) conducted in Indonesia, investigated how entrepreneurship education influences the intentions of students, and the findings revealed that entrepreneurship education positively influences both entrepreneurial intentions and mindset, however, the effects of this programme are still not well recognised, regardless of the widespread promotion of the phenomenon (Tshehla, Chodokufa & Costa, 2020). Lv et al.(2021), in their research focused on developing countries, specifically, China, however, there has been minimal attempt at empirical research on improvements in entrepreneurship education, in the South African context (Mei, Lee & Xiang, 2020). In 2020, the University of Venda developed a strategic plan for 2021-2025 to become an entrepreneurial institution, particularly capable of contributing to South Africa's aim of being an inclusive economy. The specific road to this transformation remains unarticulated due to a lack of scientific knowledge relating to the process of transformation into an entrepreneurial institution (Iwara & Kilonzi, 2022). The study of Kativhu and Netshandama (2024) also revealed that the transformation is still in the process due to the lack of a relevant guiding framework and principles. There is, hence, still a dearth of knowledge of the role of entrepreneurship education in entrepreneurship development, thus, further investigation is required. This study, therefore, sought to fill the gap, thereby, improve the literature on entrepreneurship education research in South African universities. This led to the formulation of the research problem; subsequently, this study is targeted at investigate the role of entrepreneurship education on student entrepreneurial development.

1.4 Problem Statement.

Entrepreneurship education aims to help students to acquire knowledge and skills so that they may resort to self-employment (Ajani, 2024), however, unemployment remains a concern to many people including graduates (Essa, 2025). It has been determined that the South African system of entrepreneurship education is inadequate in giving students the skills and information that they need to develop an entrepreneurial attitude and culture (Ncube & Lekhanya, 2025). This corroborate the findings in a study of Gamede and Aleunya (2020) which revealed that there is gap in entrepreneurship modules at universities, that need to be addressed so that students can develop appropriate and relevant skills and knowledge that they need to start their

own business. The effectiveness of entrepreneurship education, however, is still hindered in South Africa by diverse factors (Sathyanand, Moodley, Nhleko & Msomi, 2025). The establishment of successful entrepreneurship education initiative is hampered by several issues, despite the fact that entrepreneurship education should play a significant role in promoting businesses in South Africa (Makhoba, 2024). A study conducted by Musetsho and Lethoko (2017), that was conducted at University of Venda revealed that, although the entrepreneurial intentions and traits that students developed were a true reflection of the entrepreneurial education they received, however, the curriculum content in the University of Venda lacks practical aspects.

1.5 Aim of the study

This study aims to investigate the role of entrepreneurship education, towards student entrepreneurship development, in the University of Venda. In other words, the main aim is to answer the question - “How does entrepreneurship education received, influence student entrepreneurial development in the University of Venda?”

1.6 Research objectives

. The study aims to achieve the following objectives:

- To identify the factors of entrepreneurship education that contribute to student entrepreneurship development, in the University of Venda.
- To identify challenges around entrepreneurship education among students, in the University of Venda.
- To develop strategies to enhance entrepreneurship education, in the University of Venda.

1.7 Research questions

- What are the factors of entrepreneurship education that contribute to student entrepreneurship development, in the University of Venda?
- What are the challenges of entrepreneurship education among students, in the University of Venda?
- How can entrepreneurship education be improved to better support student entrepreneurship development, in the University of Venda?

1.8 Significance of the study

There is plenty of literature on entrepreneurship education and its role, although much of it is focused on developed countries (Obeng-Koranteng, 2021), hence, few studies have been conducted on entrepreneurship education in South Africa. These few studies have largely focused on the effectiveness of entrepreneurship education and its impact on student entrepreneurial intention, mindset, and attitude (Iwu, Opute, Nchu, Eresia-Eke, Tengeh, Jaiyeoba & Aliyu, 2021; Radebe & Vezi-Magigaba, 2021; Tshehla et al., 2021). This study will add to this literature by contributing additional insights on the role of entrepreneurship education on student entrepreneurship development and the limitations associated with the process, amongst university students. It will also contribute a South African perspective on the entrepreneurship education literature, in general.

The challenges of entrepreneurship education have attracted scholars in Africa, especially in Nigeria and Zimbabwe, however, there is a dearth of knowledge of the challenges of entrepreneurship education in South Africa. This study, therefore, will bridge this gap by contributing insight into the challenges of entrepreneurship education in the South African context. The insight that are provided by this study will help stakeholders, like tertiary institutions, policy-makers, non-government organisations as well as others to gain insights on how entrepreneurship education influence student entrepreneurial development, challenges associated with entrepreneurship education and subsequently develop strategies to address these challenges.

1.9 Delimitation of the study

The study focused on the role of entrepreneurship education on student entrepreneurship development at the University of Venda, although there are other universities in South Africa which also offer similar courses and programmes. Additionally, the study focused on higher education institutions, even though entrepreneurship is also incorporated in the curriculum in the FET colleges .

1.10 Key concepts and their definitions

Education

Education is defined as the philosophy and practice of teaching or providing knowledge about a certain subject (Chimucheka, 2014). According to Verma, Doharey and Verma (2023), education is the process through which one gains certain knowledge, abilities, and experiences to effectively navigate and adapt to one's surroundings. This study defines education as the systematic process of providing knowledge and skill in schools or universities, including the theory and practice of teaching (Tshikovhi & Mvula, 2014).

Entrepreneurship

Entrepreneurship is defined as the ability to transform ideas into action, involving creativity, innovation and risk-taking, as well as the capacity for planning and managing enterprises/business projects to accomplish goals (Aluenya, Omotosho & Gamede, 2021). Ratten (2023) explains it as the process of discovering potential business opportunities and leveraging them through the recombination of existing resources or the formation of new ones to produce and commercialise new products and services. Entrepreneurship is widely known and accepted as the capacity and willingness of a person to look for investment possibilities, launch, and successfully run and manage a business (Mazikana, 2023). In this study, it is viewed as conceptualising, arranging, launching, and nurturing a business opportunity to become a high-growth enterprise in a complex and uncertain environment, through innovation (Tshikovhi & Mvula, 2014).

Entrepreneurship education

Entrepreneurship / entrepreneurial education is a deliberate intervention of a teacher in a student's life with the goal of imparting entrepreneurial traits and abilities to help the student thrive in the business environment (Chimucheka, 2014). According to Aluenya, Omotosho and Gamede (2021), entrepreneurship education refers to the effectiveness of an education system in delivering knowledge and hands-on experience in starting and operating a business. Entrepreneurship education is referred as either a formal or informal education and training aimed at igniting an entrepreneurial enthusiasm and knowledge, whether or not the goal is to start and run

a successful business (Phiri and Chasaya, 2023). Musetsho and Lethoko (2017), explicate that there are two types of entrepreneurship education - education about entrepreneurship and education for entrepreneurship. The goal of entrepreneurship education is to learn theories, while the goal of entrepreneurial education is to help students who have the capacity to become actual entrepreneurs by developing and motivating them (Musetsho & Lethoko, 2017). For this reason, this study defines entrepreneurship education as any educational activity that seeks to equip individuals for responsible entrepreneurial conduct with the skills, information, and attitudes required to be goal-driven and for fulfilment (Obeng-Koranteng, 2021).

Unemployment

Unemployment refers to when someone is able and willing to work, but cannot find a job (Rainea, Toma, Marinescu & Chitimiea, 2020). According to the International Labour Organisation (2019), an unemployed is any individual who is 15 years of age and older, who is not employed, but was engaged in actions to seek employment, within a given period.

1.11 Preliminary literature review

1.11.1 Overview of entrepreneurship education in HEIs

Entrepreneurship education aims to provide students with knowledge and skills on theoretical and conceptual frameworks that support entrepreneurship (Amalia & Korflesch, 2021). Parfirio, Carrilho, Jardim and Wittberg (2022) proved that entrepreneurship education promotes students to pursue entrepreneurship as a career and provide them with the skills required, however, studies have proven that entrepreneurial education has been insufficient since HEIs produce graduates who are not equipped to engage in entrepreneurial activity (Zhou, Rashid & Cheng, 2024). As a response, most universities have added action-based entrepreneurship education to their curricula (Tun, 2024). Higher education institutions hope to develop entrepreneurship awareness amongst students by implementing entrepreneurship programs and courses (Farid & Rahman, 2020). South African HEIs, for instance, provide entrepreneurial programmes like Enactus and STEP, which support action-based approach alongside academic theoretical courses (Otache, Akubo & David, 2024). In 2018/19, the University of Venda began encouraging entrepreneurial activity, including projects, brief training, and event organising, to establish itself as a strong

institution of higher learning focused on socio-economic development (Iwara and Kilonzo, 2022).

1.11.2 The factors of entrepreneurship education that contribute to student entrepreneurship development

1.11.2.1 Entrepreneurship knowledge and skills

Entrepreneurship promotion aims to equip undergraduates with necessary skills to create something new, to solve problems and determine prospects; this means that entrepreneurship promotion can play an essential role in equipping university students with the skills to launch businesses upon graduation (Edokpolor, 2020). Furthermore, a degree in entrepreneurship can prepare students with various knowledge and skills, such as, the capacity to spot opportunities, seize them by formulating new concepts and gathering the necessary funding, as well as launch and oversee a new business, while exercising critical and creative thought (Chimucheka, 2014).

1.11.2.2 Entrepreneurial mindsets

Khalil, Hashim, Rababa and Atallah (2024) asserts that the higher education system is essential to the development of entrepreneurs, in that HEIs have the potential to mould entrepreneurial mindsets. Moreover, entrepreneurship promotion can help students adopt attitudes and mindsets that are not afraid of taking risks, failing, and competing (Chimucheka, 2014; Deng & Wang, 2023). This view is supported by Porfirio, Carrilho, Jardim and Wittberg (2022) who argued that perceptions of students' potential for entrepreneurship, includes risk-taking and innovativeness; these can be modified by methodical and ongoing effort of entrepreneurship courses.

1.11.2.3 Entrepreneurship intentions

Entrepreneurship intention is not inherited, but established through entrepreneurship education (Tshehla et al., 2020). An intention is referred to as an individual's desire and willingness to start a venture or to behave in an entrepreneurial manner (Phiri & Chasaya, 2023). Entrepreneurship education improves students' intention by establishing a business culture (Deng & Wang, 2023). As such, the goal of entrepreneurship education, in universities, is seen as a catalyst for encouraging relevant intentions, ultimately contributing to the development of future entrepreneurs (Chahal, Shoukat & Ayoubi, 2024). Shah, Amjed and Jaboo (2020) also pointed out that

entrepreneurship education encourages students to establish their own enterprises, at some point in their careers.

1.11.3 Challenges of entrepreneurship education among students

There are numerous challenges that are confronting entrepreneurship education, despite the articulated benefit of entrepreneurship education, amongst students.

1.13.3.1 Lack of entrepreneurial skills in lecturers

A major challenge confronting entrepreneurship education's aim is lack of entrepreneurial skills in lecturers (Mico & Chungu, 2023). Iwu, Opute, Nchu and Erezia-Eke (2021), expressed dissatisfaction over the lecturers' lack of personal exposure to entrepreneurship since the majority of them did not own or run their own enterprises, although attitudes towards the new curriculum have improved. Lecturers' experience with the concept of entrepreneurship has increased, yet most still lack sufficient knowledge of the objectives, subject matter, and methodology in transmitting entrepreneurship education. As a result, many lecturers might not be able to teach their students, the necessary entrepreneurial skills and expertise (Kulo, Agbogo & Okudarie, 2018).

1.11.3.2 Lack of practical experience

Courses in Universities tend to be more theoretical than practical, and learners typically do not implement the instructional strategies employed, because university syllabuses place a strong emphasis on theoretical elements and traditional teaching methods like classroom lectures (Karimi, Chizari Biemans & Mulder, 2010). Radebe and Vezi-Magigaba (2021) claimed that the typical HE curriculum is too narrow to adequately equip students to gain real-world entrepreneurial skills, experience, and abilities. Concurring, Varblane and Mets (2010), declare HE syllabus as being unsuitable for providing students with the necessary groundwork for entrepreneurship or cultivating an entrepreneurial mindset within them.

1.11.3.3 Lack of facilities and equipment

Many educational institutions, particularly those in impoverished areas, may not have the equipment and facilities necessary to provide thorough entrepreneurial programmes (Maka, 2023). In South Africa, to foster and facilitate entrepreneurship

across various education institutions, a small number of entrepreneurship centres have been developed, however, these centres are underequipped, in the limited regions where they have been built (Salihu, Audu, Ibrahim & Mohammed, 2020). As a result, prospective young student entrepreneurs cannot access technology, participate in practical learning experiences, or receive mentorship support (Maka, 2023).

1.11.4 Strategies for improving entrepreneurship education

Challenges in entrepreneurship education stand as a threat to the success of entrepreneurship education if they are left unresolved, fortunately, certain strategies can be employed to address some of these challenges (Okeke & Edikpa, 2014).

1.11.4.1 Development of internship programmes

It should be mandatory for undergraduates to complete a minimum of two months internship with a successful business, which will assist them in developing the practical entrepreneurial skills necessary to launch, grow and manage their businesses after graduation, assert Olorundare & Kayode, (2014). This is supported by Aide'Ojeifo (2012) who states that developing internship programmes matching students with local successful entrepreneurs will firmly established these education programmes, thereby, alleviating issues surrounding entrepreneurship education. Many unresolved issues may arise when learning practical skills that are cannot be covered in books, but through internship programmes, students can find practical solutions with the assistance of experienced business owners (Kulo, Agbogo & Okudaries, 2018).

1.11.4.2 Establishment of entrepreneurship centres

The current HEIs educational systems needs to change its emphasis from being certificate-based to being skill-based (Kulo, Agbogo & Okudaries, 2018). Every institution in South Africa should be required to build a centre for entrepreneurship education, which should regularly provide workshops for students and invite experienced entrepreneurs to speak on how to plan, raise capital, launch, and manage a business (Olorundare & Kayode, 2014). It is imperative to encourage students to engage in activities that replicate normal entrepreneurial conditions found in society, such as creating business plan, engaging in feasibility studies, and loan applications before attempting their own enterprises (Kulo, Agbogo & Okudaries, 2018).

1.11.4.3 Training of lecturers and trainers in entrepreneurship education

Entrepreneurship lecturers and trainers should be encouraged to pursue ongoing professional development opportunities and retrain in the field of research to remain relevant in the fast-paced, globally-interconnected business world of today (Eretan & Omotoso, 2024; Okeke & Edikpa, 2014). Lecturers should also receive funding to attend national and international conferences to expand their knowledge and to better equip themselves to teach students on how to be entrepreneurs (Olorundare & Kayode, 2014).

1.12 Research Methodology

1.12.1 Research design

A research design is a plan, framework or strategy that a researcher employs to produce responses to research questions (Kumatongo & Muzata, 2021). Three theoretical frameworks namely, phenomenology, hermeneutics and ethnography, are the primary pillars of qualitative research approach (Muzari, Shava & Shonhiwa, 2022); this study employed a phenomenology design. Phenomenological study describes the common meaning of various people's lived experience within a given topic or situation (Sarfo, Debrah, Gbordzoe, Affal & Obeng, 2021).

1.12.2 Research approach

The research methodology includes a range of phases, from broad assumptions to specific techniques for gathering, analysing, and interpreting data, in a methodical manner (Taherdoost, 2022). For the current study, the researcher employed a qualitative research approach, which, according to Bhangu, Provost and Caduff (2023), is a technique that aims to explore and comprehend the meaning that individuals or groups ascribe to social or human phenomenon. Rather than using numerical data, qualitative research typically employs verbal data / texts (Betto et al., 2020); its main aim is to understand the experiences that people have, according to Merriam and Tisdell (2016).

1.12.3 Research paradigm

Kamal (2019) explains a research paradigm as a set of beliefs and understandings regarding the nature of particular phenomenon as well as a consensus regarding the

best ways to approach its investigation. This study followed the constructive paradigm, which postulates that people build their own knowledge and comprehension of the world by due to their ideas and experiences (Kamal, 2019). Similarly, Bogna, Raineri, and Dell (2020), note constructivists as seeking to comprehend the social environment of the people being studied and entails viewing that environment through the eyes of the individuals who inhabit it.

1.12.4 Targeted population

A population is a clearly-defined group for analysis and serve as the study's main focus (Van Haute, 2017). Recruitment of the entire population of interest is frequently impractical, hence, there is a need to select a manageable sub-set (Majid, 2018). This study targeted University of Venda students, who are informal entrepreneurs involved in programs and competitions, and students registered for the entrepreneurship module. Due to various entrepreneurial education programmes offered at the University of Venda and students being involved in diverse business activities on campus, the population is not well known.

1.12.5 Sampling technique

To represent the intended population in a study, Sukmawati, Salmia and Sudarmin (2023) define sampling methodology as the procedure and methods used to choose a sub-set of units within the population, either by utilising probability methods, non-probability methods, or a combination of both methods. This study utilised non-probability; a sampling process that selects people in a non-random manner, hence, not every person may be included. By contrast, probabilistic sampling gives each member of the population an equal probability of being selected and it is mostly utilised in quantitative research (McCombes, 2020). This study followed the convenience sampling method. A non-probabilistic sampling technique known as the “convenience method” is used when members of a target population satisfy specific practical requirements or criteria. The criteria could be things like - willingness to engage in the study, availability at a specific time, geographic proximity, and convenience of access (Obilor, 2023).

1.12.6 Sample size

A sample is a smaller, more manageable version of the bigger group, yet this sub-set contains attributes of the broader population (Hennink & Kaiser, 2022). This study collected data from 10 students at which point, data saturation was achieved. A sample size of 10 is not uncommon in qualitative research; for instance, in their work, Shumba and Nkondo (2020) conducted 5 in-depth interviews in their study.

1.12.7 Data collection technique

Data collection refers to the process of acquiring information from individuals. There are two types of data that can be collected - primary and secondary. Primary data is information gathered by the researcher himself/herself in the field of interest, while secondary data is obtained from existing sources (Raj, 2020). This study collected primary data while secondary data collection was undertaken through literature reviews. Many qualitative research exploits interviews with participants as the primary data collecting method, similarly, in this study collected was data through semi-structured interviews. Semi-structured interviews feature open-ended questions and the use of interview guidelines to outline broad areas of interest and facilitate the process (Ruslin, Saepudin, Muhammad et al., 2022). Interviews are used to learn about an individual's subjective experiences, attitudes, and motives, rather than facts and conduct (Busetto, 2020).

1.12.8 Data analysis

Data analysis is the act of examining and interpreting obtained data to provide information that answers research questions (Bhatia, 2018). In this study, the researcher conducted thematic content analysis on the collected data with Atlas.ti version 8.4. Thematic analysis is a qualitative data analysis approach that identifies themes within a given dataset (Lester, Cho & Lochmiller, 2020). Atlas.ti is a qualitative research software that is used for coding and analysing transcripts and creating network diagrams. The researcher used mainly coding and continuous comparison to analyse data. Coding is a data analysis technique that involves reading and interpreting raw contextualised data to construct themes and the relationship between them. Open coding is the initial level of coding during which the researcher identifies themes, categorise them then assign codes (Williams & Moser, 2019).

1.12.9 Trustworthiness criteria

1.12.9.1 Credibility

Credibility is defined as the degree to which a study measures the concepts it claims to measure (MUzari et al., 2022). In other words, a study is considered credible if it accurately represents the target structures or variables being studied (William, 2024). The researcher employed the audit trail strategy to validate data, which involves monitoring and keeping all the records of research activities and field collected raw data such as interview documents and audio recordings for future examination by interested parties. Such records ensure that readers will be able to follow exactly how the study was conducted

1.12.9.2 Reliability

Reliability in qualitative research pertains to the degree of consistency exhibited by the data gathering instruments. According to this principle, research in qualitative analysis should be documented in a way that allows other researchers to examine the data and reach similar conclusions (Nassaji, 2020). The research used audit trail strategy by monitoring and keeping interview documents and audio recordings to verify the accuracy of participants' responses.

1.12.9.3 Transferability

Transferability refers to the extent to which the study findings may be generalised to different contexts or circumstances (Ahmed, 2024). In terms of transferability, the researcher must assist readers in determining if the study's conclusions and insights may be applied to comparable situations (Riazi, Rezvani & Ghanbar, 2023). The researcher explained every step of the study process, from data collection and background to final report and provided a very comprehensive details about the context, thereby, assisting readers to make generalisations.

1.12.9.4 Confirmability

Confirmability refers to how fair and objective the results are, making sure that they are not affected by researchers' opinions or biases (Ahmed, 2024). This involves making sure that the researcher's prejudices do not skew how research respondents' statements are interpreted to support a specific narrative (Ahmed, 2024). The

researcher used audit trail that detailed every stage of the data analysis process to support any judgements made. The researcher also used quotations from the participants to support point made and conclusions reached.

1.12.10 Ethical considerations

1.12.10.1 Informed consent

The researcher informed the respondents about the nature and goal of the study before beginning data collection; therefore, the participants' participation was based on their informed consent.

1.12.10.2 Volunteerism

The researcher informed the participants that their participation is voluntary, which meant they may withdraw from the study at any time, without any penalty.

1.12.10.3 Maintaining confidentiality and anonymity

The researcher informed the participants about their rights. The researcher also assigned participants pseudonyms to guarantee that their contributions are anonymous.

1.13 Scope of the study

This study is about entrepreneurship education at the University of Venda examining how entrepreneurship education influences student entrepreneurial development. It focuses on student entrepreneurs and entrepreneurial programme participants from the University of Venda.

1.14 Area of the study

The University of Venda is a rural-based university located in Thohoyandou, in the Vhembe District of the Limpopo Province. Thohoyandou serves as the administrative centre of the Vhembe District and Thulamela Municipality. The University of Venda is a higher education institution that was established in 1982 to meet the apartheid-era educational demands of the people living in the Venda Bantustan.

1.15 Structure of the study

Chapter 1: Introduction and background of the study: this chapter dealt with the background of the study, the research gap, the problem statement, purpose of the

study, objectives and research questions of the proposed study, as well as the scope of the study.

Chapter 2: Literature Review: this chapter will cover an overview of entrepreneurship education; the role of entrepreneurship education for student entrepreneurship development, challenges of entrepreneurship education among students, and strategies to improve entrepreneurship development amongst students.

Chapter 3: Research design and methodology: in this chapter will be outline how a qualitative research method and phenomenology research design will be applied in the study. The research methods and techniques involved will be discussed in detail, as well as the sampling method, data collection and analysis, including the measurement instrument. Deliberated upon also is the analysing process, measures to ensure trustworthiness of the results in addition to ethical principles that would be adhered to.

Chapter 4: Research findings: the results and findings of the study will be presented in this chapter.

Chapter 5: Discussion of the results: The themes generated from the analysis of data will be discussed and explored in relation to the literature reviewed in Chapter 2.

Chapter 6: Conclusion and recommendations: findings will be compared with those of existing studies, the limitations of the study, as well as suggestions for future research, will be presented in this final chapter.

1.16 Chapter Summary

In this chapter was introduced the background, context, the essential nature of the study. The discussions also focused on the identified research gap, research problem, research objectives and questions, key terms to be used and the whole structure of the research.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

A literature review is an academic process that places knowledge and comprehension of the existing literature, on a particular topic, in context (Edinburgh, 2024). In addition, a literature review is also a great tool for combining research findings to demonstrate evidence at a meta-level and identifying areas that require additional study, both of which are essential for developing theoretical frameworks and conceptual models (Snyder, 2019). This literature review focuses on the whole concept of entrepreneurship education. The review will be directed by the objectives of the study: factors of entrepreneurship education that contribute to student entrepreneurship development; challenges that hinder student entrepreneurship development; and strategies to improve entrepreneurship education.

2.2 Theoretical underpinning

This study is guided by the theory of planned behaviour (Ajzen, 1991) and the social cognitive theory (Bandura, 1986). Employing multi-theory method in research is not unusual. Nuhu (2021) expressed significant support for a multi-theory strategy that combines the advantages of multiple theories to overcome the shortcomings of individual theories.

2.2.1 Social cognitive theory

This study is underpinned by the social cognitive theory (SCT), which emphasises the impact of social learning in shaping human behaviour (Boldureana, Lonescu, Berca, Bedrule-Grigorută & Boldureana, 2020). Social Cognitive Theory was developed by Albert Bandura in 1986; he postulates that learning occurs in a social context with a dynamic reciprocal interaction between the individual, environment, and behaviour. In entrepreneurship education context, SCT provides a clear framework to understand students' entrepreneurial intentions, which could be influenced by the interaction of between the environment input, personal characteristics, and behavioural outcomes (Nwosu, Obidike, Ugwu, Udeze & Okolie, 2022). In the context of this study, the environmental input is represented by entrepreneurship education; personal factors are demonstrated by entrepreneurial mindset, self-efficacy, and creativity; and behavioural outcomes are represented by students' entrepreneurial intention (Widjojo,

2023). Observation and imitation influence cognitive factors, assisting the individual in determining whether or not to imitate a seen behaviour (Bayrón, 2013).

According to SCT, behavioural outcomes are the results of a three-way reciprocal interplay between personal inputs as well as one's previous experience (Mohammed, Al qatalan, Ghawanneh & Alqaadar, 2020). In the context of this study, experience could be interpreted as student's prior learning experiences throughout entrepreneurship education and training, which can influence their entrepreneurial intentions and act through increased self-efficacy. As a result, the more students participate in entrepreneurship education, the more likely they are to develop entrepreneurial self-efficacy, entrepreneurial attitude, and assess their abilities to become entrepreneurs, as well as practice and receive feedback from other established entrepreneurs (Nwosu et al., 2023). The study of Widjojo (2023) used SCT to evaluate how students with high levels of entrepreneurship education, entrepreneurial mindset, and entrepreneurial competencies improve their entrepreneurial intention. The results revealed that entrepreneurship education has substantial impact on entrepreneurial competencies, intentions, and attitude. An entrepreneurial mindset has a little impact on intention, but entrepreneurial competencies have a significant impact. It is critical to understand how social cognitive factors influence entrepreneurial intention (Nwosu et al., 2022), therefore, SCT is most relevant for this study as it provides a comprehensive framework to investigate how entrepreneurial education influences students' cognition and subsequently entrepreneurial behaviour.

2.2.2 Theory of Planned Behaviour

Theory of planned behaviour (TPB) proposed by Ajzen in 1991 underpins this study. TPB is influenced by the theory of 'Reasoned Action', which suggests that behavioural intentions are influenced by attitudes and subjective norms (Abdullah, Khalid, Ahmed, & Gumawa, 2021). Entrepreneurial attitude and planned behavioural control both change in entrepreneurial intention from the inside, whereas subjective norms involve analysing reasons that drive entrepreneurial intention to shift in response to an entrepreneur's external environment (Su, Zhu, Chen, Jin, Wang, Lin & Xu, 2021). The intention to perform a certain behaviour then guides the students' action (Tshehla et al., 2020). High entrepreneurial attitude, subjective norms, and perceived behavioural

control in students increase their intention to engage in entrepreneurial behaviour (Abdullah et al., 2021). Exposure to entrepreneurship education can also shape learners' intentions, as it fosters entrepreneurship awareness and career options, ultimately leading to entrepreneurship intentions (Tshehla et al., 2020). A study by Aditya (2020) used TPB to examine the effects of attitude, norms, perception, and self-control on entrepreneurial intention. The results disclosed that personal attitude and self-control influence entrepreneurial intention, hence, this study will use TPB to explore the factors that influence entrepreneurship development among students.

2.3 Conceptual framework

The conceptual framework of this study summarises the literature in alignment with the objectives, thereby, providing a comprehensive understanding of the factors that influence entrepreneurial intentions amongst students - it shows the interrelationship between the variables. Entrepreneurship education and training influence factors such as attitudes, skills and knowledge, as well as entrepreneurial resources. These factors shape entrepreneurial intentions, subsequently leading to a behaviour - entrepreneurship development. This conceptual model indicates that students may develop entrepreneurial attitudes through education, knowledge and skills acquired through entrepreneurship education, which fosters high entrepreneurial intention. Resources also influence entrepreneurial intentions because they are crucial features of entrepreneurship process; they are used to produce goods and services for supply; therefore, lack of these resources may hinder entrepreneurial intentions. Individuals' decision to pursue entrepreneurship is also influenced by their perceived barriers to starting their own businesses, however, strategies to improve entrepreneurship education can enhance students' entrepreneurial intentions by equipping them with necessary skills, knowledge, and mindset to identify opportunities and providing them with resources to successfully launch their own businesses.

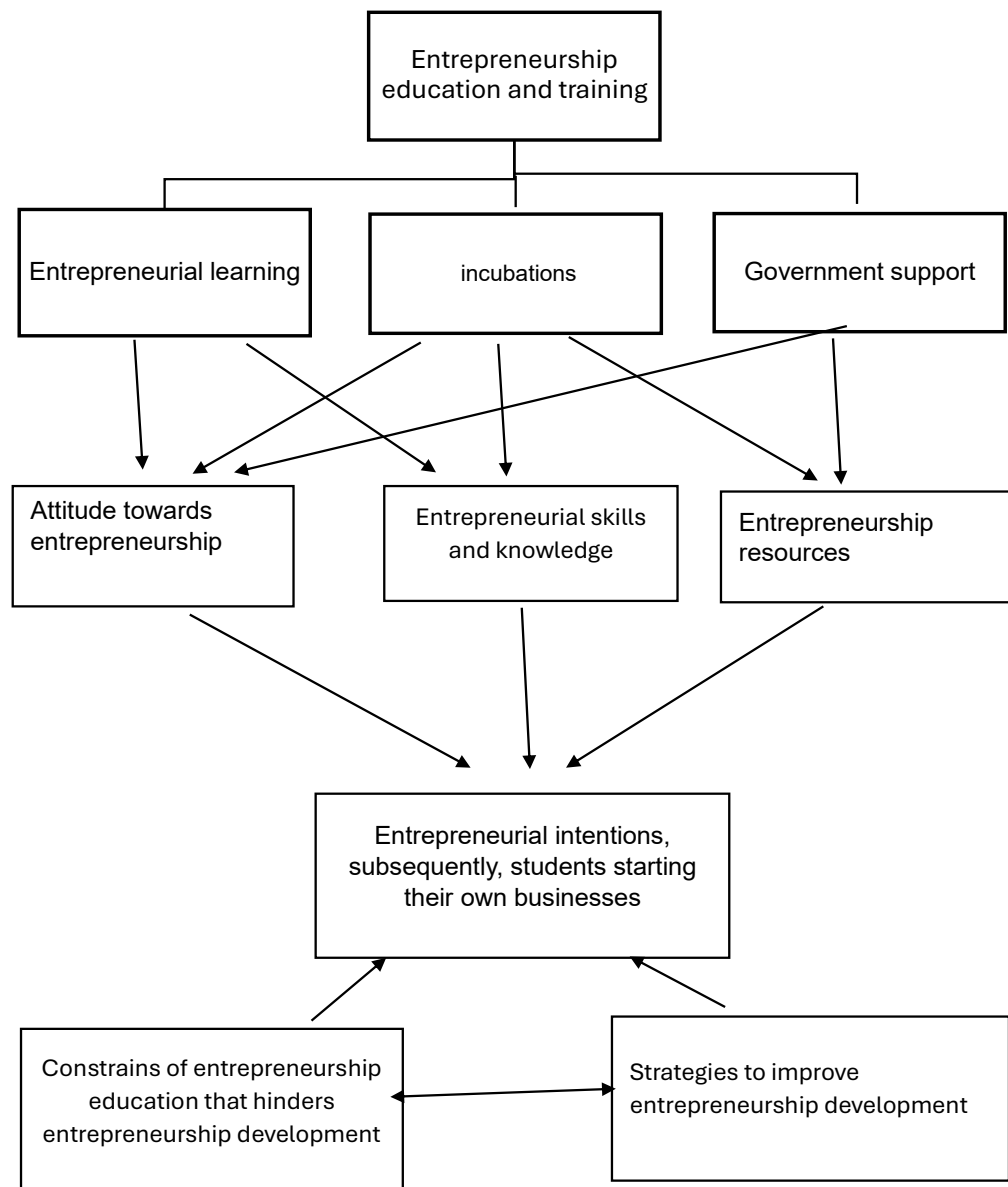


Figure 2.3 Conceptual framework of the study

2.4 Student Entrepreneurship

Entrepreneurship is known as the process of finding, assessing, and identifying value-creating opportunities through innovation to produce goods and services (Elnadi and Ghelth, 2020). Student entrepreneurship is defined as the formation of businesses by people who are enrolled in learning institutions (Uhunamure, Odeh & Okotete, 2021). In the South African context, Tshishonga (2022) highlights that youth entrepreneurship is an essential tactic for young people to overcome unemployment and establish long-term sources of income. Youth entrepreneurship in South Africa is structurally supported by both the private sector and government-driven programmes (Ogunsanya, Anwana & Mthembu, 2024), however, lack of exposure to these programs remains an obstacle. To address this challenge, it is crucial to ensure that business support services are widely available throughout the nation and that they can be accessed through platforms that young people frequently utilise (Ogunsanya, Anwana & Mthembu, 2024).

2.5 Entrepreneurship education in the South African context

South Africa has implemented several initiatives and legislations to foster an atmosphere that encourages entrepreneurship (Netshilinganedza, Mudau & Francis, 2022). In South Africa, entrepreneurship education was added to the curriculum in 2005 as an elective topic for learners in Grade 10-12. This came about as a result of the Department of Education proposal of making entrepreneurship an obligatory topic for Economic and Management Sciences (Tshehla, 2020), however, the National Department of Education does not provide detailed curriculum guidelines, leaving it up to individual teachers to select what to teach (Dlamini, 2024).

The South African government also established a policy called 'National Entrepreneurship Education Strategy' in 2010, which prioritises entrepreneurial education as a goal for economic growth, and it aims at improving entrepreneurship education by expanding enrolment, enhancing quality, and fostering supportive atmosphere (Maka, 2023). Scholars like Netshilinganedza et al. (2022) and Lea Filho, Frankenberger, Salvia, Azeiteiro et al. (2021), advocated for the incorporation of entrepreneurship within the curriculum of higher education institutions due to the compelling evidence that entrepreneurial activity's likelihood to success is strongly correlated with an individual's educational attainment. In 2018, the Department of Higher Education and Training developed a framework for Entrepreneurship

Education in Higher Education purposed for the encouragement of universities to provide entrepreneurship programmes and ecosystems on campus (Maka, 2023).

2. 6 Entrepreneurship education in HEIs

Higher educational institutions can effectively influence young entrepreneurs by providing entrepreneurship education to those who enrol in their colleges and universities (Musariwa & Tinonetsana, 2023). These institutions have established various entrepreneurship education initiatives to tackle the high levels of unemployment that is witnessed in South Africa (Mawonedzo, Tanga, Luggya & Nsubuga, 2020), hence, institutions provide entrepreneurship courses to develop students' business abilities by engaging them in specific entrepreneurial activities (Ellikkal & Rojamohani, 2023). According to Ncanywa and Dyantyi (2022) entrepreneurship education necessitates HEIs moving away from traditional methods and implementing essential structural reforms to create an ecosystem that supports entrepreneurial culture. Some universities, thus, provide mentorship programmes, networking opportunities and funding to student businesses to assist them overcome financial and other challenges to starting their enterprises (Xanthopoulou & Sahinidis, 2024).

The entrepreneurship education system was developed to equip students with entrepreneurial knowledge, skills, and abilities, and help them generate the much-needed entrepreneurial intentions (Ferreira & Smail, 2024). It is, hence, vital to implement an effective entrepreneurship education regime in HEIs (Ellikkal & Rajamohan, 2023). Providing entrepreneurship education develops awareness, skills and attributes to an alternative source of employment and this has retained students' interest in entrepreneurship education (Obeng-Korateng, 2021). Numerous universities in South Africa have included entrepreneurship in their curricula, but because the concepts' present focus is on theory than practice, it lacks the innovation needed to shape the generation of young people who will transform South Africa's economic landscape (Musariwa & Tinonetsana, 2023).

2.7 Entrepreneurship education at the University of Venda

Entrepreneurship at the University of Venda is explicitly taught in the Schools of Agriculture and Management Sciences, but there is no actual hands-on experience, included in the module (Netshilinganedza, Mudau & Francis, 2022). Some of the

University of Venda students, however, engage in extracurricular activities related to entrepreneurship, and these initiatives are supported by programmes like - Enactus, Students Training Entrepreneurial Promotion (STEP), and Entrepreneurship Development in Higher education (EDHE).

Enactus is an international non-profit organization that engages students in university-based teams to support the expansion and sustainability of small enterprises in their communities and compete annually, by displaying their community service projects (Omotoso, 2024). These students work in groups on campus, providing local businesses with business and bookkeeping skill. In addition to providing local businesses with entrepreneurial knowledge and skills, Enactus students, themselves, also acquire very appropriate skills and experience that are not provided in the classroom; hence, it is anticipated that these students will become interested in entrepreneurship as a result of their engagement in Enactus initiatives (Netshilinganedza, 2020).

In 2022, the University of Venda hosted Student Entrepreneurial Week (SEW) in alignment with the National EDHE Intervarsity Entrepreneurship Competition to promote entrepreneurship as a career option, in collaboration with enterprises, industry, and non-profit organizations. Student Intervarsity Entrepreneurship competition is aimed at discovering the best student entrepreneurs at public universities in South Africa; to honour and highlight their ventures and encourage funding for this group of student entrepreneurs (Ismail, Farrington, Bignotti, Vermeire, Knockaert & Crucke, 2024). The Intervarsity Entrepreneurship Competition is one of the University of Venda's strategic initiatives to assist in achieving its objectives of becoming involved and entrepreneurial and assisting the surrounding communities (EDHE SEW, 2022).

The University of Venda, the United Nations Education, Scientific, and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO), South Africa, collaborated with Leuphana University of Luneburg on the STEP project (Univen Annual Report, 2021). STEP is a course that equips students with practical skills that they may use to succeed in the commercial world; the process involves students forming teams and studying all the intricacies of starting their own enterprises and realising their own ideas (Univen Annual Report, 2022). The purpose of this program is to provide students with industry attachments,

certified practical knowledge of entrepreneurial success, and the chance to launch their own businesses (STEP, 2023). Through these extra curriculum programmes, the University has been able to build its entrepreneurial culture, support enterprise development, and be more involved in local and regional economic development (Iwara & Kilonza, 2022). In 2023, the University of Venda established a centre for entrepreneurship and rapid incubation periods that offered business development support to entrepreneurs in rural and underdeveloped areas, throughout the nation (University of Venda, 2023).

2.8 Factors of entrepreneurship education that contribute to student entrepreneurship development

Entrepreneurship education plays a crucial role in fostering student entrepreneurship and several factors within the course contribute to this development. By giving emphasises to these factors, entrepreneurship education can successfully contribute to student entrepreneurship development and prepare them for achievement in their entrepreneurial pursuits.

2.8.1 Entrepreneurial knowledge and skills

Entrepreneurship skills are not inherent qualities, but they are developed through academic pursuits (Maka, 2023). The assumption of entrepreneurship education is that individuals may build entrepreneurial abilities through practical learning (Edokpolor, 2020), during which they can take calculated risks, manage outcomes, and learn from these real-world situations (Radebe & Vezi-Magigaba, 2021). Institutions that cultivate entrepreneurial qualities and abilities increase students' understanding of career options and ways they can contribute to the growth of their communities (Eratan & Omotoso, 2024). Entrepreneurship education offers students entrepreneurial skills, expertise, and understanding, enabling them to follow the entrepreneurial pathway as their profession (Aditya, 2020).

In addition to emphasising entrepreneurial endeavours, the education offers critical thinking and problem-solving skills, thereby endowing students with innovative solutions to environmental and societal challenges (Maka, 2023). The primary goal of entrepreneurship education is to create and support competent future business owners who can launch and run profitable enterprises (Aditya, 2020). Entrepreneurship education helps individuals to acquire the skills necessary to make

a significant contribution to the world, by becoming financially independent, and engaging in all facets of life, as independent businesspeople (Edekpolor, 2020). This corroborates Maka (2023), which postulates that exposure to entrepreneurial environment promotes a culture of creativity, independence, and proactive participation in economic activities, through the provision of fundamental entrepreneurial skills and information. However, Ellikkal and Rajamohan (2023) argue that the recent educational system fails to equip students with necessary entrepreneurial knowledge and skills.

2.8.2 Entrepreneurial mindsets

Maka (2023) posits that aspiring entrepreneurs need to have, not only the necessary skills, but also have the right mindset to successfully negotiate the complex entrepreneurship landscape. Youths' attitudes and mindsets about entrepreneurship as a career option can be influenced by their university education (Ozen, Owaishiz, Dabic & Daim, 2023). According to a growing corpus of research, offering entrepreneurship programme through educational perspectives might help foster a relevant and appropriate mindset for entrepreneurs (Handayita et al., 2020). This can be accomplished through the official academic calendar programmes that universities offer, as well as more informal and innovative outreach initiatives (Musariwa & Tinonetsena, 2023). Ncube and Lekhanya (2021) similarly, maintains that entrepreneurship education can help students change their perspectives, thereby, empowering them with skills and inspiring them to pursue self-employment, instead of paid work.

According to Manafe, Ohara, Harahap and Ausat (2023) teaching methods that include problem-solving and business-related decision-making can better generate entrepreneurial mindset and usually, university students correctly detect traits of any entrepreneurial mindset through the entrepreneurship syllabus (Mukhtar, Wardana, Wibowo & Narmaditya 2021; Cui, Sun & Bell, 2021). An entrepreneurial mindset is demonstrated through the - propensity for taking calculated risks, ambiguity tolerance, opportunity awareness, and optimism in conducting business (Manafe et al., 2023; Mukhtar et al., 2021). Entrepreneurs with strong entrepreneurial mindset, hence, are more likely to generate new opportunities and to be better equipped to handle difficulties encountered when starting and operating an enterprise (Manafe et al., 2023).

2.8.3 Incubation centre

Universities attempt to establish facilitating ecosystems through the establishment of business incubators that support entrepreneurship education (Shekhar, Satyanarayana & Chandrashekar, 2023). The aims of business incubators, in HIEs include - supporting innovation, facilitating the commercialisation of ideas, making capital and mentoring more accessible, and giving potential entrepreneurs a platform to network (Rukmana, Maltareza, Harto, Komolasari & Hamani, 2023).

2.8.3.1 Access to resources

One of the main purpose of incubators is to offer necessary resources that prospective business owners may not have (Rukmana et al., 2023). These sources, for example are - access to office space, funding, administrative assistance, and technological infrastructure (Breivik-Meyer, Arntzen-Nordqvist & Alsos, 2024). Awonuga, Mhlongo, Alatoye, Ibeh, Elufioye and Asuzu (2024), reiterate that incubators can provide entrepreneurs with access to grants, venture capital, and angel investors, which can help them obtain the necessary capital to transform their ideas into reality. Not only do incubation lower expenses associated with starting a new business but also lower entrance challenges for up-coming business owners (Ssekiziyiwa, Masesingwa, Kabahinda, Lakaneber & Nakajubi, 2023). The availability of finance significantly influences the development, sustainability and growth of new businesses (Awonuga et al., 2024). Carbin and Thomas, (2023) maintain that entrepreneurs can create prototypes, carry out market research and start with the early phases of developing a product or service with the help of this first-money investment. Beyond just giving entrepreneurs funds, financing has a significant impact on how aspiring businesspeople tranform bright ideas into successful industry-leading enterprises (Awonuga et al., 2024).

2.8.3.2 Networking opportunities

Networking fosters an environment where different individuals come together to generate innovative ideas and creative solutions, according to Awonuga et al. (2024). This encourages collaboration and promotes an environment in which business owners share knowledge and resources, network, and form beneficial business connections (Hassan, 2020). Awonuga et al. (2024) also noted that incubators organise networking events to foster purposeful relationships among different

stakeholders - new entrepreneurs, mentors, investors and industry experts. Hassam (2020) outlined the four key roles played by networks - they generate and share knowledge and learning; they facilitate the formation of unions with existing members to achieve truthfulness; they develop new ideas and resources to support the entrepreneurial process; and they develop connections between various organisations, which in turn facilitates growth of firms and the accomplishment of the entrepreneurial objectives.

Networking, in addition, facilitates interactions that promote the sharing of best practices, approaches, and ideas, as well as cultivating a culture of ongoing learning and adaption (Awonuga et al., 2024). Karambakuwa and Bayat (2023) allude that networks help young entrepreneurs develop the formal and informal skills needed to be a high-tech entrepreneur while facilitating the flow of information about new markets, advances, and prospects in a certain area. Moreover, it generates an innovative culture, for as entrepreneurs observe the accomplishment and traits of their colleagues, they are motivated to challenge conventions, undertake calculated risks, and investigate diverse methods of resolving issues (Awonuga et al., 2024). Networks help start-ups by stimulating learning and business development through the breeding of ideas among seasoned and aspiring entrepreneurs (Karambakuwa & Bayat, 2022). Establishing a robust vibrant network through networking events, workshops, and collaboration is deemed vital for startups to establish connections with prospective partners, clients, and investors (Rukmana et al., 2023).

2.8.3.3 Mentorship

According to Awanuga et al. (2024) mentorship is a driving force, providing early-stage entrepreneurs with valuable knowledge, expertise, and assistance. Mentors provide guidance for startup entrepreneurs to help them reduce risks by preventing them from repeating errors already made by other entrepreneurs (Karambakuwa and Bayat, 2022). This assertion is in-line with Awonuga et al. (2024) that mentors bring a plethora of knowledge and advise for navigating challenges and successes in entrepreneurship. Their insights give nascent entrepreneurs an overview for navigating the challenges of business development (Zaheer, Breyer, Dumay & Enjeti, 2022). Mentorship provides strategic and relevant guidance, assisting entrepreneurs in articulating and refining their business approaches - market positioning, product

development, and long-term planning - which guarantee that enterprises have solid foundation (Awonuga et al., 2024).

High-quality mentorship initiative acknowledges the significance of varied viewpoints by bringing in mentors from diverse range of backgrounds, industries, and area of expertise to provide in-coming entrepreneurs with a more comprehensive learning experience (Schulz, 2020). The entrepreneurial road is fraught with uncertainty and hardships; thus, mentors serve as confidants who understand the stresses and demands of running a start-up by offering emotional support to emerging entrepreneurs (Awonuga et al., 2024). Mentors frequently act as gatekeepers to large networks, according to Robinson (2022), by connecting entrepreneurs with possible collaborators, investors, and industry expert , hence, helping entrepreneurs grow and gain recognition.

2.8.4 Government support

According to Salisu (2020) government entrepreneurial support refers to the supply of essential resources to encourage and assist entrepreneurship, such as creating a welcoming business environment, funding policies and streamlining regulations to decrease obstacles for aspiring entrepreneurs. Universities are in accordance with this, by allowing public financial support and skills development from Entrepreneurship Development in Higher Education of DHET, and partnerships with government agencies such as NYDA, SEDA, SETA, and others (Ogunsanya, Anwana & Mthembu, 2024).

Government policy framework that supports entrepreneurship

2.8.4.1 National Youth Development Agency (NYDA)

In accordance with National Youth Development Act No. 55 of 2008, the National Youth Development Agency was established because of the partnership between the Umsobovu Youth Fund and National Youth Commission (Mukozvi, Adams & Yu, 2023) and NYDA plays a crucial role in executing youth development initiatives (Ogunsanya, Anwana & Mthembu, 2024). The NYDA was developed with the aim of helping South African youth between the ages of 14-35 to start their businesses and finance any existing enterprises with grant, loans, and training (Mmusi, 2020). Moreover, the grant program provides youth entrepreneurs with an opportunity to access financial and non-

financial business development support (Mukuvhi, 2021). As noted by Mukozvi et al. (2023), the NYDA as part of the Youth Employment Accord, develops the education and skills of the youth and assists them in launching and preserving their businesses. Dube (2020) explains that the NYDA implemented an entrepreneurship programme that is called, “Business Management Training Programme”, to help South African youth to contribute to the economy by offering them entrepreneurial skills, training, knowledge and business support. As a result, the NYDA has given South African Youth an immense opportunity to embark on entrepreneurship, in the form of financial skills training, business management, and funding which range from R1000-R50000 for startups and R50000- R100 000 for innovation and growth of existing companies (Mukuvhi, 2021).

2.8.4.2 Umsobovu Youth Fund (NYF)

Umsobovu Youth Fund was established in 2008, and its mission is to encourage the transfer and enhancement of existing skills and the establishment of jobs (Mukozvi et al., 2023). Odeku & Rudolf (2019) noted that enterprise capital, microfinance, and business development services are the primary components of UYF’s youth entrepreneurship programme. Mukuvhi (2021) explains that in order to provide financing to youth entrepreneurs, the UYF has established a variety of funds such as the SME Fund, and the UYF Business Partners Funds, where these funds are used, to either initiate new enterprises or to extend, acquire, or buy-out existing ones. Moreover, in tackling youth social issues, the UYF agency collaborates with the public and private sectors, as well as other stakeholders (Mukozvi et al., 2023). Mukuvhi (2021) also state that youth-owned small businesses can access government , state-owned, and corporate procurement opportunities through a linking programme.

2.8.4.3 Small Enterprise Finance Agency (SEFA)

The Small Enterprise Finance Agency was combined with South African Micro-Finance Apex Fund (SAMAF) and Khula Enterprise Finance Limited to support small firms that require funding up to a maximum of R3 million (Majadibodu, Ramasimu & Ladzani, 2023). Mmusi (2020) explains that SEFA provides asset finance, financing for working-capital needs, bridging finance, revolving loans, and term loans. Entrepreneurs, in addition, receive vouchers for business training, monitoring, market linkage and other support services prior to obtaining the grant (Mukuvhi, 2021).

2.8.4.4 Small Enterprise Development Agency (SEDA)

The National Small Business Act No 29 of 2004 made provision for the establishment of the Small Enterprise Development Agency, whose mandate was to establish a concept for small business development and generate support for potential and existing entrepreneurs (Mukozvi et al., 2023). According to Mmusi (2020) as well as Majadibodu, Ramasimu & Ladzani (2023), SEDA is responsible for designing the government's small business strategy, as well as, implementing a uniform and standardised national distribution network for small businesses' support-agencies, across all levels of government.

2.8.4.5 Technology Innovation Agency

In accordance with the Technology Innovation Agency (TIC) Act of 2005, the Science and Technology Department founded the TIC to generate and advance technological innovation to improve the international competitive ability of South African businesses (SEDA, 2016). TIC's goal is to develop and capitalise on technology advancements to promote socio-economic growth, thereby, and the standard of living for all South African communities. This specialised organisation provides non-financial help for pre and post loans, business support for operations, research and innovation development, business strategies, training and development (Mmusi, 2020).

2.8.4.6 National Empowerment Fund (NEF)

The National Empowerment Fund, although, founded in 1989, was only fully operational by 2004; its aim is to promote, motivate and inspire black economic equality and transformation. Its mission and objective are to serve as a forum for broad-based Black Economic Empowerment (BB-BEE) (Mmusi, 2020). According to Seda (2016), NEF was established to provide black-owned enterprises with both financial and non-financial assistance. Prospective entrepreneurs, however, are often unaware of the diverse government programs aimed at supporting them, and even those who are aware of such programs complain of difficulties in accessing them due to cumbersome bureaucracy. Such challenges result in many young entrepreneurs in South Africa believing that the government is not providing adequate support for them to establish their businesses, successfully (Mzimela, 2023).

2.9 Challenges of entrepreneurship education among students

Entrepreneurship education in South Africa faces many challenges and hurdles that hinder its efficient execution and contribution to entrepreneurship development (Maka, 2023). The challenges that hamper the effective delivery of entrepreneurship education, include among others - lack of resources, inadequate funding, irrelevant and under-developed curriculum, and lack of entrepreneurial skills in lecturers.

2.9.1 Curriculum implementation

The curricula offered by educational institutions seem not to alter students' perspectives on becoming entrepreneurs (Radebe & Vezi-Magigaba, 2021). According to Motaung (2021), unsuitable curricular content in the domain of entrepreneurship education is a fundamental reality in South Africa. Higher education curriculum is inadequate in content and teaching methods, leading to graduates in entrepreneurship seeking traditional labour market jobs instead of creating their own jobs (Mzimela, 2023). University graduates seem not encouraged to think outside the box, create work for themselves, or even become employers in an era when jobs are few and unemployment is increasing, rampantly (Omotoso, Ga

mede, Vezi-Magigaba & Ayandibu, 2022) . Radebe and Vezi-Magigaba (2021) note that these HEIs seem to lack the instructional strategies and approaches that can enable students to apply what they have learned to real-world situations and build their skills sets, effectively. Due to the insufficiency of entrepreneurial centres, with the required equipment, entrepreneurship education is focused primarily on theoretical rather than practical learning (Saleh et al., 2020). In addition to being underqualified for the workforce, university graduates are frequently, equally, ill-prepared for business, a clear demonstration that there are insufficient and inappropriate instructional materials utilised in entrepreneurship education (Mzimela, 2023); Radebe and Vezi-Magigaba (2021) hence, assert that educational institutions in South Africa lack relevant course materials that reflect the nation's economic reality and can remedy any challenges.

2.9.2 Lack of facilities and equipment

The absence of facilities for appropriate training for the acquisition of entrepreneurial skills is a significant issue facing entrepreneurship education (Ubogu, 2023). Eze and

Obidile (2018) argue that the facilities and equipment offered for entrepreneurial activities are outdated and require improvements, since the relevant authorities have not yet supplied certain necessary equipment. Facilities, such as sufficient laboratories, workshops, and teaching materials are essential in schools since students learn better when there are facilities available (Ubogu, 2023). Furthermore, technology is driving every element of business and education worldwide, with information and communication technology being seen as extremely significant development. Unfortunately, these facilities are inadequate in most HEIs in underdeveloped nations, like South Africa (Ulojo, 2021).

2.9.3 Poor funding

Ubogu (2020) reveals that lack of funds creates barriers for entrepreneurship education and development. Adequate funds for modern facilities, training of trainers, and seed money to enable students to carry out their business concepts are essential components for the successful execution of entrepreneurship education programmes (Tennakoon, Gunawardena & Premaratne, 2020). This is supported by Saleh et al. (2020) who allude that substantial amount of funds is imperative for practical entrepreneurial education lessons, as well as for the start-up and growth of business endeavours, to create and sustain successful entrepreneurs. Appropriate government financing and policies, that are carefully designed and developed are responsible for the growth and encouragement of entrepreneurship education (Ubogu, 2020). One of the things that university students and other aspiring businesspeople often worry about when considering starting up a business is, access to finance (Li, Ahmed, Qalati, Khan & Naz, 2020). This is due to the fact that, accessing funds from government and non-governmental financial organizations is usually, challenging due to the demand for collateral by these agencies, which often denies potential entrepreneurs access to capital required for start-up and operation of entrepreneurial activities (Eze & Obidile, 2018). Furthermore, potential business owners in underdeveloped countries fear restrictions in financial institutions, shortage of funds, and loan programmes as almost insurmountable obstacles to successful business endeavours (Tennakoon et al., 2020).

2.9.4 Lack of textbooks

Eretan and Omotoso (2024) argue that one other issue that arises from the recent addition of entrepreneurial education to the institutions curriculum, is the scarcity of relevant textbooks; this has posed serious difficulties for the way entrepreneurial courses are taught in schools and HELs. Lack of textbooks not only hinders the teaching of the course, but it can also demotivate both the teachers and students, leading to a bad attitude towards the entrepreneurial modules (Ogina, 2022). The government is advancing entrepreneurial education by launching facilitating strategies, however, the lack of textbooks still has significant consequences as it makes it difficult for lecturers to finish the syllabus, which lowers the likelihood that graduates will succeed, once they enter the business world (Gamede & Aluenya, 2019). This challenge, hence, restricts teachers' capacity to devise relevant innovative strategies for advancing the subject's instruction and interest among students (Ogina, 2022). Eretan and Omotoso (2024) also assert that teaching and learning without textbooks would require and result in a great deal of memorising and excluding of other sources of knowledge, thereby, elevating the teacher's word as the highest authority, which makes it impossible to become competent in entrepreneurship. Moreover, some students find it difficult to do their coursework without textbooks (Ogina, 2020).

2.9.5 Students' lack of interest in entrepreneurial programmes

Magagula and Tsvakirai (2020) revealed that there is lack of interest and engagement in entrepreneurship initiatives amongst the youth, despite the numerous efforts to foster entrepreneurship abilities. Students, hence, are hesitant to devote their time and effort on entrepreneurial education and activities (Farid & Rahman, 2020). In addition, some students do not wish to participate in entrepreneurial activities because they perceive them as time-consuming activities with very uncertain rewards (Eze & Obidile, 2018).

2.9.6 Lack of entrepreneurial skills in lecturers

Another major obstacle to entrepreneurship promotion, is the dearth of competent entrepreneurship lecturers in most higher education institutions, according Radebe & Vezi-Magigaba (2021). Entrepreneurship is a dynamic field that heavily emphasises activity, consequently when it comes to teaching entrepreneurial education, lecturers need to be well-versed in the theoretical aspects, such as lesson plans, objectives,

content, and teaching strategies, however, students also urgently need practical dimensions (Tannakoon et al., 2020). In addition to educating students how to manage a firm, entrepreneurship education also teaches them how to think creatively and how to foster a strong sense of accountability and self-worth (Radebe & Vezi-Magigaba, 2021), therefore, entrepreneurship lecturers should possess multiple entrepreneurial abilities to impart entrepreneurial information and skills to students (Tannakoon et al., 2020).

Otache (2019) proposed that lecturers should demonstrate entrepreneurial attitudes and behaviours because students tend to develop entrepreneurial intentions by imitating people they perceive as their role models. Student, thus, may develop entrepreneurship interest when they see that their lecturers are entrepreneurially minded (Tannakoon et al., 2020). Most university lecturers on entrepreneurship education have Bachelor of Business Administration, Commerce or Accounting and lack wide expertise or understanding of entrepreneurship (Tannakoon et al., 2020). Similarly, lecturers who teach entrepreneurship at the University of Venda hold qualifications in Business Management and Business Administration, with no visible signs of their entrepreneurial abilities.

2.9.7 Inappropriate teaching methods

Entrepreneurship education at South African universities is not sufficiently practical (Ncube & Lekhanya, 2025). This is applicable to teaching both the theoretical and practical elements of new enterprises in the context of entrepreneurship (Omotoso et al., 2022). Most universities in South Africa use the traditional method of teaching, whereby, the lecturer stands in the classroom and give lesson without students being practically engaged during the lesson. Traditional lecture techniques may be useful in certain theoretical curricula; however, experiential methods reflect more the unexpected nature of business and provide student entrepreneurs with more possibilities to solve real-world challenges (Omotoso et al., 2022). According to Lackeus (2020), certain learning platforms and strategies have a greater influence on students than others, such as innovative practical contact with the outside world resulting in empirical value production for others. Academic institutions, thus, should adopt teaching strategies that promote practical application and outcomes which bring about skills development. In the entrepreneurship context, this refers to educating in

both theoretical and practical business concepts (Mzimela, 2023). Additionally, Shambare and Donga (2019) suggest universities should adapt educational techniques that allow undergraduates to use their talents practically and holistically because this approach enables students to develop free and creative thinking in the application of information and theory in the real world by prioritising practical knowledge over memorisation of formulae in textbooks. According to Bell (2021), for instance, one most effective way to prepare students for entrepreneurship is to conduct experiments in a controlled environment, such as role-playing or business simulation.

2.10 Strategies that can be used to enhance entrepreneurship education

To address challenges associated with entrepreneurship education require multifaced strategies.

2.10.1 Fostering entrepreneurial culture

Kativhu and Netshandama (2024) argue that establishing pertinent organisations is essential; these may include funding bureaus, licensing, intellectual property offices, spinoff activities, and on-campus incubators. The vision of an entrepreneurial university should encompass the creation of a platform for networking amongst students, business owners and incubators (Hassan, 2024). Entrepreneurial facilities are already available in majority of universities in South Africa, but there is still lack of commitment to make effective use of them; for example, universities need to incorporate the entire campus in their business incubators, not only students from the Business Management Faculties (Kativhu & Netshandama, 2024). In addition, universities should host events like business proposal competition, innovation championship, entrepreneurial week, and awards, as well as allowing students to conduct informal mini-businesses on campus (Tannakoon et al., 2020).

2.10.2 Curriculum reform

University curriculum designers must revamp their curricula to include an entrepreneurial focus, in all degree programmes (Netshilinganedza, 2020), hence, to improve the adoption of entrepreneurial philosophies and culture within the universities, this should be implemented throughout all faculties (Kativhu & Netshandama, 2024). All undergraduate students should be required to take

introductory modules in entrepreneurship as part of their curriculum to help shape their perspective from the start and raise awareness of the alternative career path of becoming an entrepreneur in any field of study (Saleh et al., 2020). Netshilinganedza (2020) suggests that universities need to explore opportunities of offering short learning courses for students whose courses do not include entrepreneurship module. It is also advised that universities consider offering entrepreneurial degrees such as a Bachelor of Entrepreneurship or Bachelor of Business Entrepreneurship. From such courses, students would be able to focus on entrepreneurship-specific courses that address both fundamental and advanced entrepreneurial abilities (Phiri & Chasaya, 2023).

2.10.3 Integrating practical learning in the classroom

Rather than confining entrepreneurship education to the classroom, an integrated strategy that connects classroom instruction with real-world experiences is required (Sibanda & Iwu, 2023). Lose (2021) advocates implementing practical work-based learning to bridge the gap between theory and practice and help students improve their entrepreneurial competencies. A syllabus for entrepreneurship education, hence, must include a fair mix of theoretical and practical instruction, which need to be closely connected to real-world business exposure (Mzimela, 2023); for instance, an entrepreneurial curriculum at the University of Pretoria, South Africa, saw the successful implementation of a practical teaching approach, hence, implementing the belief that using hands-on teaching methods to encourage entrepreneurial learning, is imperative (Sibanda & Iwu, 2023).

2.10.4 Developing internship programmes

Entrepreneurship education should also provide students with hands-on training through placing them in industrial internships (Saleh et al., 2020). Mzimela (2023) suggests a training programme that offers mentorship from local business owners, whereby each student is paired with a mentor and actively participates in the company's operations and decisions, while serving the period of internship. The acquisition of skills involves more application than theory, thus, student should occasionally walk alongside successful local business owners who have strong academic backgrounds to mentor them under supervision of the university to enhance the practical skills and observe the theories in action (Kulo et al., 2018). This kind of

training provide students with hands-on experience and exposure to realism of the local businesses' environment, thereby, preparing them to become prepared entrepreneurs in the future (Boldureanu, Lonescu, Bercu, Bedrule-Grigotuta & Boldureanu 2020). Universities should, therefore, partner with private businesses to open avenues for internships and on-site training for aspiring entrepreneurs (Nwokolo, 2018).

2.10.5 Establishment of entrepreneurial centres

Universities should also establish centres for entrepreneurship and innovation, furnish these centres, and even expand the service by offering all students short entrepreneurial courses in conjunction with employment creation offices (Ubogu, 2020). According to Ubogu (2023), HEIs should make sure that sufficient workshops and laboratory facilities are available at entrepreneurship centres, so that students can learn real-world skills necessary for starting a business. Constant upgrading of the resources, equipment and facilities is essential to assist research activities, educate students and provide real platforms for them to practice theories learnt during lectures (Aditya, 2020). Eretan and Omotoso (2024) believe that introducing entrepreneurs to business prospects through sufficient training and development in workshops or seminars would improve the entrepreneurial programmes, thus, better prepare the trainees. This would necessitate universities hiring experienced entrepreneurship specialists to conduct workshops and seminars with the notion of mentorship at these entrepreneurial centres (Ubogu, 2023). Students should be encouraged to take the risk of engaging directly in entrepreneurship by taking advantage of the resources and infrastructures available at campus entrepreneurial centres (Aditya, 2020).

2.10.6 Training of entrepreneurial lecturers

According to Tannakoon et al. (2020), during the introduction of entrepreneurship education, the lecturer has a critical role to play in energising the classroom and fostering a yearning for knowledge. Universities need to train their lecturers to be capable and effective enough to meet the rising demands in the business world, both domestically and internationally. Higher education institutions can furnish educators with the necessary resources, training, and chances for professional growth through seminars, workshops and short courses to enable them to impart appropriate entrepreneurial education, effectively (Mlambo, Mbongwa & Khambule, 2024).

Mawonedza, Tanga and Nsubuga (2021) , similarly, advocate that entrepreneurial lecturers should undertake in-service training concentrating on updating their content knowledge and skills to student-centred methods of teaching that would include experiential learning. Providing lecturers with continuous training and assistance can improve their motivation, teaching abilities and capacity to cater to the varied needs of their students involved in entrepreneurship education (Amadi-Iwai, Ubulom & Okiridu, 2024).

2.10.7 Providing adequate funding and government support

Mlambo et al. (2024), reiterate that government should provide funding and resources to help educational institutions conduct initiatives aimed at entrepreneurial education, which may involve providing funding for curriculum reform, teaching resources, and extra-curricular activities related to entrepreneurship. Kulo et al. (2018), however, argue that government funding is insufficient to support functional entrepreneurial education since it requires the involvement of diverse experts with a range of competencies, thus, Mlambo et al. (2024) suggest that government should collaborate with a range of stakeholders, such as private companies, non-profit organisations, and diverse educational institutions should collaborate to promote programs in entrepreneurship education. Collaboration between these stakeholders can help address financing gaps, upgrade infrastructure and improve educational outcomes (Sibhensana & Maistry, 2023). As noted by Maka (2023), the process would improve the delivery of all-inclusive programmes and give students access to various strategies, such as technology, mentorship, and hands-on experiences. After the programme, credit facilities or interest-free loans should be given to students to help them launch their business and measures should be put into place to make sure that the beneficiaries use the funds for the right purpose (Eretan & Omotoso, 2024). Such assistance has the potential to improve the success rate of entrepreneurial endeavours and raise students' willingness to pursue entrepreneurial activities (Elikkal & Rajamohan, 2023).

2.10.8 Integrating technology

The utilisation of technology and digital platforms can broaden the scope and ease access to entrepreneurship education, which would guarantee that a more diverse range of prospective entrepreneurs can obtain educational materials and assistance

even in distant areas (Kimani, 2024). This is supported by Mlambo et al. (2024) who postulate that integrating technology in entrepreneurship education can increase the accessibility of educational resources, enable distance learning, and enhance the effectiveness of instruction. It is absolutely essential to expose students to technology, particularly, on recent advancements so that they avoid being out-dated in their businesses rather, they will be abreast with technology advancement (Saleh et al., 2020).

2.11 Chapter summary

This chapter analysed the literature review on the concept of entrepreneurship education, thus, the factors of entrepreneurship education that influence student entrepreneurship development, from the perspective of other scholars, were presented in this chapter. Additionally, the chapter thoroughly discussed the challenges that hinder student entrepreneurship development, and the possible strategies that can improve entrepreneurship education. In South Africa, entrepreneurship education is developing, with the support of both government and private sectors, however, challenges that hinder the process still exist. With strategies in place to improve entrepreneurship education, South Africa can develop entrepreneurship as a tool for economic growth and job creation.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

The research methodology describes the methods and processes used to find and examine data on a particular topic. It is the procedure whereby researchers plan their study so as to use certain chosen research tools to accomplish their objectives (Sreekumar, 2023). This chapter describes, in detail, the selected research design as well as the data analysis process. The discussions will provide a summary of the project's approach, a full explanation of research design and method, data collection procedures, sample selection strategies, and ethical standards adhered to during the conducting of the study.

3.2 Study area

A study area refers to the region where the research was done; this study was conducted at the University of Venda, Thohoyandou. The researcher collected data from this area because of the noticeable student entrepreneurs and various entrepreneurship programs offered in the University. The University of Venda is a rural-based university located in Thohoyandou in the Vhembe District of the Limpopo Province. It serves as the administrative centre of the Vhembe district and Thulamela Municipality. University of Venda is a higher education institution that was established in 1982 to meet the apartheid-era educational demands of the people living in the Venda Bantustan. At present, it offers a variety of undergraduate and postgraduate degrees to about +15000 student enrolled in 4 faculties: Faculty of Humanities, Social Sciences and Education; Faculty of Science, Engineering and Agriculture: Faculty of Management, Commerce and Law as well as Faculty of Health Sciences. Currently the University of Venda students take part in entrepreneurship extra-curricular activities, under the support of Enactus, Student Training for Entrepreneurial Promotion (STEP), EDHE Entrepreneurship Intervarsity and Student Entrepreneur Week (SEW), and EDHE Economic Activation Office.

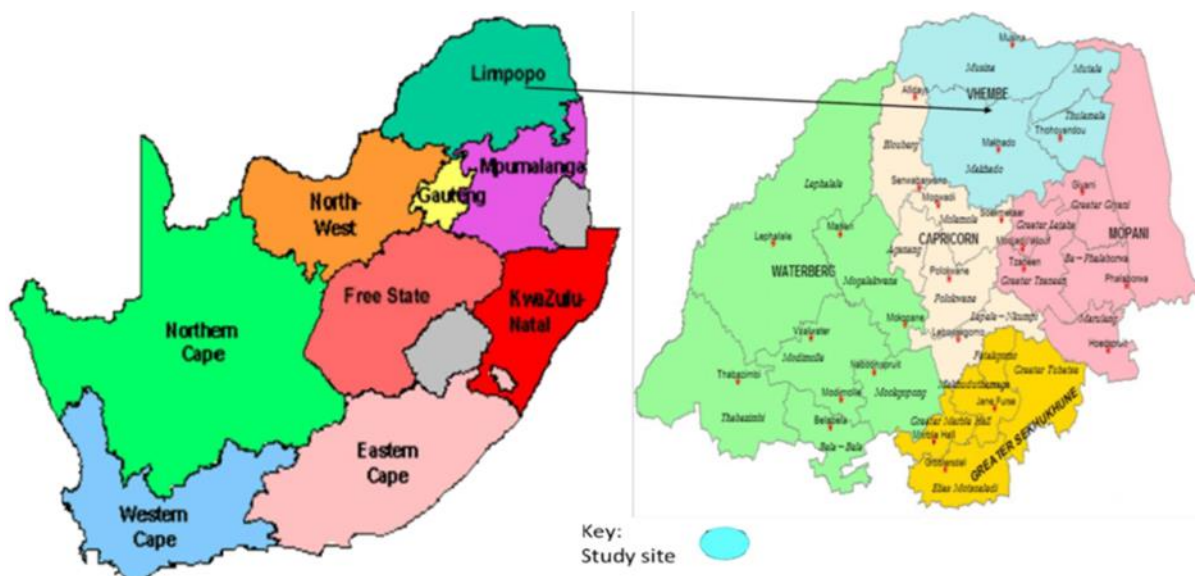


Figure 3.2: Study area map

3.3 Research design

A research design is a plan, framework or strategy that a researcher employs to produce responses to research questions (Kumatongo & Muzata, 2021). Three theoretical frameworks namely, phenomenology, hermeneutics and ethnography, are the primary pillars of qualitative research approach (Muzari, Shava & Shonhiwa, 2022). This study employed the phenomenology design.

3.3.1 Phenomenology design

Phenomenological study describes the common meaning of various people's lived experience around a given topic or situation (Sarfo, Debrah, Gbordzoe, Affal & Obeng, 2021). Following phenomenological design in qualitative research produces descriptive data, which the researcher must then analyse using systematic techniques, such as transcriptions, coding, and analysis to identify trends and themes (Muzari et al., 2022). A phenomenology study usually relies on interviews or focused-group discussions to collect data to answer questions based on the subject's perception of what happened (Taherdoost, 2022). Phenomenological study usually starts with a question; therefore, it is an exploratory approach that builds concepts by examining the lived experience of individuals or communities to fully describe a phenomenon

(Sarfo et al., 2021). The phenomenology design assisted the researcher to have in-depth information of entrepreneurship education.

3.4 Research approach

Research approach involves gathering information and data to make informed conclusions regarding the research. Its goal is to characterise, evaluate, and draw conclusions from a variety of data collection techniques while taking into account each one's advantages and disadvantages (Muzari et al., 2022). The researcher utilised a qualitative research approach in this study.

3.4.1 Qualitative Approach

According to Bhangu, Provost and Caduff (2023), qualitative research is a technique that aims to explore and comprehend the meaning that individuals or groups ascribe to social or human problems. Qualitative approach falls within the interpretative paradigm, and it is derived from constructivist theory of knowledge, which argues that knowledge is subjective and influenced by individuals' perceptions of the environment, hence, qualitative research depends on individual's viewpoint (Muzari, Shava & Shonhiwa, 2022). Rather than using numerical data, qualitative research typically employs non-quantifiable information expressed through words, texts, descriptions, and observations (Karunarathna, Bandara & Jayawardana, 2024). The technique relies on participants' actual remarks, reducing the possibility of fabricating research outcomes (Muzari, Shava & Shonhiwa, 2022). The researcher, hence, employed qualitative approach to gain an in-depth understanding of students' experiences with entrepreneurship education.

3.5 Research paradigm

A research paradigm is a set of accepted ideas and viewpoints among scientists regarding how to comprehend and solve problems (Mahajam & Mahajam, 2022). Research paradigms can be classified in several ways including - constructivism, positivism, interpretivism, ideology, and pragmatism (Kumatongo & Muzata, 2021). The research paradigm chosen for this study is constructivism.

3.5.1 Constructive paradigm

Constructivism is an epistemology that provides an explanation of the nature of knowledge (Mahajan & Mahajan, 2022). A constructivist viewpoint maintains that

knowledge is based on cultural traits and shaped by experience gained, both individually and collectively, across social contexts, with the meaning interpreted considering one's prior experience, as well as one's present conception of the world (Gannon, Taheri & Azer, 2021). The foundation of constructivism is the idea that individuals try to make sense of the world they live in by developing their own subjective interpretation of their experiences (Kumatongo & Muzata, 2021). Constructivism emphasizes creating hypotheses or patterns of meaning rather than evaluating existing ones (Gannon, Taheri & Azer, 2021). The objective of constructivism is to rely on participants' perspectives of the event being studied and interpret the meanings they ascribe to their surroundings (Kumatongo & Muzata, 2021).

3.6 Population

The word "population" in research refers to a large group of people who are the primary target of the study, and the studied population tend to share similar traits (Islam & Al daihani, 2022). Data collection from the entire population is not always feasible (Stratton, 2021), hence, this study targeted University of Venda students who are undergoing entrepreneurship education programs and extra-mural activities. Due to various entrepreneurial education programmes offered at the University of Venda and the diverse informal entrepreneurial activities are involved in, the target population is not well known.

3.7 Sampling techniques

Sampling is the process of selecting research participants from a larger population based on the study's requirements (Turner, 2020). The aim of sampling is to obtain a representative from the broader population by selecting a small number or sub-set (Rahman, 2023). According to Rahman, Tabash, Salamzadeh, Abduli and Rahman (2022), the two most popular sampling methods are - probability and non-probability sampling. Probability sampling ensures that all members of the target population have an equal chance of being chosen as a study participant (Stratton, 2021). In non-probability sampling, people are chosen non-randomly, hence, not all people might be included (McCombes, 2022). This study employed non-probability sampling to select participants.

3.7.1 Non-probability sampling

Non-probability sampling is recommended for studies where respondents do not have an equal chance of being selected (Rahman, 2023). This sampling approach is usually utilised in exploratory and qualitative research with the purpose of obtaining a clear knowledge of a small and under-researched group (McCombes, 2022). This study followed convenience sampling method.

3.7.2 Convenience method

Convenience sampling involves going to the public place and inviting bystanders to participate. The researcher establishes inclusion criteria and reaches out to members of the targeted group who meet the requirements and invite them to participate in the study, then select them based on their agreement (Golzar & Tajik, 2022). Convenience sampling selects individuals who are perceived to be easily accessible to the researcher (Muzari, Shava & Shonhiwa, 2022), hence, the process allows researchers to save time, money, and effort (Golzar, Noor & Tajik, 2022). The researcher applied convenience method to select participants among students who are currently registered in entrepreneurship course and those who participate in entrepreneurship programs around the campus. This method was selected due to its accessibility and time-efficiency, given that the study was conducted in a limited timeframe with insufficient resources. The selected students were readily available and willing to participate in this study, and they met the inclusion criteria set for the study. The use of convenience method in this study had various limitations. The study findings are not comprehensive as the individuals were chosen non-random, which makes it difficult to draw conclusions to a larger population. Moreover, the sample may be biased since it does not include all the people but only individuals who were available to participate in the study.

3.7.3 Sample size

The sample refers to a sub-set of a population that is needed to provide enough information, to enable a generalisation of the study results (Rahman, 2023). This study participants were 10 students, and this size was determined by the data saturation. This sample consisted of students who were registered for the entrepreneurship module and those who participate in Enactus and STEP entrepreneurial programs offered on campus. A sample size of 10 is not uncommon; for instance, Shumba and

Nkondo (2020) conducted 5 in-depth interviews in their study. Data saturation occurs when no new information is obtained from the data, resulting in redundancy in the analysis process (Islam & Aldaihani, 2022).

3.8 Data collection

Data collection refers to gathering information from respondents for analysis, to respond to research questions, test hypotheses, and eventually accomplish the goals of the study (Karunarathna, Gunasena, Hapuarachchi et al., 2024). Data is classified into two types - primary data and secondary data. Primary data is information gathered by the researcher in his/her field of interest, while secondary data is obtained from existing literature sources (Raj, 2020); this study collected primary data as well as from existing literature review.

3.8.1 Data collection techniques

Many qualitative research includes interviews with participants as the primary data collecting method. Interviews are a core data collection approach that involves asking participants questions and recording their responses (Karunarathna et al., 2024). Interviews can be conducted in person or remotely through a phone or computer using software like Zoom and Teams (Ruslin, Mashuri, Rasak, Alhabsyi & Syam, 2022). In this study, the researcher collected data using semi-structured interviews.

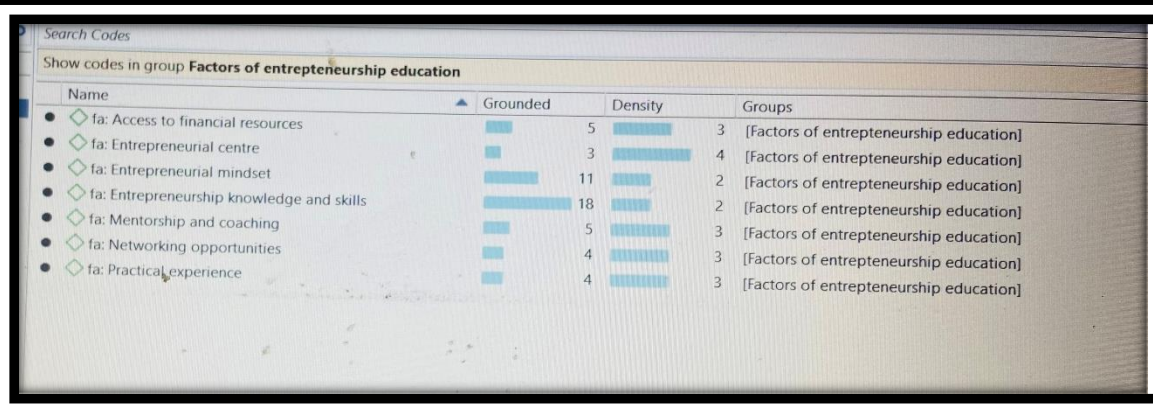
3.8.2 Semi-structured interview

Semi-structured interviews use open-ended questions to cover certain subjects and allow for in-depth discussions between the researcher and the participant (Muzari et al., 2022). In semi-structured interview, the researcher uses interview guideline which is created with series of questions designed to elicit participants' thoughts, opinion, and feelings about a specific topic (Ruslin et al., 2022). During the process, the researchers can adhere to interview guideline, and they can also delve deeper into the participants' answers, when necessary, to elicit more pertinent information (Karunarathna et al., 2024). To overcome any geographical obstacles, the researcher also collected data through virtual interviews and used an audio recorder to record the interviews with the participants. The interviews were done in English, and all the

participants indicated they understood the questions and were comfortable participating in the study.

3.9 Data analysis

Qualitative data analysis examines patterns and themes in textual data to gain deeper understanding of a topic, ultimately, addressing research questions (Islam & Aldaihani, 2022). In this study, the researcher performed a thematic content analysis of the data using Atlas.ti version 8.4. Thematic analysis is a qualitative data analysis approach that identifies themes within a given dataset (Lester, Cho & Lochmiller, 2020). Once similar patterns are recognised, in the data, the researcher must analyse their relevance in line with the goals and objectives of the study (Dusi & Steverns, 2022). Atlas.ti is a qualitative research software that is used for coding and analysing transcripts and creating networks diagrams (Paulus, 2023). The researcher used mainly VI coding and continuous comparison to analyse data. Coding is a data analysis technique that involves reading and interpreting raw contextualised data to construct themes and the relationship between them then assign a code to each theme (Williams & Moser, 2019). After the coding process, the data can be analysed and interpreted using data extracts or quotations; finally, the results can be presented in the form of themes or model development (Tenny et al., 2022). The researchers started by reading interview transcripts to immerse in the data, followed by coding where meaningful texts were highlighted and labelled using open coding and list coding taken directly from participants' own words. The codes were then grouped into broader categories through continuous comparison. The researcher developed themes such as entrepreneurial mindset, practical experience, and networking opportunities.



Search Codes

Show codes in group **Factors of entrepreneurship education**

Name	Grounded	Density	Groups
fa: Access to financial resources	5	3	[Factors of entrepreneurship education]
fa: Entrepreneurial centre	3	4	[Factors of entrepreneurship education]
fa: Entrepreneurial mindset	11	2	[Factors of entrepreneurship education]
fa: Entrepreneurship knowledge and skills	18	2	[Factors of entrepreneurship education]
fa: Mentorship and coaching	5	3	[Factors of entrepreneurship education]
fa: Networking opportunities	4	3	[Factors of entrepreneurship education]
fa: Practical experience	4	3	[Factors of entrepreneurship education]

Figure 3.9: Coding

3.10 Trustworthiness criteria

Trustworthiness ensures the accuracy of the information gathered from the respondents (Muzari et al., 2022). There are four acknowledged trustworthiness criteria for analysing qualitative data: credibility, transferability, dependability and conformability.

3.10.1 Credibility

Credibility is defined as the degree to which a study measures the concepts it claims to measure (Muzari et al., 2022). In other words, a study is considered credible if it accurately represents the target structures or variables being studied (William, 2024). The researcher employed the audit trail strategy to validate data, which involves monitoring and keeping all the records of research activities and field collected raw data such as interview documents and audio recordings for future examination by interested parties. Such records ensure that readers will be able to follow exactly how the study was conducted

3.10.2 Reliability

Reliability in qualitative research pertains to the degree of consistency exhibited by the data gathering instruments. According to this principle, research in qualitative analysis should be documented in a way that allows other researchers to examine the data and reach similar conclusions (Nassaji, 2020). The research used audit trail strategy by monitoring and keeping interview documents and audio recordings to verify the accuracy of participants' responses.

3.10.3 Transferability

Transferability refers to the extent to which the study findings may be generalised to different contexts or circumstances (Ahmed, 2024). In terms of transferability, the researcher must assist readers in determining if the study's conclusions and insights may be applied to comparable situations (Riazi, Rezvani & Ghanbar, 2023). The researcher explained every step of the study process, from data collection and background to final report and provided a very comprehensive details about the context, thereby, assisting readers to make generalisations.

3.10.4 Confirmability

Confirmability refers to how fair and objective the results are, making sure that they are not affected by researchers' opinions or biases (Ahmed, 2024). This involves making sure that the researcher's prejudices do not skew how research respondents' statements are interpreted to support a specific narrative (Ahmed, 2024). The researcher used audit trail that detailed every stage of the data analysis process to support any judgements made. The researcher also used quotations from the participants to support point made and conclusions reached.

3.11 Ethical considerations.

Ethical considerations are crucial for the quality and success of data-driven research. These factors safeguard participants' rights, privacy, and well-being while assuring responsible and transparent research practices (Karunaratna et al., 2024). To ensure this, the researcher first obtained ethical approval (Ethical clearance No: FMCL/24/BMA/17/0909) from the University of Venda Research Ethics Committee.

3.11.1 Informed consent

The next step in ensuring that data was collected in an ethical manner was for the researcher to get informed participation from the sample. The researcher informed the respondents about the nature and goal of the study before beginning data collection; therefore, participation was based on their informed consent. Consent was also requested for the interviews to be recorded.

3.11.2 Volunteerism

Participation was optional, hence, respondents were advised that they may withdraw from the study at any point if they were uncomfortable to continue with the study or if they became unwell, with no detrimental consequences.

3.11.3 Maintaining confidentiality and anonymity

The researcher informed the participants about their rights to have their personal identifying information kept confidential. This was undertaken by participants not providing any identifying details; hence, they were guaranteed anonymity. The researcher also assigned participants pseudonyms to guarantee that their contributions were anonymous.

3.12 Chapter Summary

This chapter offered a full overview of the research technique used in the study. The study aims and objectives are mentioned since they influenced the approach adopted. The qualitative approach's research design, sample procedure, data collecting method, and data analysis method were all discussed in connection with the study's objective.

CHAPTER 4

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

In Chapter 3, which focused on the study's methodology, the researcher detailed the procedures utilised to collect and analyse the data to address the study questions posed in Chapter 1. In Chapter 2, the current literature on the field was fully reviewed. This chapter will present the findings from the data received from the various respondents.

4.1 Introduction

This chapter gives an interpretation of the study findings derived from the responses received; the primary method of data gathering was a semi-structured, face-to-face interview. The findings were obtained in relation to the research goals stated in the background and introduction to the study.

4.2 Demographics

This section presents the demographics of participants. The researcher investigated the role of entrepreneurship education on student entrepreneurship development. The student entrepreneurs under investigation are University of Venda students from different degree programs but are also involved in entrepreneurship. The student entrepreneurs are participating in Enactus and STEP entrepreneurship programs.

Table 4.2 Demographics of participants

Participant	Education and training	Entrepreneurship program	Years of operation
1	BCom in Business Management	Entrepreneurship module, Enactus, STEP	5
2	Bachelor of Agriculture	STEP	4
3	Bachelor of Education	STEP	
4	Honours in Business Management	Entrepreneurship module	3
5	BCom in Business Management	Entrepreneurship module	3

6	Master's in psychology	STEP	10
7	Honours in Business Management	Entrepreneurship module, Enactus	4
8	BCom Tourism	Enactus	5
9	BA in Public Relations	STEP	2
10	BSc in Environmental Science	STEP	3

4.3 Conceptualisation of the factors of EE that contribute to student entrepreneurship development.

This section presents and discusses the factors of entrepreneurship education that contribute to student entrepreneurship development. During data analysis, seven themes were extracted from the data and coded . The codes were - access to financial resources; entrepreneurial centre; entrepreneurial knowledge and skills; entrepreneurial mindset; mentorship and coaching; networking opportunities; and practical experience.

4.3.1 Access to financial resources

The results in this study have shown that access to financial resources is one of the factors of entrepreneurship education that influence student entrepreneurship development. This is evidenced by the views of Participants 1, 2, 3,6 and 9 as shown in the excerpts below:

“In Enactus programme they host competition whereby students present their business ideas and the student with the best idea get a start-up capital of a certain amount” Participant 1

“I also received financial support from NYDA, I received a grant of R5000 after attending their training, which helped me to start my farming business.” Participant 2

“When you participate in STEP workshop, at the end of the workshop you are given R2000 as a start-up capital for your business idea, so I’ve gained uhm finance if I can put it like that, funds or capital to stat-up my business.” Participant 3

“It assists most of the young people to grow. Uhm, more especially at the program that I partake in because they also make sure that they give you a start-up capital” Participant 6

“Access to startup funding.” Participant 9

From the above excerpts, the respondents disclosed that they receive financial resources from the entrepreneurship programs that they participate in. They indicated that they received start-up capital from Enactus, STEP as well as NYDA upon completion of the training. The participants indicated that the start-up capital that they received from these entrepreneurship education programs, helped them to implement their business ideas. This proves that access to financial resources influences student entrepreneurship development.

4.3.2 Entrepreneurship centre

The results indicate that the existence of an entrepreneurship centre is one of the notable factors that contribute to student entrepreneurship development. This is revealed by the perceptions of Participants 1 and 2 from the quotations below:

“Univen has established an entrepreneurship centre where they conduct entrepreneurial workshops and events.” Participant 1

“The University of Venda foster entrepreneurship culture in campus by hosting entrepreneurship competitions, events and they have also developed an entrepreneurship centre.” Participant 2

The above extracts revealed that the University of Venda has established an entrepreneurial centre aimed at fostering entrepreneurial culture among students, through hosting entrepreneurship events, workshops and competitions. The entrepreneurial centre actively engages students and encourages their participation in entrepreneurship education. This initiative plays a crucial role in shaping students' interest in entrepreneurial activities.

4.3.3 Entrepreneurial mindset

Entrepreneurial mindset is another factor of entrepreneurship education that contributes to student entrepreneurship development. This is revealed by Participants 1, 2, 4, 5, 7, 8, and 9 in the following quotations:

“Entrepreneurship education shifted my mindset from wanting to work for someone to wanting to be my own boss and create employment for other people. I started to see entrepreneurship as the way to success since the education systems is failing to equip us with the necessary skills needed in the workplace.” Participant 1

“Entrepreneurship education has helped me develop an entrepreneurial mindset, which has helped me to approach challenges with creativity, perseverance and adaptability.” Participant 2

“Entrepreneurship education programmes play a vital role by fostering a mindset that embraces innovation, risk-taking and problem-solving.” Participant 4

“According to my point of view, I think it develops entrepreneurial mindset in such a way that through the knowledge that is imparted to entrepreneurship education students lead to many of them being entrepreneurs.” Participant 5

“In entrepreneurship it has helped me with that mindset to tolerate risk, so I see risk as, you know, as a learning opportunity, so if I fail, I see it as a learning opportunity.” Participant 7

“At the end of the day, being exposed to such an environment, it actually resulted in me saying - come on I can actually start a business, I can run my own business successfully - so at the end of the day, it actually provided that platform, so it was a birthing ground of me now embarking on entrepreneurship.” Participant 8

“EE programs play a crucial role in fostering an entrepreneurial mindset” Participant 9

From the quotations above, the students expressed that entrepreneurship education played a significant role in fostering an entrepreneurial mindset. They further indicated that they started to perceive entrepreneurship as a viable career option through their participating in entrepreneurship education. These results show that students have gained mindset that can tolerate risks, that navigate challenges with creativity and resilience and enables them to bounce back from setbacks. This provides clear

evidence that entrepreneurship education contributes to the development of student entrepreneurship by instilling in students an entrepreneurial mindset.

4.3.4 Entrepreneurial knowledge and skills

The findings show that entrepreneurial knowledge and skills is identified as another factor that influences student entrepreneurship development. This is proven by the responses of participants 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 8, 9, and 10 in the following extracts.

“The entrepreneurship course provided me with theoretical knowledge on aspects like business planning, market research, and financial management, which were critical in shaping my entrepreneurial mindset. I also gained practical skills through participating in Enactus and STEP programmes.”
Participant 1

“The most beneficial aspects have been the acquisition of skills and knowledge, especially in areas such as financial literacy, market research, and business planning.” Participant 2

“My experience with entrepreneurship education can be entrepreneurial skills and knowledge, so through entrepreneurship education I’ve build skills on how to start-up a business, how to navigate your business idea and also I have gained some financial skills, how to draw up a business plan and how to navigate the challenges that one encounters when they start a business.”
Participant 3

“Entrepreneurship education programmes have supported my start-up ideas by equipping me with essential business skills such as market research, financial planning and operations and all that.” Participant 4

“My experience is that I gained it was like, uh the budgeting skills as well as the way of me managing my profit well, with a bigger view for me to ensure that my business grows in a certain period of time that I set.” Participant 6

“I think it encourages creativity, you know, it teaches, or it taught us to think creatively and develop innovative solutions. It helped us to develop problem solving skills, it equipped us with skills to identify and solve problems in real world.” Participant 7

“You see that when someone now is taught about entrepreneurship, there’s a concept for positive impact creation, for example, right? There’s an aspect for opportunity identification, there’s now an aspect of actually managing finances, there’s an aspect of marketing, there’s an aspect of registering the business. So, through those entrepreneurship education programmes you see that people they get now acquitted with those things that are acquired within the entrepreneurship arena.” Participant 8

“Entrepreneurship education programs have helped refine my start-up ideas by teaching me how to develop business plans, conduct market research, and pitch to investors.” Participant 9

“I think the most beneficial one it has to be financial literacy, marketing strategies, and also communication skills.” Participant 10

The above extracts confirm that entrepreneurship programs equip students with essential entrepreneurial knowledge and skills. The students reported that they acquired skills such as - business planning, marketing research, financial management, creativity, risk-taking, innovation, and problem-solving. These skills played an essential role in shaping their entrepreneurial mindsets. These entrepreneurial skills that they developed through entrepreneurship education, hence, are crucial in successfully implementing and maintaining a business.

4.3.5 Mentorship and coaching

The study findings illustrated that mentorship, and coaching were noted as other factors of entrepreneurship education that influence student entrepreneurship development. This is demonstrated by the views of Participants 1, 2, 3 and 9 as shown in the quotes underneath:

“In the STEP programme we attend workshops and events where successful entrepreneurs share their success stories and teach us how to navigate the entrepreneurship journey and tackle challenges of starting and managing a business.” Participant 1

“Mentorship by facilitators of the program.” Participant 2

“STEP provides us with mentorship, so when we attend this, uhm programmes we are provided with entrepreneurship facilitators who help us to navigate through, uh, how to start a business, how to go on about it, and also we are offered mentors to mentor us throughout the journey.” Participant 3

“The most beneficial aspects of EE include mentorship opportunities.”
Participant 9

From the above extracts, the students indicated that they receive valuable mentorship and coaching from entrepreneurship facilitators involved in the programs. These facilitators provide guidance on how to implement a successful business and navigate the challenges that one may come across when one implements and runs a business. They also revealed that the entrepreneurial programs host events and workshops where successful entrepreneurs are invited to share their success stories. These engagements motivate students, especially those who may be hesitant to pursue entrepreneurship due to a fear of failure. The mentorship programme has had a huge influence in developing entrepreneurial mindset because students often perceive these mentors and facilitators as role models and imitate their behaviour, subsequently leading them to take the initiative to start their businesses.

4.3.6 Networking opportunities

The results of this study elucidated that networking opportunities are perceived as other aspects that contribute to student entrepreneurship development. This is evidenced by the views of Participants 1, 2, 3 and 9 as illustrated in the quotations below:

“The most important aspect is networking opportunities with successful entrepreneurs.” Participant 1

“Networking opportunities with successful entrepreneurs.” Participant 2

“It provides networking because when one attends this kind of workshops you get to meet, uh successful entrepreneurs who have knowledge about the ins and outs of entrepreneurship and how to start a business, how to navigate through the business journey.” Participant 3

“Networking with industry experts.” Participant 9

From the above extracts the respondents disclosed that partaking in entrepreneurship program offered them an opportunity to connect with experienced entrepreneurs. Networking with industry experts, therefore, enabled them to gain comprehensive understanding of how to navigate the entrepreneurial journey. This highlights the significant role networking plays in supporting student entrepreneurship development.

4.3.6 Practical experience

The research findings revealed that practical experience is another factor that contributes to student entrepreneurship development. This is evidenced by the opinions of Participants 4, 8 and 9 in the extracts below:

“The most beneficial aspects have been the hands-on approach to learning, exposure, and case studies.” Participant 4

“The one that I can give relevance to was Enactus, right? Because with Enactus, we could go to communities and be able to assist the entrepreneurs there with their business planning, marketing, you know, operation planning, financial planning.” Participant 8

“Experiential learning.” Participant 9

From the quotes above, the students specified that after the training they go and practice what they have been taught. They unveiled that in the Enactus program they practice their taught skills by going to the nearby communities and helping entrepreneurs with business planning, financial planning, marketing, as well as operational planning. Through assisting entrepreneurs in the communities, they get exposed to the real-world experience; they apply their theoretical knowledge into real-world situations. This is evidence that the entrepreneurial programs provide students with practical experience.

Summary of the factors of EE that contribute to student entrepreneurship development is shown in Figure 4.3 below.

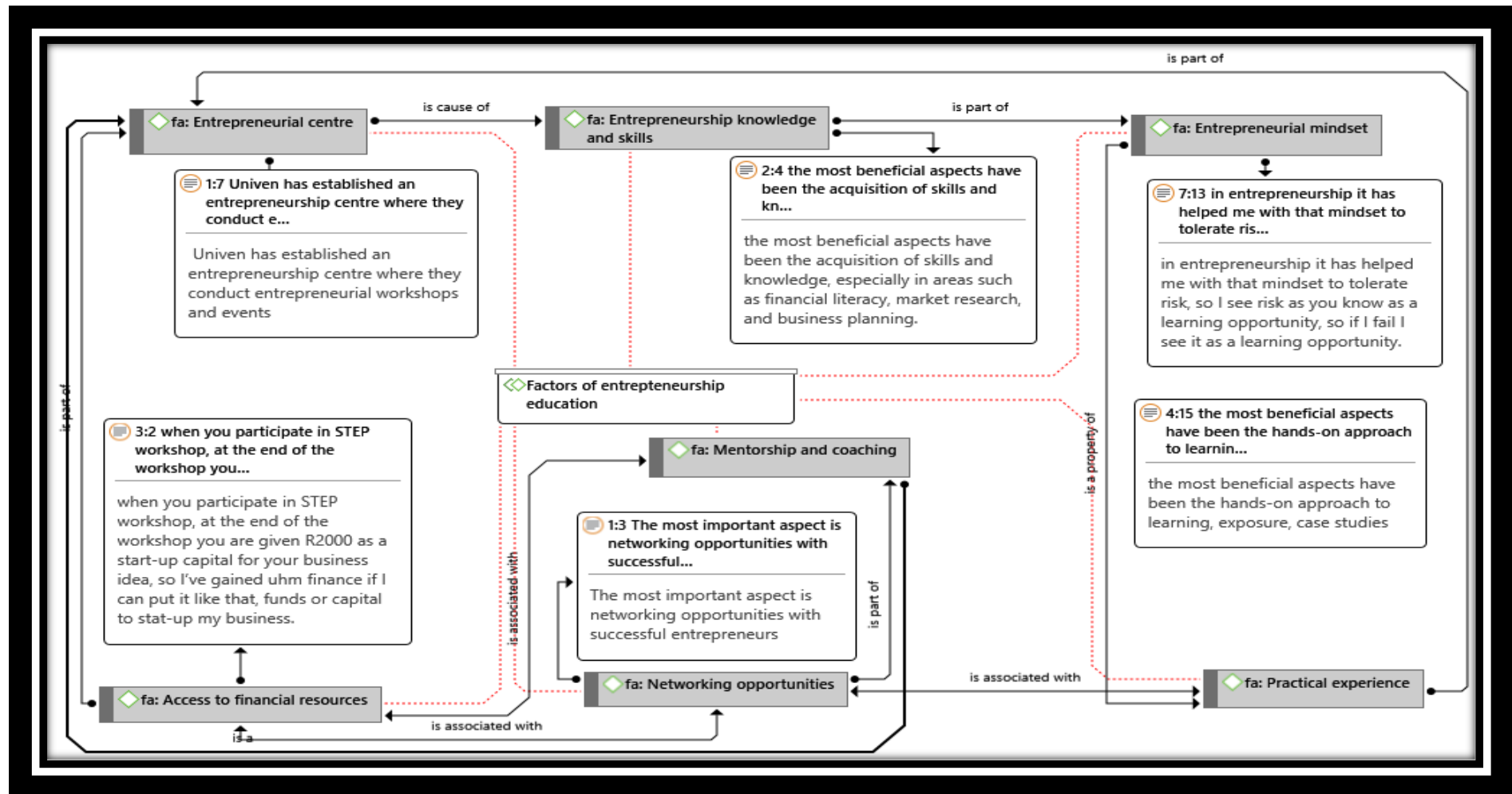


Figure 4.3 Factors of EE that contribute to student entrepreneurship development

Source: Factors of entrepreneurship education using Atlas.ti

4.4 Conceptualisation of the challenges of entrepreneurship education amongst students.

This section discusses the challenges of entrepreneurship education that hinder student entrepreneurship development; 13 codes were discovered during the data analysis. The discovered codes are - financial constraints; inadequate funding; inappropriate teaching methods; lack of awareness; lack of equipment and facilities; lack of lecturers with entrepreneurial skills; lack of management support; lack of practical experience; lack of textbooks; limited mentorship; outdated curriculum; students' lack of interest in entrepreneurship programs; and poor time management.

4.4.1 Financial constraints

The study results illustrate that financial constraints are the main challenges that hinder student from engaging in entrepreneurship education programmes. This is evidenced by the insights of Participants 2 and 4 as shown in the extracts below:

“To participate in this programme, you must affiliate which is quite expensive for some students. I think that is another reason why lots of students do not participate in entrepreneurship programmes.” Participant 2

“The main challenge I faced was the cost of entrepreneurship education; some programmes are quite expensive. For instance, making them inaccessible to us as students, uhm from lower income backgrounds.” Participant 4

From the above extracts, the participants indicated that another reason why most students do not participate in entrepreneurship education is financial constraints because to participate in these programs you must pay affiliation, which is quite expensive for some student, especially those who come from disadvantaged backgrounds. This is evidence that financial constraints are challenges that hinder students' engagement in entrepreneurship education programs.

4.4.2 Inadequate funding

The study results revealed that inadequate funding is another challenge with entrepreneurship education that hinders student entrepreneurship development. This is proved by the views of Participants 1, 2, 3, 6 and 8 as indicated in the excerpts below:

“Another challenge is poor funding for entrepreneurship program which affects the availability of equipment and facilities, and without these resources, it is difficult to gain hands-on experience.” Participant 1

“A gap that I perceived is insufficient funding for entrepreneurship programmes which limit the resources and support for student entrepreneurs.” Participant 2

“There isn’t a lot of funding when it comes to entrepreneurship. If I can ask someone now how many funding opportunities uh are there that are aimed at entrepreneurship education, they are not many.” Participant 3

“You will find out that I have an idea, but they are giving me a startup capital and you find out that the startup capital that they are giving me it can’t even assist me to start that business. It just like a quarter of my business expenses.” Participant 6

“The provision of capital, because I’ve seen that, students even when they do those entrepreneurship education workshops, want money right? When they do like competitions or pitch competitions, you find that a student is given a mug as a reward, but an entrepreneur does not need a mug after pitching, an entrepreneur needs what? Capital, needs funding, needs more capacity to improve their ideas, to implement their ideas.” Participant 8

From the extracts above, the participants pointed out that there is limited funding for entrepreneurship education which limit the accessibility of resources and support for student entrepreneurs. They further specified that the funding that they receive from the entrepreneurship programs is not enough to transform their ideas into a venture. Participants complained that the inadequate funding from entrepreneurship education limits the availability of resources, resulting in limited practical learning. This proves that inadequate funding hinders student entrepreneurship development because even though the students have the skills and the mindset to pursue entrepreneurship, they fail to start their businesses because they do not have the capacity to do so, due to lack of funding.

4.4.3. Inappropriate teaching methods

The participants revealed inappropriate teaching methods as another challenge affecting entrepreneurship education amongst students. This is evidenced by the views of participants 1, 2 and 9 shown in the following extracts:

“The teaching method is so traditional, whereby the lecturer stands in front of students and give them lessons. There is lack of engagement with the students, also there is no application in the classroom, whereby students apply theoretical knowledge in real-world situations.” Participant 1

“Another thing is that the traditional teaching methods fail to engage students in the classroom, which can lead to lack of interest in entrepreneurship course.” Participant 2

“Inappropriate teaching methods sometimes hinder a deeper understanding of real-world applications.” Participant 9

From the above quotations, the students indicated that the lecturers use traditional teaching methods to teach entrepreneurship, which limits students' engagement in the classroom. The traditional teaching method limit application of theoretical knowledge to real-world situations. This lack of application results in students failing to succeed in the business environment because they are not trained to apply the theories. This proves that inappropriate teaching methods hamper student entrepreneurship education.

4.4.4 Lack of awareness

The results in this study acknowledge that lack of awareness is another barrier that prevents student entrepreneurship development. This is supported by the opinions of Participants 1, 6, 8, 9 and 10 as shown in the quotations below:

“I feel like students from other faculties are not exposed to entrepreneurship education.” Participant 1

“Some are being left out and I feel like that gap needs to be identified and fulfilled for one to make sure that they are gaining more students to partake in that program.” Participant 6

“There must be a calendar for entrepreneurship education programmes which must be accessible to all students so that students they are aware of the programmes, because sometimes it is not the fault of the student, how can you attend something you are not aware of?” Participant 8

“Some challenges include a lack of awareness about available entrepreneurship education opportunities.” Participant 9

“I think the problem might just be students not being aware about it.” Participant 10

From the above quotations, the participants indicated that there is lack of awareness about the available entrepreneurship education programmes. Most students are not exposed to entrepreneurship education, especially those who are not in the Faculty of Management. This lack of awareness results in lack of students’ engagement in entrepreneurship programs. This confirms that lack of awareness is a challenge that hinders students’ participation in entrepreneurship education.

4.4.5 Lack of equipment and facilities

The findings have indicated that lack of equipment and facilities is another challenge of entrepreneurship education. This is proven by the viewpoints of Participants 1, 2 and 3 as shown in these extracts:

“Univen has established an entrepreneurship centre where they conduct entrepreneurial workshops and events, but the problem is that this entrepreneurial centre doesn’t have enough equipment.” Participant 1

“The entrepreneurship centre that has been established at University of Venda has limited equipment and facilities.” Participant 2

“When we attend this uhm workshops for uh entrepreneurial education, we are not provided with any equipment. For example, laptops or computers where we can do some research and stuff, and we don’t have enough facilities where we can be able to go there to do our work.” Participant 3

From the excerpts above, the respondents revealed that the established entrepreneurial centre at the University of Venda is not fully equipped with resources, like computers. The lack of equipment is a result of lack of funding for entrepreneurship

education. Inadequate funding for entrepreneurship education reduces the availability of equipment and facilities, subsequently, negatively affecting the effectiveness of entrepreneurship education.

4.4.6 Lack of lecturers with entrepreneurship experience

The results acknowledge that lack of lecturers with entrepreneurial skills is another challenge of entrepreneurship education among students. This is evidenced by the opinions of Participants 1, 2, 3 and 9 in the following extracts:

“One of the major challenges is lack of experienced lecturers who possess practical entrepreneurial skills. Many lecturers lack hands-on experience in entrepreneurship which makes it difficult for students to relate the lessons to real-world situations of running a business.” Participant 1

“Many lecturers lack practical entrepreneurship experience, which makes it difficult for them to give relevant and practical guidance.” Participant 2

“Another challenge that I’ve noticed is the lack of lecturers with entrepreneurial skills, so a lot of lecturers who are lecturing entrepreneurship they don’t have businesses, so they don’t have a real idea of what entrepreneurship education really is.” Participant 3

“Some lecturers lack practical entrepreneurship experience, affecting the quality of learning.” Participant 9

From the above statements, entrepreneurship lecturers fail to give students practical guidance as they, themselves, do not have practical entrepreneurial skills. Participants explained that the lecturers do not have businesses of their own, so they do not have the practical experience of what entrepreneurship really is. The social cognitive theory used in this study implies that students learn by imitating people they perceive as role models. As a result, students are not motivated to start their own businesses because the people they should look up to, do not have businesses. These lecturers fail to teach students to think outside the box because the former are not business-minded.

4.4.7 Lack of management support

The lack of management support was identified as one of the challenges that hinder student entrepreneurship development. This is proven by the views of Participants 2 and 8 as shown in the excerpts below:

“They don’t allow students to conduct their businesses in the Schools’ premises, not even in their rooms.” Participant 2

“Management and staff they must also be supportive in the process because it does not make sense that you’re being trained about entrepreneurship education and you want to practice and your things are taken, so at the end of the day it demotivates; it demoralises someone.” Participant 8

From the excerpts above, the respondents specified that the management of the University does not allow students to practice entrepreneurship on campus. Respondents, however, believe that students involved in entrepreneurship education must practice what they have been taught in class or by operating their own businesses on campus since they are still full-time students. This lack of support by management demotivates students from pursuing entrepreneurship. Management should allow students to run their businesses on campus; this will help them to measure the effectiveness of their entrepreneurship education by their performance on campus.

4.4.8 Lack of practical experience

The findings of this study indicate that lack of practical experience is recognised as another challenge with the entrepreneurship education which in turn hinders student entrepreneurship development. This is evidenced by the insights of Participants 1, 2, 3, 5, 7 and 9 as shown in the extracts below

“One of the major gaps that I have observed is lack of practical learning. Many academic programs focus on theory, which limits students’ ability to apply their knowledge in real business environments.” Participant 1

“The University curriculum focuses more on theory than practice, which makes it difficult for students to apply their knowledge in real-world scenarios.” Participant 2

“These programmes focus on the theory side of entrepreneurship education, and they don’t focus on practical learning, so we have a challenge when we have to face the business world because we only have the theoretical part of it, we don’t know how to navigate the application and put it into practice.”

Participant 3

“Most courses in entrepreneurship education focus on theory instead of combining it with practical experience. Many students fail to start and run their businesses for a long term because they are not introduced to the business world, practically.” Participant 5

“I lacked practical experience you know, insufficient opportunity for hands-on learning you know in the real-world. We could just get maybe lessons only without experiments; you know things like practical experience.” Participant 7

“The absence of real-world entrepreneurial exposure has made it difficult to fully benefit from the courses.” Participant 9

From the extracts above, the respondents point out that the major challenge that they face in entrepreneurship education is lack of practical experience. They further stated that the entrepreneurship education focuses more on theory rather than combining it with practical learning. Students have a challenge when they must enter the business environment because they are not trained to apply their theoretical knowledge in real-world scenario. The emphasis on theory with no practice is failing to expose students to real business world. It is apparent that lack of practical experience is a challenge that hampers student entrepreneurship development.

4.4.9 Lack of textbooks

Lack of textbooks was identified as another challenge with entrepreneurship education. This is supported by the views of Participants 2 and 3 as shown in the excerpts following:

“There is also insufficient access to relevant textbooks in the University library.”

Participant 2

“I think another challenge is lack of textbooks, if you can go to the library, you might find that there isn’t a lot of textbooks that talk about entrepreneurship.”

Participant 3

From the above excerpts, the participants revealed that there is limited access to entrepreneurship textbooks. Lack of textbooks impede effective teaching and learning. Limited access to relevant textbooks reduces students’ engagement in the classroom because they would not be able to answer the questions posed to them by the lecturer, thereby, limiting the acquisition of entrepreneurship knowledge. Students need textbooks to study and grasp concepts, and if they do not have them, it will lead to poor performance.

4.4.10 Limited mentorship

Respondents stated that limited mentorship is another challenge with entrepreneurship education. This is proven by the opinions of Participants 4, 5 and 8 shown in the following quotations:

“One significant challenge was finding relevant mentorship and while entrepreneurship programmes often provide theoretical knowledge, access to experienced mentors who can provide us with tailored advice is often limited.”

Participant 4

“The University hosting owners of certain business to come and explain in detail how they manage to stay active in the business world for a long term is something that was not done when we were doing our entrepreneurship education.” Participant 5

“There must be also mentorships provided, which are not available, now.”

Participant 8

From the above quotations, the students disclosed that another challenges that they face in entrepreneurship education is limited mentorship. They stated that they are not exposed to successful entrepreneurs to mould them throughout their entrepreneurship journey. They added that the available entrepreneurship education programmes do not provide students with mentors who can help them refine their ideas, and coach them on how to navigate the challenges of starting and running a business. Successful entrepreneurs can motivate students by sharing with them the hardships that they

went through in their entrepreneurial journeys. This will shift the students' mindset and reduce their fear of failure in entrepreneurship.

4.4.11 Outdated curriculum

Respondents noted outdated curriculum as another challenge with entrepreneurship education. This is proven by the observations of Participants 4, 7 and 9 as indicated in the extracts below:

“Many entrepreneurship education programmes tend to emphasis traditional business models but there’s a growing need in education around ventures that focus on social impact sustainability and ethical business practices.” Participant 4

“There was also limited coverage on essential topics like inadequate or outdated coverage, you know in entrepreneurship topics such as digital marketing, financial management and innovation.” Participant 7

“One significant gap is the outdated curriculum that does not align with current industry trends.” Participant 9

From the above extracts, the respondents revealed that the entrepreneurial curricula are outdated and that the curriculum does not align with the current trends. They further indicated that the entrepreneurship education is more in-line with traditional business models. We live in a changing world; therefore, the educational curriculum should be updated to align with industry trends.

4.4.12 Students' lack of interest in entrepreneurial programs

Respondents assert that students' lack of interest in entrepreneurial programs is a challenge for entrepreneurship education. This is evidenced by the views of Participants 1, 3 and 9 in the quotations below:

“Another thing that I have noticed when participating in entrepreneurship programs is lack of engagement by students. I feel like many students don’t see entrepreneurship as a viable career path or they are not motivated to pursue it.” Participant 1

“There’s also a challenge when it comes to students, uhm they lack the interest to attend these entrepreneurial programmes, so this is also a challenge since

workshops are put out there and there aren't a lot of people who are attending."

Participant 3

"Students' lack of interest in entrepreneurship programs sometimes reduce engagement and effectiveness." Participant 9

From the above extracts, respondents maintain that lots of students are not interested in entrepreneurship education. Entrepreneurship education programs are accessible to all students, but there is still a lack of engagement by students. This could be because students are not interested in pursuing entrepreneurship as their career path. Entrepreneurship education programmes are designed to equip students with entrepreneurship skills, but if the targeted participants are not interested in these initiatives, this can reduce the effectiveness of the programs and demotivate the University from enhancing the quality of entrepreneurship education.

4.4.13 Time management

respondents acknowledged that time management is another challenge with entrepreneurship education. This is demonstrated by the perceptions of Participants 2, 5, 7, 8 and 9 as indicated in the extracts below:

"The challenge that I face when completing STEP programme is balancing my academics with engaging in this programme." Participant 1

"I had a hard time when it comes to time management because there was a lot to take in, in a short period of time." Participant 5

"Time management and also balancing multiple responsibilities, prioritising on tasks and managing time effectively." Participant 7

"Sometimes as students you need to balance your classes and the training, so you see that sometimes you'll not be able to manage." Participant 8

"Time management difficulties in balancing entrepreneurship education with other academic work." Participant 9

From the above abstracts, the respondents disclosed that time management posed a challenge when pursuing entrepreneurship education. They stated that they failed to balance their academics with participating in entrepreneurship education programs. Sometimes classes and training timetable clashes, thus, as a student one needs to

set one's priorities and manage time effectively, hence, time management problems affected students' engagement in entrepreneurship education.

Summary of the challenges of entrepreneurship education amongst students is shown in Figure 4.4 below.

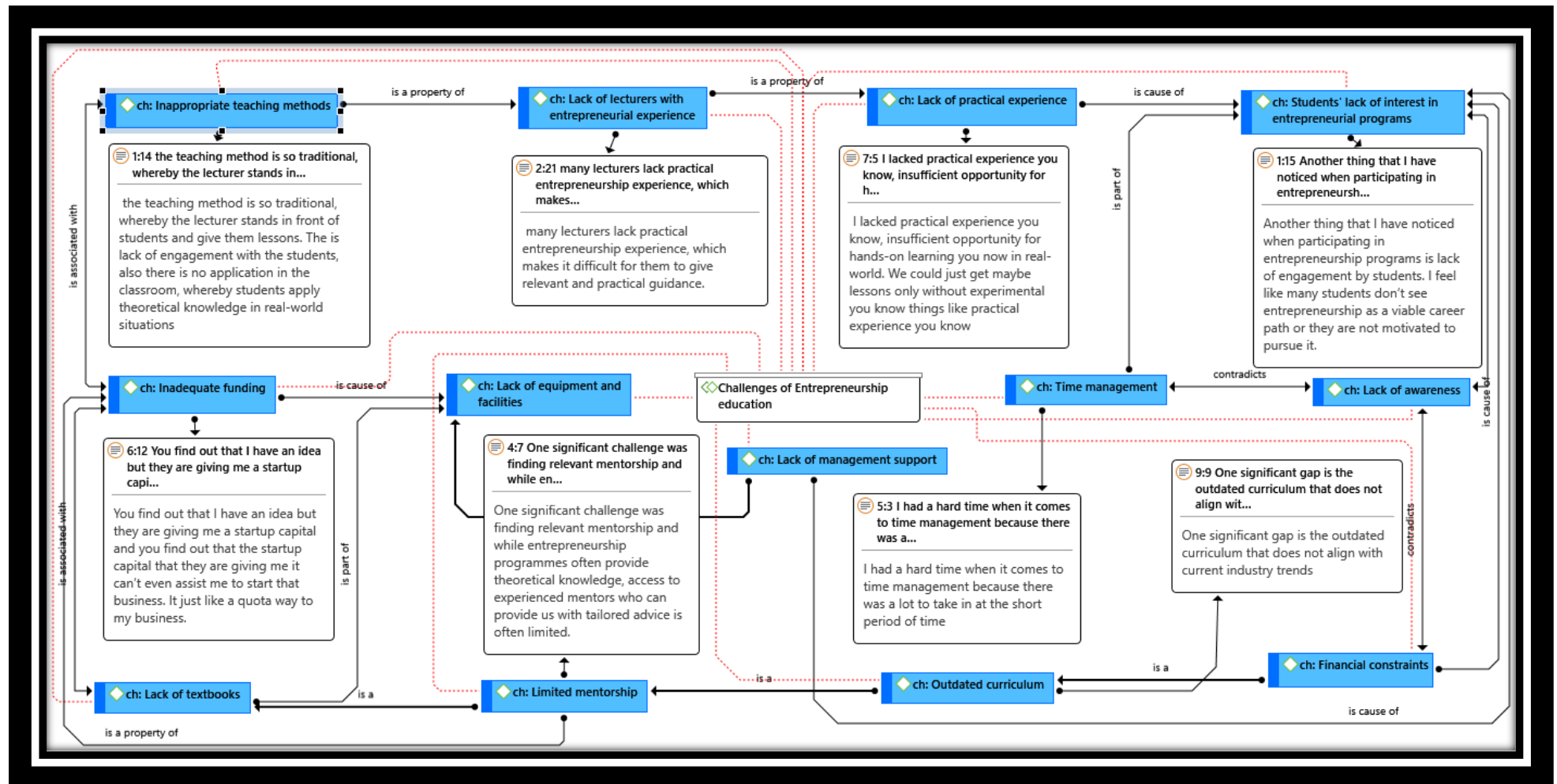


Figure 4.4: Challenges with entrepreneurship education, among students

Source: Challenges with entrepreneurship education among students, using Atlas.ti.

4.5 Conceptualisation of strategies to enhance entrepreneurship education

In this section is discussed the strategies that can be implemented to enhance entrepreneurship education so as to better support student entrepreneurship development. During data analysis 15 themes were discovered and coded. The coded themes were – provision of adequate funding; community engagement; creating awareness; curriculum reform; enhancing mentorship; evaluating entrepreneurship education's effectiveness; fostering entrepreneurial culture; government support; creating inclusivity; incorporating practical learning; incubation; internships development; media exposure; technology integration and training of entrepreneurship lecturers.

4.5.1 Adequate funding

Provision of adequate funding was identified as one of the strategies that can be used to enhance entrepreneurship education. This is evidenced by the statements of Participants 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 8 and 9 below:

“Provide the students who have business ideas but do not have the financial means to execute these ideas with financial aid.” Participant 1

“The University should collaborate with the government and investors, and secure funding for students who have business ideas but do not have the financial means to put these ideas into action.” Participant 2

“They can provide adequate funding.” Participant 3

“Financial support for students from under-represented backgrounds could also help.” Participant 4

“Increased support for students who have small businesses, by providing them with funding.” Participant 5

“The strategies that is supposed to be employed is that they must give a start-up capital that equals the business ideas of the students because some business idea they don't match the start-up capital.” Participant 6

“There must be platforms where someone access the capital that matches the idea so that it can be implemented successfully.” Participant 8

“Offering scholarships, reducing financial barriers.” Participant 9

From the beyond quotations, the respondents suggested that there should be adequate funding to tackle financial barrier to student entrepreneurship development. They added that entrepreneurship education programs should provide students with a start-up capital that matches the idea so that it can be implemented successfully. The respondents recommended that the university must collaborate with the government and private sector to secure funding for entrepreneurship education. This is proof that providing funding is a strategy that can enhance entrepreneurship education to better support student entrepreneurship development.

4.5.2 Community engagement

The results indicated that community engagement is another strategy that can be employed to enhance entrepreneurship education. This is supported by the insights of Participants 4, 5 and 8 as shown below:

“Community-based programmes.” Participant 4

“Another one is community engagement; by involving the community; by doing entrepreneurship education awareness in schools, as well as opening small businesses in the community.” Participant 5

“Community members, they must be able to access these entrepreneurship programmes without any barriers because someone in the community must be interested in being trained, so the University must also ensure that there are those open doors that everyone has to access to them.” Participant 8

From the above excerpts, the participants have suggested that the University must extend the entrepreneurship education also to community members who have an interest in entrepreneurship education. Students can also go to the communities and assist entrepreneurs with business planning, marketing and financial literacy. The University should also host entrepreneurship day in nearby high schools, where all learners can practice entrepreneurship not only for those who are doing the commercial stream, thus, they would all get exposed to entrepreneurship at an early stage.

4.5.3 Create awareness

The research findings have shown that to create awareness about entrepreneurship education is another strategy that can be utilised to enhance entrepreneurship education. This is supported by the views of Participants 5, 6, 8 and 9 below:

“By involving the community and by doing entrepreneurship education awareness in schools.” Participant 5

“They should also make sure that there are marketing teams, so that in circumstances where they are hosting an event around the University, they are supposed to be some people who can send those messages to students so that all students can be well informed about that training.” Participant 6

“There must also be that thing of awareness, so awareness campaign must be done, action campaigns where students and staff are aware of these entrepreneurship education programmes so that they can be known better.” Participant 8

“Creating awareness about available programs.” Participant 9

From the above extracts, the respondents proposed that the University should create entrepreneurship education awareness. They stated that when the University hosts entrepreneurship education events, the marketing team should inform all students by sending them emails, so that all parties are aware about such events. Creating entrepreneurship awareness could improve students' participation in entrepreneurship education because some students do not engage in such programmes because they are not aware of them.

4.5.4 Curriculum reform

The study results have shown that curriculum reform is another strategy that can be used to enhance entrepreneurship education. This is supported by the statements of Participants 1, 3, 4, 5, 7, 8, 9 and 10 as presented in the extracts below:

“I think universities need to include entrepreneurship in all degree in all faculties, so that students can gain knowledge and skills needed to start and run successful businesses, focusing on their area of study.” Participant 1

“They can just include entrepreneurship education as a module in each and every uhm degree, or as a compulsory module to take.” Participant 3

“I would like to see maybe more uh interdisciplinary approach to entrepreneurship education where students from maybe various fields not only from Business Management or maybe from the Arts for example, to collaborate to create uhm maybe a diverse and innovative business ideas.” Participant 4

“Entrepreneurship education can be more accessible and inclusive by applying the entrepreneurship education for all degrees, whereby all students who are interested in doing entrepreneurship courses are allowed, regardless of their major subjects.” Participant 5

“I think we can combine entrepreneurship with other disciplines by developing courses and programmes that combine entrepreneurships with other disciplines, such as business engineering, and in Computer Sciences, you know.” Participant 7

“To be more effective I think it actually has to be introduced as a mandatory module. Entrepreneurship education has to be mandatory for all faculties, for every student. It must be given weight every semester to say, 5% of your semester mark is coming from entrepreneurship education, so at the end of the day when it becomes mandatory, everyone now has to say - okay - I need to be part of entrepreneurship education.” Participant 8

“An updated curriculum that reflects current entrepreneurial trends.” Participant 9

“I think it can be integrated by making entrepreneurship a module compulsory to every faculty, in every degree, because one thing about entrepreneurship it can form part of every degree.” Participant 10

From the above extracts, the participants were advocated for entrepreneurship education to be integrated in all academic degrees, across all faculties. They specified that it should be made a compulsory module, ensuring that all students gain essential knowledge about entrepreneurship, enabling them to establish successful businesses within their fields of study. Respondents further explained that the entrepreneurship education programmes should be placed in the official University calendar, as

mandatory, so that students can take it seriously. Additionally, they suggested that the entrepreneurship training should contribute a certain percentage to the semester mark, which would encourage student participation. One of the participants also proposed that the curricula should be updated to align them with the current industry trends, so that students can stay updated with the recent entrepreneurial trends.

4.5.5 Enhance mentorship

Respondents acknowledged enhancing mentorship as another strategy that can be utilised to improve entrepreneurship education, to better support student entrepreneurship development. This was proven by the opinions of Participants 4, 5, 7 and 8 as indicated in the following excerpts.

“Incorporating mentorship systems, where students can receive guidance from seasoned entrepreneurs is also a key.” Participant 4

“Changes I would like to see in entrepreneurship education are more mentorship and coaching. This will ensure that students get access to successful and experienced entrepreneurship coaches and mentors.” Participant 5

“There should be also mentorship and coaching providing for students, so they can access experienced entrepreneurs. Like they should get entrepreneurs out there to come and help those that are still doing the course you know, such as mentors who can offer the guidance and support.” Participant 7

“There must be also mentorship issued” Participant 8

From the above excerpts, students suggested that there should be mentorship and coaching sessions from experienced entrepreneurs to guide and support them throughout the entrepreneurship education journey. This is proof that improving mentorship is a strategy that can be used to enhance entrepreneurship education.

4.5.6 Evaluate entrepreneurship education’s effectiveness

The study findings indicated that evaluating entrepreneurship education’s effectiveness can be used to enhance entrepreneurship education. This is evidenced by the views of participants 5, 6 and 9 as shown in the following extracts:

“Strategies that can be employed are feedback and assessment. By providing students with regular assessments and feedback, they will improve their knowledge when it comes to entrepreneurship education.” Participant 5

“They also have some students who can do some thorough research and do some publications on that because the moment when they have students who are conducting some research, they also manage to review their data and manage to see the progress of the program.” Participant 6

“Assessing entrepreneurship education effectiveness regularly can enhance its impact.” Participant 9

From the above extracts, the participants suggested that students should be given regular assessments to evaluate their entrepreneurial knowledge. They should also conduct some research to evaluate the effectiveness of the entrepreneurial programs so that adjustments can be made where needed. This demonstrates that evaluating entrepreneurship education’s effectiveness can be utilised to enhance entrepreneurial education.

4.5.7 Fostering entrepreneurial culture

The research findings show that fostering entrepreneurial culture is a strategy that can be used to enhance entrepreneurship education, so that it can better support student entrepreneurship development. This is supported by the views of Participants 1, 2, 3 and 8 in the quotations below:

“The University of Venda should create an entrepreneurial culture on campus by allowing students entrepreneurs to operate their businesses on campus.” Participant 1

“The University of Venda can foster an entrepreneurship culture on campus by hosting entrepreneurial competitions and events.” Participant 2

“First thing first I think they must foster an entrepreneurial culture.” Participant 3

“A student must be given the chance even to sell snacks on campus and practice their entrepreneurship education training.” Participant 8

From the above quotations, the respondents recommend that the University should foster entrepreneurial culture by hosting entrepreneurial events, workshops and competitions. They further suggested that the Institution should allow students to practice entrepreneurship on campus. This is evident that fostering an entrepreneurship culture can be utilised to enhance entrepreneurship education.

4.5.8 Government support

The need for government support was identified as another strategy that can be used to enhance entrepreneurship education. This is evidenced by the comments of Participants 1, 2, 3 and 9 as shown below:

“I also think that they need to collaborate with government agencies like SEDA, SEFA, and so on, to create training opportunities for entrepreneurship student to enhance their skills through hands-on experience.” Participant 1

“The University should collaborate with the government and investors, and secure funding for students who have business ideas but do not have the financial means to put these ideas into action.” Participant 2

“Government support.” Participant 3

“Government support for entrepreneurship education initiatives.” Participant 9

From the above quotations, the students suggested that the government should provide universities with funding to support entrepreneurship education. Government agencies that support youth entrepreneurship, like SEDA and NYDA, should be easily accessible to students to provide them with training and start-up capital, thus, showing that government support can be used to enhance entrepreneurship education.

4.5.9 Inclusivity

Stressing inclusivity is a strategy that can be used to enhance entrepreneurship education, thereby support student entrepreneurship development. This is evidenced by the views of Participants 1, 4, 5, 7, 8 and 9 in their statements below:

“The University should offer online entrepreneurship courses for everyone, not only University of Venda registered students.” Participant 1

“I would like to see maybe more, uh interdisciplinary approach to entrepreneurship education where students from maybe various fields not only from Business Management but maybe from the Arts, for example, to collaborate to create uhm maybe diverse and innovative business ideas.”

Participant 4

“Entrepreneurship education can be more accessible and inclusive by applying the entrepreneurship education for all degrees, whereby all students who are interested in doing entrepreneurship courses are allowed, regardless of their major subjects.” Participant 5

“Provide accessible learning materials, such as audio, and also in braille for students with disabilities.” Participant 7

“It must be diversity-oriented where everyone and any one as long as they’re a student at the University, as long as they’re staff members or even community members, they must be able to access these entrepreneurship programmes without any barriers.” Participant 8

“Mentorship opportunities should be made available to all students, regardless of their background.” Participant 9

From the excerpts above, the respondents recommended that entrepreneurship education should be inclusive and accessible to all students regardless of their field of study, nationality, background and abilities. They further suggested that entrepreneurship education should be accessible to staff and community members who are interested, without any barriers. It is evident from these quotations that inclusivity is a relevant strategy that can be employed to enhance entrepreneurship education.

4.5.10 Incorporate practical learning

Incorporating practical learning was identified as another strategy that can be exploited to enhance entrepreneurship education, thereby, better support student entrepreneurship development. This is supported by the perceptions of Participants 2, 3, 4, 5, 7 and 9 as shown in the following extracts:

“Educators should incorporate experiential learning activities, such as business planning competitions to provide students with practical experience.”

Participant 2

“I think they just have to integrate the practical learning in the classroom.”

Participant 3

“Integrating more practical experiences such as live business projects.”

Participant 4

“Concentration on project-based assessment by evaluating the ability of students through applying theoretical concepts to real-world problems.”

Participant 5

“Incorporating more hands-on projects and experimental learning opportunities to help students develop practical skills.” Participant 7

“I would like to see more hands-on, experiential learning opportunities.”

Participant 9

From the above extracts, the students suggested that the institution should integrate projects to assist students to develop practical skills. The curriculum should combine both theory and application opportunities where students will apply their theoretical knowledge in real-world situations. The practical learning should include project-based assessments. This will expose students to real business environment.

4.5.11 Incubation

The concept of incubation was acknowledged as another strategy that can be employed to support student entrepreneurship development. This is in accord with the views of participants 3, 8 and 9 shown below:

“I think they can just allow us to have resources, through for example business incubators.” Participant 3

“There must be that incubation platform where you know that after training there’s someone waiting for me for incubation.” Participant 8

“Incubation centres can provide continued support for student entrepreneurs.” Participant 9

From the comments above, the participants identified incubation platforms as ways to provide students with the necessary resources they need to implement their ideas successfully. According to the participants, an incubation centre can provide students entrepreneurs with continued support and help them sustain their businesses - proof that incubation can be used to better support student entrepreneurship development.

4.5.12 Internship development

Developing internship opportunities was another strategy mentioned that can be used to enhance entrepreneurship education. The perspectives of Participants 1, 2, 4 and 7 below, support this point:

“I think that to bridge the gap between theory and practice, universities should collaborate with companies to create opportunities for students to engage in internships, or business projects that would allow them to gain hands-on experience.” Participant 1

“The University must create internship programme for entrepreneurship students to gain hands-on experience.” Participant 2

“One area for improvement is the incorporation for more hands-on practical experiences, such as internships or opportunities for students to work on real projects and this would bridge the gap between theory and practice.” Participant 4

“They should provide internships or apprenticeships, offering students the opportunity to work on consulting projects,” Participant 7

From these excerpts, the participants suggest that the University should develop internship programmes where students can apply their entrepreneurial knowledge and skills while gaining hands-on experience, hence, developing internship programmes would bridge the gap between theory and practice. The University should, therefore, collaborate with companies to create internship programmes, where students receive mentorship in a workplace setting.

4.5.13 Media exposure

The findings also revealed that media exposure can be used to enhance entrepreneurship education. This is supported by the opinions of Participants 1, 7 and 10 as shown in the following extracts:

“I also think that they should use social media platforms to share information about these entrepreneurship programmes because lots of students are exposed to social media, so, it will be easy for them to get information about these programmes.” Participant 1

“It should be posted in social media as young people now they engage more in social media, so what I can just suggest is that they also need to have their own pages like Facebook page , TikTok page, where they post about that.” Participant 6

“I think with the influence of social media. I think they can just improve through social media, such as promotion through popular people within the University such as SRC members, bloggers, we have many people who blog everything.” Participant 10

From the above extracts, the respondents suggest that information about the entrepreneurship education programmes should be posted on social media to reach larger audience, since a lot of students are exposed to social media. The University should use social media to engage with their target audience and give them a platform to give reviews and feedback about the entrepreneurship education programmes. This will help to identify areas of improvement and make adjustments as needed. Media exposure will make students aware of these programs, ultimately enhancing their engagement and education.

4.5.14 Technology integration

Technology integration was acknowledged as another strategy that can be used to enhance entrepreneurship education. This is substantiated by the views of Participants 1, 2, 3, 4, 7 and 9 from their quotations shown below:

“The University should offer online entrepreneurship courses for everyone, not only University of Venda registered students.” Participant 1

“Entrepreneurship programmes like STEP and Enactus should offer online workshops to accommodate students in different locations.” Participant 2

“I think they can just integrate entrepreneurship education in terms of offering entrepreneurship education or programmes online where it will be accessible to everyone, since some students are too busy to go and attend workshops.” Participant 3

“Entrepreneurship education could be offered in more accessible formats, such as online courses.” Participant 4

“They can also be flexible you know, by offering online courses to provide flexible learning options for students.” Participant 7

“Providing online and hybrid learning options.” Participant 9

From the above quotations, the respondents recommended technology integration to better entrepreneurship education. The University should offer online classes to provide students with flexible learning options, so that the students should be able to access learning materials, online, at any time, confirming that technology integration is a strategy that can be used to enhance entrepreneurship education.

4.5.15 Training entrepreneurship lecturers

Offering training for entrepreneurship lecturers was another strategy, offered that can be used to enhance entrepreneurship education. This is in-line with the views of Participants 1, 2 and 9, in the following quotations:

“I think universities should work on improving the skills of their lecturers through workshops and training by successful entrepreneurs.” Participant 1

“The University needs to invest in training these lecturers and providing them with resources, and support for them to stay updated on the latest entrepreneurial trends and best practices.” Participant 2

“Training entrepreneurship lecturers to have practical experience.” Participant 9

From the comments above, the participants recommended that the University should invest in upskilling entrepreneurship lecturers; it should also provide them with

resources and support through workshops. Entrepreneurship lecturers should do research to stay updated on the recent entrepreneurial trends, hence, training entrepreneurship lecturers can be used to enhance entrepreneurial education.

Summary of strategies that can be used to enhance entrepreneurship education is shown in Figure 4.5 below.

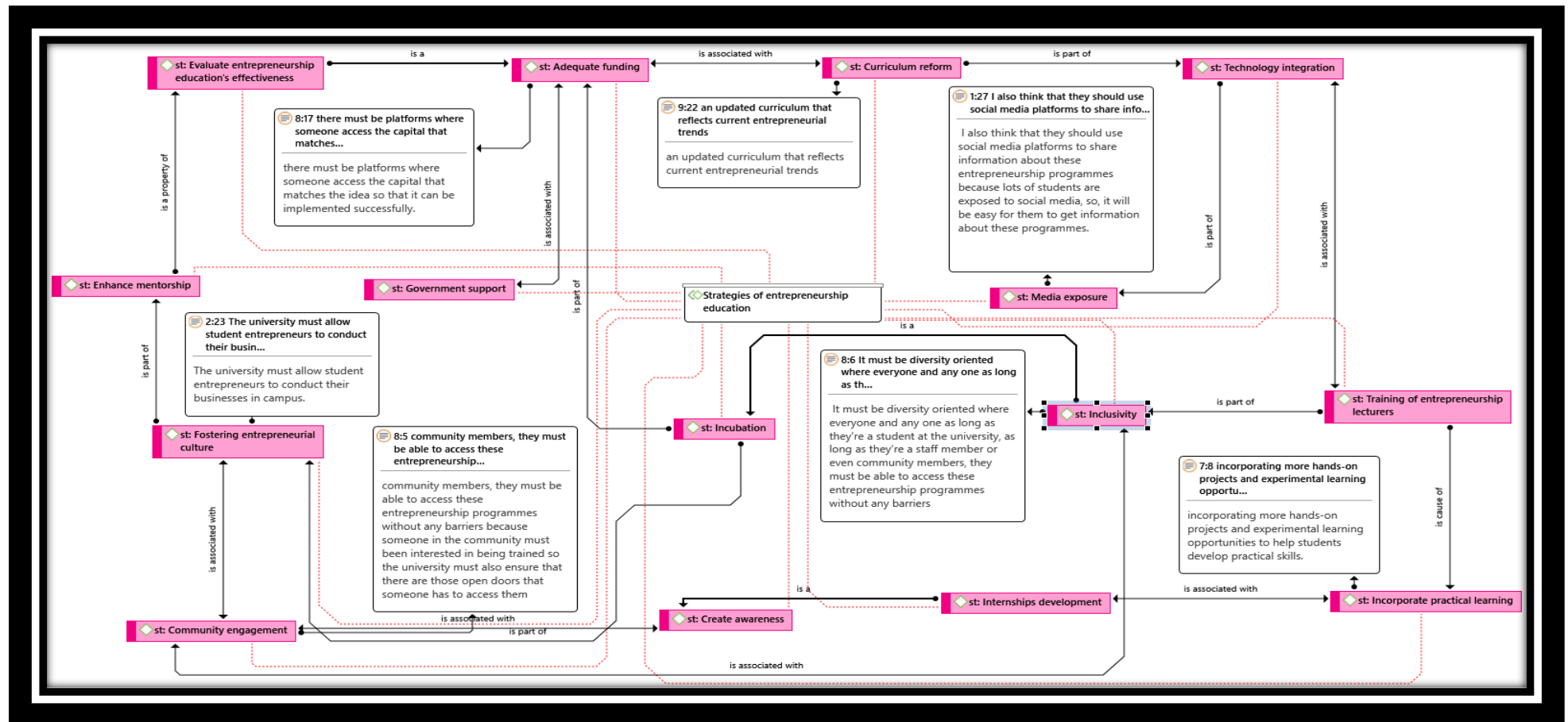


Figure 4.5: Strategies to enhance entrepreneurship education

Source: Strategies to enhance entrepreneurship education, using ATLAS.ti

4.6 Chapter summary

This chapter focused on interpreting the results in line with the role of entrepreneurship education and its effect on students' entrepreneurship development. This chapter has presented the results that emerged from the analysis of data. The next chapter will provide a discussion of these results.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

5.1 Introduction

The previous chapter focused on the analysis and interpretation of the collected data. This chapter discusses the findings presented in Chapter 4. The discussions will also place the findings in the context of the existing body of knowledge on the topic. This implies that in this Chapter will be established the similarities and differences between the findings of this study and those of previous scholars, hence, this chapter constitutes a scholarly debate on the topic.

Discussion of the results

This section provides a discussion of the results of the analysed data.

5.2 Factors of entrepreneurship education that contribute to student entrepreneurship development

5.2.1. Access to financial resources

The current study revealed that entrepreneurship education provides students with financial resources to successfully establish and maintain their ventures. The students specified that they receive financial assistance from STEP, Enactus and Nyda. This result concurs with the study of Rukmana et al. (2023) which stated that entrepreneurship education provides student entrepreneurs with access to early-stage funding, venture capital networks, and support in securing grants and loans, which are considered crucial for firms' growth and viability. Similar findings were obtained from the study conducted by Awonuga et al. (2024) who mentioned that entrepreneurship education provides students with access to funding, through incubation.

5.2.2 Entrepreneurship centre

The observation that the University of Venda has established an entrepreneurial centre to foster entrepreneurial culture among students, through hosting entrepreneurial events, workshops and training, was also made in the study of Iwara (2023) who indicated that the University of Venda concentrates on imparting entrepreneurial knowledge and skills through establishing an entrepreneurship training centre. Similar contents were found in the study of Thaba-Nkadimene, Masebe and Mashitola (2024)

which state that the establishment of entrepreneurship and innovation hubs enables hands-on entrepreneurship experiences.

5.2.3 Entrepreneurial mindset

The respondents in this study revealed that entrepreneurship education has played a crucial role in shaping their entrepreneurial mindsets. The same sentiment was echoed in the research done by Boahemaah, Xin, Dobge and Pomegbe (2020) who assert that entrepreneurship education helps individuals to cultivate a mindset which fosters a good attitude, motivation and capacity, in relation to entrepreneurship. This is in accordance with the study of Jiatong et al. (2021) who specified that entrepreneurship education fosters an entrepreneurial mindset by creating a culture of understanding and raising awareness about launching a new firm. These sentiments were also made in the study of Lose and Cheteni (2023) who concluded that entrepreneurship modules open up students' mindset and their perceptions about entrepreneurship. The outcomes in the study of Rankhumise and Letsoalo (2023), however, suggest that entrepreneurship education exerted a negligible influence on cultivating an entrepreneurial mindset among students enrolled in the programs, which contradict the findings of this study.

5.2.4 Entrepreneurial knowledge and skills

The current study states that entrepreneurship education equips students with the necessary knowledge and skills needed to embark in entrepreneurship. This finding corroborates those of Rankhumise and Letwoalo (2023) who maintain that entrepreneurship education equips students with essential knowledge, skills and competencies necessary to establish and manage a business. Obaje (2024), however, concluded that the current approach to entrepreneurship education does not provide students with the necessary skills to succeed as entrepreneurs, which contradicts with the findings of the current study. This non-support is echoed by the study of Ellikkal and Rajamohan (2023) that entrepreneurship education system is inadequately developed and lacks the capacity to convey entrepreneurial information, skills and abilities, as well as to cultivate entrepreneurial interest among students.

5.2.5 Mentorship and coaching

The participants reported that mentorship and coaching from facilitators of entrepreneurship education programs who do guide them through the process of starting a new business. This study's findings are in line with those in the study of Awonuga et al. (2024) who maintain that mentorship provides significant insights, expertise and assistance for new entrepreneurs.

5.2.6 Networking opportunities

The findings revealed that students get an opportunity to network with their peers, investors, and industry experts through entrepreneurship education programmes. The assertion is confirmed by Karambakuwa (2021) that entrepreneurship education enables networking with like-minded individuals to exchange ideas and opportunities. Similarly, Rakmana et al. (2023) report that entrepreneurship education programs can establish a strong network through networking events and workshops to facilitate collaboration and information-sharing among aspiring and experienced entrepreneurs, investors and industry professionals.

5.2.7 Practical experience

The current study acknowledged practical experience as another factor of entrepreneurship education that influences students' entrepreneurial intentions. A study by Saleh et al. (2020) contradicts the findings of the current study by stipulating that the main focus of most entrepreneurship education is imparting theory knowledge rather than practice.

5.3 Challenges of entrepreneurship education among students

5.3.1 Financial constraints

The students in the current study indicated that financial constraints hinder them from participating in entrepreneurship education and training programs, as, for instance an individual must pay to affiliate with an entrepreneurship training program, and most of them cannot afford the fee. According to the participants, this results in most of them not participating in entrepreneurship education programs. This is the first mention of this challenge among studies which indicate financial constraints as a challenge that hinders students' engagement in entrepreneurship training.

5.3.2 Inadequate funding

The study of Ellikkal and Rajamohan (2023) discovered that students frequently encounter obstacles, such as insufficient finance, that impede their capacity to launch business operations. Similar findings were acquired in the study of Nuhu (2021) which contended that financial limitations have negatively impacted the execution of entrepreneurship education programs. Insufficient finance is commonly attributed to the difficulties faced by entrepreneurial education in Nigeria and the deteriorating quality and state of the education sector overall. The current study corroborates with these previous scholars that entrepreneurship education faces limited funding which affects the availability of resources.

5.3.3 Inappropriate teaching methods

The recent study concluded that educators in higher education employ traditional teaching methods, which provides little room for creativity and critical thinking. These findings concur with those in the study of Nuhu (2021) who revealed that many educators' instructional methods, which emphasise developing a business plan in a highly theoretical and basic manner, have come under heavy fire and are seen as problematic in the literature. This is also in accord with the study of Amalia and Korflesch (2021) which demonstrates that the typical procedures of entrepreneurship education at the higher education level, still appear to be using traditional instructional techniques.

5.3.5 Lack of awareness

The current study revealed that lots of students at the University of Venda are not aware of the available entrepreneurship education programs. This is in-line with the findings of Radebe and Vezi-Magigaba (2021) that a significant number of students do not have sufficient exposure to available entrepreneurship education programs. Uboga (2023) made a similar statement, that there is lack of awareness regarding entrepreneurship education among students.

5.3.5 Lack of equipment and facilities

This study's results acknowledged the lack of equipment and facilities in the established entrepreneurial centres as a challenge that impact on the quality of entrepreneurship education. This is in concurrence with the findings of Usman and

Hamid (2022) that numerous higher education institutions lack contemporary entrepreneurship laboratories, workshop facilities and equipment to facilitate entrepreneurial learning process. These sentiments are also in agreement with the findings of Ondiyaundeye and Otu (2022) that insufficient facilities and contemporary equipment for teaching and learning, impede quality entrepreneurship education,

5.3.6 Lack of lecturers with entrepreneurial experience

Lack of lecturers with entrepreneurial skill was noted as another challenge that affect the effectiveness of entrepreneurship education. This is in support of the findings of Nuhu (2021) that a major issue is the lack of qualified instructors, in the field of entrepreneurship, who can make the course practically engaging and goal-oriented, as opposed to the current reality, which is mostly focused on theoretical instructions. Chhabra, Dana, Malik and Chaudhary (2021) similarly, highlighted that majority of entrepreneurship educators do not possess entrepreneurial background. These scholars, however, consider entrepreneurship experience a valuable qualification for entrepreneurship educators, as it enables them to respond to students' enquiries that extend beyond the curriculum. These findings are also validated by Radebe and Vezi-Magigaba (2021) who revealed that many lecturers lack training and practical expertise in teaching entrepreneurship, which reduces their effectiveness in transforming students into entrepreneurs and supporting their ventures.

5.3.7 Lack of management support

The respondents in the current study acknowledged lack of management support as a challenge facing entrepreneurship education. They indicated that the University Management lacks commitment to supporting entrepreneurial activities on campus. These findings concur with those of Farid and Rahman (2020) that some university restrictions and administrators' negative attitude towards entrepreneurship have hindered the smooth operation of entrepreneurship education on campuses.

5.3.8 Lack of practical experience

These empirical results assert that entrepreneurship education emphasises more on theory than practice. Ubogu (2020) made similar observation in his study which revealed that entrepreneurship education is flawed because it lacks a practical focus. This is also evidenced by the study of Undiyaundeye and Otu (2022) who pointed out

that lack of practical entrepreneurial programs in universities' curricula hinders the effectiveness of entrepreneurship education.

5.3.9 Lack of textbooks

The observation that students have limited access to relevant textbooks which hinder the teaching and learning process of entrepreneurship, was also made in findings of Nuhu (2021) that students on entrepreneurial education courses have limited access to appropriate learning materials, such as books and handouts. Due to a lack of standard learning resources, students in entrepreneurship education often only rely on handouts and training manuals provided by instructors. This is also validated by the study of Eretan and Omotoso (2024) showing that a challenge with entrepreneurship education is the lack of textbooks.

5.3.10 Limited mentorship

The recent study discovered limited mentorship as a challenge facing entrepreneurship education. This corresponds with a point by Chhabra et al. (2021) which posit that mentorship possibilities for students are limited, and educational assistance for their development is lacking.

5.3.11 Outdated curriculum

Alam, Haroon, Yusof and Islam (2021) disclosed that most tertiary courses in entrepreneurship lack current content to enhance students' resilience skills for confronting unpredictable current conditions. Motaung (2021) likewise assert that an underlying fact in South Africa tertiary education is that the substance of the curriculum in the field of entrepreneurship is inappropriate. The current study's results substantiate those of past scholars that the entrepreneurship curricula do not align with the current entrepreneurial trends.

5.3.12 Students' lack of interest in entrepreneurship education

The data revealed that University of Venda students lack interest to undertake entrepreneurship education because they do not perceive entrepreneurship as a career option. This finding substantiates the work of Farid and Rahman (2020) which demonstrates that students exhibit reluctance to invest their time and effort in entrepreneurial endeavours. This is also supported by Magagula and Tsvakirai (2020)

who discovered a deficiency of enthusiasm and engagement in entrepreneurship program among students.

5.3.13 Time management

The fact that students fail to manage their time effectively by not balancing their academic work and entrepreneurship education engagement, was also made by the study of Farid and Rahman (2020). These scholars report that students encounter difficulties in managing their academic responsibilities and participating in activities related to entrepreneurship, hence, they tend to miss most of their classes during their entrepreneurship program participation.

5.4 Strategies that can be used to enhance entrepreneurship education

5.4.1 Adequate funding

The current study's results noted providing adequate funding as a strategy that can be used to support student entrepreneurship development. The students suggested that entrepreneurship education programs should provide adequate funding for students to successfully implement their ideas. This study's findings are substantiated by the study of Ubogu (2023) which showed that sufficient finances must be allocated for the acquisition of equipment to ensure quality in entrepreneurship education.

5.4.2 Community engagement

This study highlighted that community members should collaborate in entrepreneurship education without any barriers. These results correspond with the findings of the study conducted by Kativhu and Netshandama (2024) which recommended that universities in rural areas could engage the local communities in entrepreneurial activities by organising events, workshops, and conferences, promoting participation in programs and creating space for cooperation and resources sharing. Similar results were obtained by Iwara (2023) who indicated that engagement with local communities and society at large, is crucial for invigorating key fundamentals, stimulating innovation, and creating entrepreneurship opportunities.

5.4.3 Create awareness

Creating entrepreneurial awareness is another strategy to enhance entrepreneurship education. This study highlighted that there should be entrepreneurship education awareness among students so that they are well informed about these programs.

These findings concur with those of Kativhu and Netshandama (2024) that awareness campaign should be in place to expose students to diverse entrepreneurial education programs. Similar findings were acquired by Maka (2023) who indicated that it is crucial to make an effort to enhance awareness about the availability and the essential nature of entrepreneurship education.

5.4.4 Curriculum reform

The respondents in the current study suggested that entrepreneurship course should be by Thaba-Nkadimene et al. (2024) which revealed the need for curriculum transformation that incorporates entrepreneurship education across multiple disciplines, rather than a stand-alone program that fails to create a broad-based entrepreneurial attitude. Mico and Cungu (2023) supported this by emphasising that entrepreneurship education ought to be included in all academic programs, not solely for those focused on business, as one of the essential skills within the current education curricula pertains to entrepreneurial competence. Additionally, Usman and Hamid (2022) suggested that entrepreneurship curricula should align with industrial 4.0 era. Kativhu and Netshandama (2024) similarly posit that the tertiary curricula should stay updated to align with the current research results. The current study, hence, concurs with past scholars that entrepreneurship curricula should be updated to align with the recent entrepreneurial trends.

5.4.5 Enhance mentorships

The empirical results reveal that there should be more mentorship and coaching opportunities, where students would have access to experienced entrepreneurs to guide and assist them throughout their entrepreneurial journey. Rukmana et al. (2023) proposed that a strong mentorship program should be established to connect student entrepreneurs with seasoned mentors and subject matter experts from academic and industry, which corroborates with the findings of the current study. This is also in support of findings in a study conducted by Ellikkal and Rajamohan(2023) that obtaining professional mentorship in entrepreneurship can assist students in surmounting challenges and advancing their entrepreneurial endeavours.

5.4.6 Evaluate entrepreneurship education's effectiveness

The participants in the recent study identified evaluating the effectiveness of entrepreneurship education as a strategy that can be used to enhance

entrepreneurship education. This is in accord with the study of Co and Mitchell (2023) who propose that an assessment is required to see if the methodologies employed in teaching entrepreneurship help achieve the objectives established by the course. This is also supported by Radebe and Vezi-Magigaba (2021) who assert that effective monitoring and evaluation methods are imperative for assessing the long-term impact of entrepreneurship education programs, through tracking student entrepreneurs progress and measuring the program outcomes. Magaisa et al. (2018) suggest that higher education institution should request comprehensive insight about entrepreneurship education from students and utilise the data to guide curricula development. Similar sentiments were obtained by Ubogu (2023) who expressed that entrepreneurship programs should be evaluated similarly to other components of academic excellence.

5.4.7 Fostering entrepreneurial culture

The recent study findings indicated that the University of Venda fosters entrepreneurship culture by offering entrepreneurship education training programs, and hosting events, workshops, and competitions. The respondents, however, further revealed that the University does not permit students to practice entrepreneurship activity on the University premises after the training. The participants, therefore, advocated for entrepreneurship activity to be allowed on campus. The findings corroborate those in the study of Kativhu and Netshandama (2024) that entrepreneurship endeavours should be permitted on campus with appropriate supervision and mentorship.

5.4.8 Government support

The findings of this study suggest that the government should support universities with adequate funding for entrepreneurship education, which will enhance the availability of resources for entrepreneurship. A similar recommendation was made by Ellikkal and Rajamohan (2023) that government and educational institutions can offer assistance through initiatives such as venture funds to student entrepreneurs and the provision of complimentary workspaces to enhance resources accessibility. Similar sentiments were expressed in a study by Chhabra et al. (2021) that the government should also be responsible for establishing a robust entrepreneurial system and providing financial assistance to aspiring entrepreneurs, for business development.

5.4.9 Inclusivity

This study expressed the fact that the University should offer entrepreneurship education to all students, staff, and community members who are interested in entrepreneurship education and training. This is in line with the findings of the study of Kativhu and Netshandama (2024) who posit that universities ought to make available entrepreneurship education for all personnel and students, thereby, facilitating growth through faculty-level entrepreneurship collaboration with academics and senior staff, while encouraging diversity and innovation in teaching and learning across all disciplines.

5.4.10 Incorporate practical learning

The current data revealed that entrepreneurship education should integrate practical learning rather than putting more emphasis on theory. This is supported by the findings in the study of Obaje (2024) that entrepreneurship education should offer experiential learning to enhance and support the theoretical knowledge acquired in the classroom. Chabra et al. (2021) articulated a compelling necessity for practical learning for entrepreneurship education and training students to apply the knowledge taught in academic setting.

5.4.11 Incubators

Kativhu and Netshandama (2024) implied that it is essential to establish pertinent infrastructure, such as on-campus incubators, that can serve as centres of entrepreneurial activity, drawing entrepreneurs, investors, and industry experts to the area. Nuhu (2021) pointed out that establishing incubation centres, that combine theory with practice can improve entrepreneurship teaching in higher education. This study substantiates these past scholars by proposing that after entrepreneurship training, there ought to be entrepreneurial incubators that provide students with necessary resources needed for entrepreneurship development.

5.4.12 Internships development

The study findings suggest that the University should collaborate with companies to develop internships for students, so they can gain relevant hands-on experience. Similar findings were acquired by Iwara (2023) which showed that service-learning, through student placements in internships and apprenticeships is an effective method for cultivating new entrepreneurs and imparting practical skills. This is supported by

Svotwa, Jaiyeoba, Roberts-Lombard and Makanyeza (2022) who proposed that there should be a practical component to the universities' curriculum, such as internships, where students can learn how to respond to uncertainty and evaluate risks, which are essential for developing an entrepreneurial attitude.

5.4.13 Media exposure

The empirical data collected recommended media exposure as a strategy that can be employed to enhance entrepreneurship education. Media publicity will help create awareness about entrepreneurship education programs among students. The media could be used to spread information about the entrepreneurship training programs that are available at the University of Venda. Participating students specified that social media would help to reach a larger audience since majority of students are on social media. This finding corresponds with those of Magaisa et al. (2018) which maintained that tertiary institutions must establish social media platforms to promote the entrepreneurship education provided to students.

5.4.14 Technology integration

The respondents suggested that there should be technology integration in entrepreneurship education to improve its flexibility and accessibility to all students, regardless of their geographic location. They advocated that classes and learning materials should be accessible online. Similar findings were acquired by Alam et al. (2023), that digitalisation facilitates access to online entrepreneurship education and pertinent information. These findings are also in line with the findings of the study conducted by Ratten (2020) which expressed that higher education institutions are increasingly using artificial intelligence for entrepreneurship education, which allows for geographic flexibility, online interaction, real-time feedback and online delivery and presentation.

5.4.15 Training of entrepreneurship lecturers

The current study noted training of entrepreneurship lecturers as a strategy that can enhance entrepreneurship education. Universities should put effort into training their entrepreneurship lecturers through workshops, seminars and research, to stay up to date with current entrepreneurial trends. These results are in accord with the work of Elikkal and Rajamohan (2023) who proposed that lecturers need to get training in teaching methodologies and subject matter for the entrepreneurship education

program. This is supported by Oyinlola, Kolade, Okoya, Ajola et al. (2024) that training facilitators and lecturers is essential for designing relevant and up-to-date materials, and methodologies, as well as promoting real-life learning opportunities and assessment.

Chapter summary

This chapter discussed the study's findings as well as establish parallels to previous literature. The chapter also highlighted previous academic arguments, which either focused on the overlaps and conflicts with the current study's findings. This study findings go beyond confirming known factors in entrepreneurship education by highlighting challenges such as lack of management support, lack of student interest, inadequate resources- issues that are often overlooked in current literature focusing on well-resourced institutions. The study also highlights less discussed strategies such as media exposure, community engagement, inclusivity, enhancing the debate by proposing more context and ecosystem-based approach to entrepreneurship education. The following chapter will detail the study's conclusions and suggestions.

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSION, RECOMMENDATION AND DIRECTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

6.1 Introduction

As stated in Chapter 1, the aim of this research was - to identify the factors of entrepreneurship education that contribute to student entrepreneurship development; to identify the challenges of entrepreneurship education among students, and to develop strategies for improving entrepreneurship education. Chapter 1 gave the study's introduction and context, while Chapter 2 provided a literature review. Chapter 3 described the study's methodology, and Chapter 4 presented the outcomes of the data analysis. Chapter 5 contained a discussion of the findings, while this final chapter will conclude, make commendations, and give directions for further research. The problem statement in Chapter 1 is as follows:

Entrepreneurship education aims to help students to acquire knowledge and skills so that they may resort to self-employment (Ajani, 2024), however, unemployment remains a concern to many people including graduates (Essa, 2025). It has been determined that the South African system of entrepreneurship education is inadequate in giving students the skills and information that they need to develop an entrepreneurial attitude and culture (Ncube & Lekhanya, 2025). This corroborate the findings in a study of Gamede and Aleunya (2020) which revealed that there is gap in entrepreneurship modules at universities, that need to be addressed so that students can develop appropriate and relevant skills and knowledge that they need to start their own business. The effectiveness of entrepreneurship education, however, is still hindered in South Africa by diverse factors (Sathyanand, Moodley, Nhleko & Msomi, 2025). The establishment of successful entrepreneurship education initiative is hampered by several issues, despite the fact that entrepreneurship education should play a significant role in promoting businesses in South Africa (Makhoba, 2024). A study conducted by Musetsho and Lethoko (2017), that was conducted at University of Venda revealed that, although the entrepreneurial intentions and traits that students developed were a true

reflection of the entrepreneurial education they received, however, the curriculum content in the University of Venda lacks practical aspects.

Ultimately the objectives of the study were as follows:

Objective 1: To identify the factors of entrepreneurship education that contribute to student entrepreneurship development in the University of Venda.

Objective 2: To identify challenges around entrepreneurship education among students in the University of Venda.

Objective 3: To develop strategies to enhance entrepreneurship education in the University of Venda.

Consequently, the research questions were as follows:

RQ1: What are the factors of entrepreneurship education that contribute to student entrepreneurship development in the University of Venda?

RQ2: What are the challenges around entrepreneurship education among students in the University of Venda?

RQ3: How can entrepreneurship education be improved to better support student entrepreneurship development in the University of Venda?

This chapter provides the conclusion of these research objectives.

6.2 Conclusion of the research objectives

This section provides the conclusions on the research objectives.

6.2.1 Conclusion on factors of EE that contribute to student entrepreneurship development

With regard to Objective 1: *To identify the factors of entrepreneurship education that contribute to student entrepreneurship development*, this study identified the factors as - access to financial resources; entrepreneurship centre; entrepreneurial mindset; entrepreneurial knowledge and skills; mentorship and coaching; networking opportunities; and practical experience. In terms of access to financial resources, the findings indicated that students receive a startup capital from the entrepreneurship

programs to implement their ideas. Regarding entrepreneurship centre, the results indicated that the University of Venda has established an entrepreneurship centre, where they offer training to students. Pertaining to an entrepreneurial mindset, the results disclosed that entrepreneurship education plays a significant role in shaping students' mindset since, it equips students with entrepreneurial knowledge and skills.

In addition, with reference to mentorship and coaching, the results showed that students access mentorship and coaching from facilitators of entrepreneurship programme, who guide them throughout the entrepreneurship development journey. With regard to networking opportunities, the findings revealed that students gain networking opportunities with their peers and experienced entrepreneurs. On the issue of practical experience, the participants maintained that they gain practical experience through engaging with entrepreneurs in the community and helping them with business planning, financial management, and marketing research.

6.2.2 Conclusion on challenges around entrepreneurship education among students

Regarding Objective 2: *To identify the challenges of entrepreneurship education among students*, this study established that the challenges are - financial constraints; inadequate funding; inappropriate teaching methods; lack of awareness; lack of facilities and equipment; lack of lecturers with entrepreneurship experience; lack of management support; lack of practical learning; lack of textbooks; limited mentorship, outdated curriculum, students' lack of interest in entrepreneurship education and time management inability. Regarding financial constraints, the results showed that students do not participate in entrepreneurship education programs due to lack of finance to affiliate with support programs. Concerning inadequate funding, the findings indicated that the capital that students receive from entrepreneurship education programs is not enough to successfully transform their ideas into venture.

In addition, regarding inappropriate teaching methods, the results revealed that lecturers use traditional methods to teach entrepreneurship, which fails to teach students how to apply their theoretical knowledge in real-world situations. In connection with lack of awareness, the results showed that some students are not aware of the entrepreneurship programs that are available at the University of Venda. Pertaining to lack of facilities and equipment, the results indicated that the University

lacks facilities and equipment to support entrepreneurship learning process. With regard to lack of lecturers with entrepreneurship experience, the findings revealed that the entrepreneurship lecturers lack essential entrepreneurship experience, which makes them unable to guide students beyond the curricula. Concerning lack of management support, the results indicated that University Management prevents students from conducting entrepreneurship activities on campus.

In addition, pertaining to lack of practical experience, the findings specified that entrepreneurship education emphasises more on theory than practice, which does not facilitate students applying the theory that they acquired into real-world scenarios. Concerning lack of textbooks, the results showed that there is lack of relevant textbooks in the University library. Regarding outdated curriculum, the findings revealed that entrepreneurship curriculum does not align with recent entrepreneurship trends. In terms of students' lack of interest in entrepreneurship education, the results indicated that most students are not interested in participating in entrepreneurship education because they do not perceive entrepreneurship as a career option. Concerning time management, the findings have shown that students have a challenge when it comes to balancing their academics with engaging in entrepreneurship training and activities

6.2.3 Conclusions on the strategies to enhance entrepreneurship education.

With regard to Objective 3: *To develop strategies that can be used to enhance entrepreneurship education*, the identified strategies are – provision of adequate funding; community engagement; creating entrepreneurship awareness; curriculum reform; enhancing mentorship activities; evaluating entrepreneurship education's effectiveness; fostering entrepreneurial culture; providing government support; incorporating practical learning; incubation; ensuring inclusivity; internship development; media exposure; technology integration; and training of entrepreneurship lecturers. Regarding adequate funding, the findings indicated that there should be adequate funding for modern facilities and equipment to improve the quality of entrepreneurship education. In terms of community engagement, the results indicated that the University should engage the community in entrepreneurship education as well as create training opportunities for community members who are interested in entrepreneurial opportunities. Pertaining to creating entrepreneurship awareness, the results are that university should develop awareness campaign, so

that students can be well informed about the available entrepreneurship programs. Regarding curriculum reform, the findings suggested that entrepreneurship module should be integrated in all degree programs, across all faculties. The findings also showed that entrepreneurship training should be mandatory and should contribute a certain percentage to students' semester marks.

In addition, regarding enhancing mentorship, the results indicated that students should have access to seasoned entrepreneurs who will guide and mould them into successful entrepreneurs. Concerning evaluating entrepreneurship education's effectiveness, the findings showed that the effectiveness of entrepreneurship education should be evaluated by gathering information from students on how entrepreneurship have contributed to their entrepreneurship development, which will help to identify areas for improvement. Pertaining to fostering entrepreneurial culture, the results revealed that the University could motivate entrepreneurial culture among students by hosting entrepreneurship events, workshops, and competitions, as well as allowing interested students to practice entrepreneurship on campus. Regarding government support, the findings highlighted that the government should provide funding for entrepreneurship education, so that government agencies that support youth entrepreneurship should be easily accessible to students. In terms of incorporating practical learning, the results have shown that practical learning should be integrated to entrepreneurship curriculum, where students practice what they were taught in the classroom.

The findings regarding incubation, were that the university should establish incubation centre and collaborate with private sector, thereby, providing students with resources needed to establish their businesses. Concerning inclusivity, the results were that entrepreneurship should be accessible to all the students regardless of their qualification, race and nationality. It should also be extended to staff and community members who have interest. Pertaining to internship development, the participants suggested that the University must collaborate with companies to create internship programmes for students to gain hands-on experience. With regard to media exposure, the findings were that the University should create media platforms to disseminate information about the available entrepreneurship programs. In connection with technology integration, it was suggested that technology should be integrated in entrepreneurship education by offering online classes, workshops and training, as well

as providing students with electronic learning materials. Regarding training of entrepreneurship lecturers, it was recommended that the University put more effort in training entrepreneurship lecturers.

6.3 Designed conceptual model

The model highlights that entrepreneurship education is influenced by factors such as - access to financial resources; entrepreneurship centres; entrepreneurial mindset; entrepreneurial knowledge and skills; mentorship and coaching; networking opportunities as well as, practical experience. The model also demonstrates that entrepreneurship education is threatened by certain challenges, which include - financial constraint; inadequate funding; inappropriate teaching methods; lack of awareness; lack of facilities and equipment; lack of lecturers with entrepreneurship experience; lack of management support; lack of practical learning in the curricula; lack of textbooks; limited mentorship, outdated curriculum, students' lack of interest in entrepreneurship education and students' poor time management. Entrepreneurship education is enhanced by strategies such as – provision of adequate funding; community engagement; creation of entrepreneurship awareness; curriculum reform; enhancement of mentorship; constant evaluation of entrepreneurship education's effectiveness; fostering entrepreneurial culture; government providing support; incorporating practical learning; provision of an incubation process; inclusivity; internship development; media exposure; technology integration as well as training of entrepreneurship lecturers. This model can guide universities to assess their needs, identify gaps and develop action plan tailored to their contexts. The model encourages a context-based approach to evaluate and strengthen entrepreneurship education in rural and under-resourced institutions where entrepreneurship education is critical. The model is shown in Figure 6.3 below:

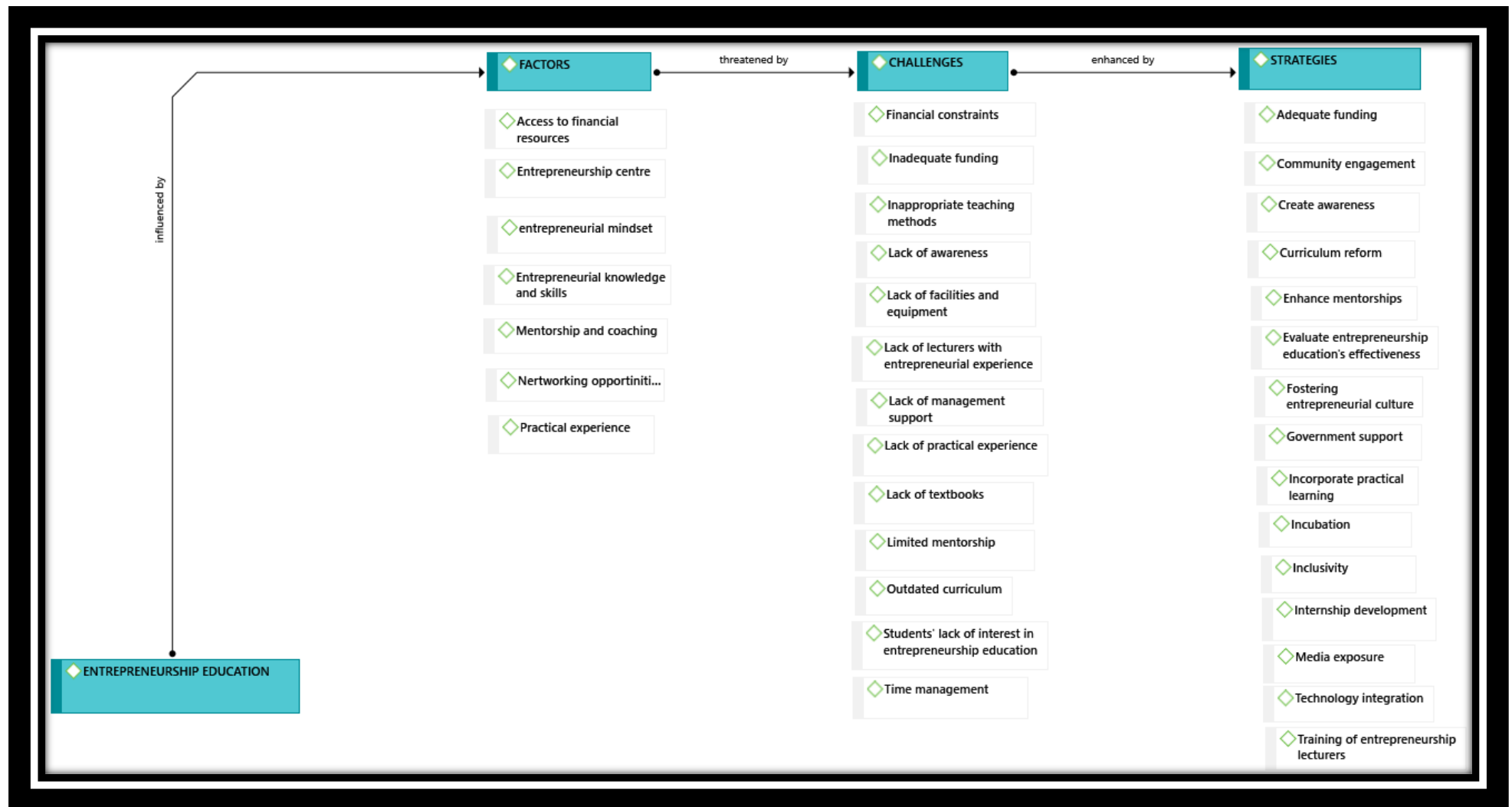


Figure 6.3 : Entrepreneurship education model

6.4 Contribution of the study to the body of knowledge

This study contributes to the existing literature on the entrepreneurship education through a South African context. The findings confirm recognised factors that contribute to student entrepreneurship development such as entrepreneurial mindset, mentorship, networking opportunities, skills acquisition, and practical experience, which are consistent with global research (Jiatong et al., 2021; Ellikkal & Rajamohan, 2023). Nonetheless, the study also identified factors such as entrepreneurship centre, and access to financial resources, which have not gained recognition in entrepreneurship education especially in rural universities. The study focuses on University of Venda specific entrepreneurship programs such as STEP, Enactus, and the EDHE intervarsity Competition, which contributes context that is lacking in broader studies.

This study has managed to establish the challenges of entrepreneurship education among students such as - financial constraints; inadequate funding; lack of facilities and equipment; lack of lecturers with entrepreneurship experience; lack of textbooks; outdated curriculum, which raises national concern about educational equity and resources distribution among institutions in South Africa, while also align with broader international challenges around lack of practical experience. Yet, the study also provides a unique rural insight, specially the intersection between lack of infrastructure and entrepreneurial intention. For example, the students have indicated that they fail to apply entrepreneurial knowledge and skills due to lack of facilities and management support, issues that are rarely explored in urban-centric studies. This highlights a critical gap in literature and suggests that institutional infrastructure and rurality may directly mediate the translation of entrepreneurship education into entrepreneurial action, as a potential new line of inquiry.

The university of Venda instances add to the literature on entrepreneurship education by showing how rural limitations both limits and change the paths that entrepreneurs can take to grow their businesses. The researcher has managed to come-up with the strategies to enhance entrepreneurship education, such as - adequate funding; government providing support; providing an incubation process; inclusivity; internship development; media exposure; and training of entrepreneurship lecturers, which shows how important it is to change the way we teach entrepreneurship in a way that fits the situation. These findings call for rural-responsive framework that combine

technology integration; community engagement; creating entrepreneurship awareness; curriculum reform; enhancing mentorship; evaluation of entrepreneurship education's effectiveness; fostering entrepreneurial culture; incorporating practical learning. This study enhances knowledge of entrepreneurship education in under-resourced environments and establishes a foundation for subsequent research investigating the influence of rural institutional ecosystems on entrepreneurial outcomes.

6.5 Recommendations from the study

The recommendations are as follows:

- a. Entrepreneurship education should be integrated as a compulsory module, bearing credits, across all faculties.
- b. Government should allocate adequate funding and resources for rural universities to support entrepreneurship centres, infrastructures, and students start-ups through incubations.
- c. The University should provide ongoing professional development for entrepreneurship lecturers through mentorships, workshops and collaborative networks .
- d. The University should collaborate with local businesses and community organisations develop internship programmes for students to gain hands-on experience.
- e. Higher educational institutions should implement entrepreneurship awareness initiatives in local schools and communities to cultivate entrepreneurial attitude prior to students' enrolment in higher education.

6.6 Limitations of the study

This study was conducted at the University of Venda; this means the results may not be applicable to other universities; however, certain inferences can be drawn, albeit with caution. This study was also a qualitative one, hence, a small sample size was utilised.

6.7 Directions for future research

The researcher suggests that a comparable study be undertaken at other universities besides the University of Venda to determine any similarities or variations in the

findings. A mixed-method research approach is also recommended to gain thorough understanding of the subject matter.

6.8 Chapter Summary

The previous chapters have presented the introduction and context of the study, the review of literature, the methodology of the study, the results from the analysis of data and the discussion of results. This chapter has presented the summarised research objectives, the study's contribution to the body of knowledge, suggestions to various stakeholders, limitations of the study and directions for future research. This study concludes with this chapter.

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APPENDIX A



INTERVIEW GUIDE

for the

Research Project entitled:

The role of entrepreneurship education on student entrepreneurship development at the University of Venda.

COMPILED BY: Mashimbye Zanele

Dear Participant,

My name is Zanele Mashimbye, and I am a student (Master of Commerce in Business Management) at the University of Venda. In order to complete my dissertation, I am inviting you to participate in the research titled: **“The role of entrepreneurship education on student entrepreneurship development at the University of Venda.”**

The research questions formulated for the study are:

***RQ1:** What are the key components of entrepreneurship education that contribute to student entrepreneurship development?*

***RQ2:** What are the challenges of entrepreneurship education among students?*

***RQ3:** What are the strategies for improving EE to better support student entrepreneurship development?*

Be assured that all the information gathered from you will remain confidential.

Thank you for taking the time to participate

Yours sincerely,

Zanele Mashimbye

Email: mashimbyezanele@gmail.com

Cell phone number: +27 715 069 415

A: DEMOGRAPHICS

Education and Training	
Entrepreneurial program	
Years of operation	

B: Conceptualisation of EE factors that contribute to student entrepreneurship development.

1. Can you describe your experience with entrepreneurship education?
2. What aspects of EE have been most beneficial to your entrepreneurship development?
3. How have entrepreneurship education course or programme supported your start-up ideas or venture?
4. What role does entrepreneurship education programmes play in entrepreneurship development?
5. Are there any entrepreneurship education factors you believe need improvement? Elaborate.

C: Conceptualisation of the challenges of EE among students.

1. Have you faced any gap in entrepreneurship education? Elaborate.
2. What challenges have you faced when accessing or completing entrepreneurship education programme?
3. Are there any challenges that you faced in your entrepreneurial education journey? Elaborate.

D: Conceptualisation of strategies to enhance EE

1. What changes would you like to see in entrepreneurship education?
2. How can entrepreneurship education be better integrated with other disciplines or area of study?
3. What strategies can be employed to make entrepreneurship education more effective in promoting student entrepreneurship development?
4. How can entrepreneurship education be made more accessible and inclusive for all students?

Appendix B: Ethical Clearance

ETHICS APPROVAL CERTIFICATE

RESEARCH AND INNOVATION
OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR

NAME OF RESEARCHER/INVESTIGATOR:
Ms Z Mashimbye

STUDENT NO:
18014660

PROJECT TITLE: **The role of entrepreneurship education on student entrepreneurship development at the University of Venda.**

ETHICAL CLEARANCE NO: **FMCL/24/BMA/17/0909**

SUPERVISORS/ CO-RESEARCHERS/ CO-INVESTIGATORS

NAME	INSTITUTION & DEPARTMENT	ROLE
Dr L.G Nkondo	UNIVEN, Business Management	Supervisor
Mr V Mamphau	UNIVEN, Business Management	Co-supervisor
Ms Z Mashimbye	UNIVEN, Business Management	Investigator-Students

Type: **Masters Research**

Risk: **Minimal risk to humans, animals or environment (Category 2)**
Approval Period: **September 2024 – September 2025**

The Research Ethics Social Sciences Committee (RESSC) hereby approves your project as indicated above.

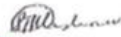
General Conditions

While this ethics approval is subject to all declarations, undertakings and agreements incorporated and signed in the application form, please note the following.

- The project leader (principal investigator) must report in the prescribed format to the REC:
 - Annually (or as otherwise requested) on the progress of the project, and upon completion of the project.
 - Within 48hrs in case of any adverse event (or any matter that interrupts sound ethical principles) during the course of the project.
 - Annually a number of projects may be randomly selected for an external audit.
- The approval applies strictly to the protocol as stipulated in the application form. Would any changes to the protocol be deemed necessary during the course of the project, the project leader must apply for approval of these changes at the REC. Would there be deviation from the project protocol without the necessary approval of such changes, the ethics approval is immediately and automatically forfeited.
- The date of approval indicates the first date that the project may be started. Would the project have to continue after the expiry date; a new application must be made to the REC and new approval received before or on the expiry date.
- In the interest of ethical responsibility, the REC retains the right to:
 - Request access to any information or data at any time during the course or after completion of the project,
 - To ask further questions; Seek additional information; Require further modification or monitor the conduct of your research or the informed consent process.
 - withdraw or postpone approval if:
 - Any unethical principles or practices of the project are revealed or suspected.
 - It becomes apparent that any relevant information was withheld from the REC or that information has been false or misrepresented.
 - The required annual report and reporting of adverse events was not done timely and accurately,
 - New institutional rules, national legislation or international conventions A it necessary

ISSUED BY:
UNIVERSITY OF VENDA, RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE
Date Considered: September 2024

Name of the RESSC Chairperson of the Committee: Prof TS Mashau

Signature 



Appendix C: Informed Consent Form

CONSENT

Statement of Agreement to Participate in the Research Study:

- I hereby confirm that I have been informed by the researcher, Zanele Mashimbye, about the nature, conduct, benefits and risks of this study - Research Ethics Clearance Number: _____,
- I have also received, read and understood the above written information (*Participant Letter of Information*) regarding the study.
- I am aware that the results of the study, including personal details regarding my sex, age, date of birth, initials and diagnosis will be anonymously processed into a study report.
- In view of the requirements of research, I agree that the data collected during this study can be processed in a computerized system by the researcher.
- I may, at any stage, without prejudice, withdraw my consent and participation in the study.
- I have had sufficient opportunity to ask questions and (of my own free will) declare myself prepared to participate in the study.
- I understand that significant new findings developed during the course of this research which may relate to my participation will be made available to me.

Full Name of Participant Date Time Signature

I, ...

(*Name of researcher*) herewith confirm that the above participant has been fully

Informed about the nature, conduct and risks of the above study.

Full Name of Researcher

Zanele Mashimbye

.....

Date: **06/09/2024**

Signature.....

Full Name of Witness (If applicable)

.....

Date

Signature.....

Full Name of Legal Guardian (If applicable)

.....

Date.....

Signature.....

Appendix D: Language Editing Certificate

PROOF OF EDITING

07 May, 2025

This is to certify that I, Dr P Kaburise, have proofread the dissertation titled - **THE ROLE OF ENTREPRENEURSHIP EDUCATION ON STUDENT ENTREPRENEURSHIP DEVELOPMENT AT THE UNIVERSITY OF VENDA** - by MASHIMBYE ZANELE (student number: 18014660). I have indicated some amendments which the student has undertaken to effect before the final dissertation is submitted.



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