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Entrepreneurship Education in Ghana: A Case Study of Teachers' Experiences

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Abstract. Despite the global popularity of entrepreneurship education in higher education, concerns persist about its heterogeneous, broad, and ambiguous objectives and curricula. Many research studies and papers have highlighted these weaknesses and offered remedies for addressing them. Not much is known about how teachers (who are their primary interpreters and users) actually experience the objectives and curricula. This study addresses this gap by exploring teachers' lived experiences of the entrepreneurship education objectives and curricula for insights regarding their nature from the perspective of teachers in order to identify more appropriate solutions to enhance them. Adopting the qualitative single case study research approach, primary data was collected from face-to-face interviews with four teachers at a Ghanaian institution offering entrepreneurship education. The data was supplemented by secondary data from course study documents and then analysed using the interpretive and case study analysis methods. The findings indicate that (1) teachers perceive the entrepreneurship education objectives and curricula as heterogeneous, broad, and ambiguous, (2) this placed certain limitations on teaching and learning, and (3) despite their shortcomings, the objectives and curricula were fitting for achieving entrepreneurship education's broader aims of creating awareness of entrepreneurship, fostering the enterprise culture in students and developing entrepreneurial skills. Teachers indicated that institutional interventions such as continuous teacher education, increased resources, and more credit hours could address the perceived shortcomings. The findings underscore the need for further research on the nature of the objectives and curricula from the lenses of teachers and students in order to enhance policy and practice.

Keywords: entrepreneurship education; entrepreneurship education objectives; entrepreneurship education curriculum; entrepreneurship education drawbacks; entrepreneurship teachers; higher education; Ghana

1. Introduction

Since its emergence in higher education in the mid-20th century with the aim of creating entrepreneurship awareness, promoting the enterprise culture, and developing students' entrepreneurial skills, entrepreneurship education as an academic subject area has gained global recognition (Blundel & Lockett, 2011; Hardie et al., 2020; Liguori et al., 2018; Weiming et al., 2019). Several studies assert that it is a vehicle for fostering entrepreneurial attitudes and competencies for socioeconomic growth (Drucker, 1985; Greene & Saridakis, 2008; Hardie et al., 2020; Harrison, 2014; Nabi et al., 2018). Entrepreneurship education offers knowledge, skills and the tools for nurturing the entrepreneurial personality for business start-ups, their management and their growth (Joshi, 2014; Neck & Corbett, 2018). It is often used interchangeably with 'entrepreneurship training' (Azim & Al-Kahtani, 2014) and 'enterprise education' (QAA, 2018). There are different genres of entrepreneurship education in higher education, ranging from single-course modules to stand-alone degree programmes.

The objectives and curricula of entrepreneurship education are alleged to be diverse with variations from one country to the other, and from institution to another, even in the same country (Fayolle, 2013; Kuratko, 2005; Schramm, 2014; Weiming et al., 2019). For instance, the aims of entrepreneurship education of the USA differ from those of Europe. Whereas the USA aims to develop traits and skills germane to entrepreneurship and for planning and analysing business issues (Sá et al., 2014), in Europe the emphasis is on the development of functional management skills and entrepreneurial mindsets for establishing and managing start-ups, and increasing worker productivity (Lackéus, 2015; QAA, 2018). In contrast, South Africa, a developing country, chooses to address its high unemployment levels with entrepreneurship education by focusing on the development of entrepreneurial skills and attitudes for fostering self-employment (Ras & Pretorius, 2007). In a similar vein, China's entrepreneurship education prepares students to consider self-employment as an alternative source of employment by encouraging and equipping them with a foundational knowledge of entrepreneurship and entrepreneurial skills (Valerio et al., 2014). Ghana, likewise, focuses on theoretical and business management topics such as 'introduction to entrepreneurship', 'creativity and innovation', 'marketing research', and 'business plans' (Dzisi, 2014; Gyamfi, 2013; Mordedzi, 2015). According to Ras and Pretorius (2007), these variations in focus are due to the differences in the environmental, economic, and socio-cultural contexts of the countries concerned.

The entrepreneurship education objectives and curriculum are also perceived as wide-ranging, broad, and ambiguous (Kigotho, 2014; Kuratko 2005; Neck et al., 2014; Schramm 2014; Sirelkhatim & Gangi, 2015).). This situation has been ascribed to several reasons. An example is the study of Weiming et al. (2019) who attribute this to the lack of agreement on the paradigms and theories of entrepreneurship. Another is Sirelkhatim and Gangi's (2015) ascription to the existing variations in the definitions of concepts such as 'entrepreneur', 'entrepreneurship', 'enterprise', and 'small businesses'. Alberti et al. (2004) and Neck and Corbett (2018) also believe that the divergent stakeholders'

expectations and understandings of entrepreneurship education, and the over-exuberance of entrepreneurship education providers to satisfy their different needs have contributed to this state of affairs. For instance, governmental and public institutional interest in entrepreneurship education is driven by the search for alternative avenues for employment, poverty reduction and rapid socio-economic growth (Acs et al., 2018; Bögenhold, 2019). On the other hand, students' motivation for entrepreneurship education is largely influenced by their varied present and future career and professional aspirations, their academic backgrounds, and specializations. Thus, the interests of management and economics studies students may be fuelled by the need for enhanced managerial and innovation skills, whereas those of students or aspiring entrepreneurs would be for the skills and the tools required for business venture creation (Ras & Pretorius, 2007).

These variations and ambiguities in the objectives and curricula of entrepreneurship education have attracted the attention of several researchers (Dzisi, 2014; Fayolle, 2013; Gyamfi, 2013; Mwasalwiba, 2010). Most of these research studies, largely quantitative and analytical, have concentrated on highlighting the weaknesses of the objectives and curricula, and suggesting ways to improve upon them (Dzisi, 2014; Gyamfi, 2013; Neck et al., 2014). A few studies have also been conducted on entrepreneurship education classroom dynamics (Neck & Corbett, 2018), and their effect on students' learning (Supramaniam & Aumugam, 2012). The role of entrepreneurship education on students' entrepreneurial intentions has also inspired many research studies (Musetsho & Lethoko, 2017). There is, however, a knowledge gap in teachers' perceptions and actual experiences of the entrepreneurship education objectives and curricula. This study contends that since teachers are primary communicators and users of these objectives and curricula, a logical approach for addressing their shortcomings would be firstly, to explore teachers' experiences of the objectives and curricula, and then secondly, to use the insights to inform revisions or changes in them.

2. Purpose of the study

This research was therefore meant to address this knowledge gap by highlighting teachers' experiences of the objectives and curricula they use for teaching and learning at a Ghanaian higher educational institution in order to use the insights gained for improvement. Motivation for this study was driven by the researchers' interest in entrepreneurship education and the search for strategies to enhance policy and practice, as well as contributing to entrepreneurship education research. The research was framed by the research question: How do teachers experience the entrepreneurship education objectives and curriculum?

3. Methodology

3.1 Research Design

The qualitative case study approach, based on the interpretivist constructionist research paradigm, was adopted for this study owing to the following considerations: Primarily, it facilitated the collection of the rich data that was

sought from the research participants (Rubin & Rubin, 2012). It also offered a direct engagement between the researcher and participants, and the opportunity to collect first-hand information on the participants' individual and common realities, perceptions, thoughts, and sense-making of the phenomenon from within their lived natural contexts (Mohajan, 2018; Rubin & Rubin, 2012; Shaughnessy et al., 2012). This approach also supported the production of a detailed descriptive narrative of how the teachers themselves experienced the entrepreneurship programme objectives and curriculum at the study institution and the unearthing of some political, socio-economic, and cultural underpinnings. Being an entrepreneurship education teacher, this approach thus ensured that the researcher's personal experiences and views were held in check. It also facilitated the conduct of diligent, disciplined, systematic, and public research from multiple data collection sources to enhance credibility and trustworthiness (Creswell, 2008; Mohajan, 2018).

3.2 The Study Context

The study was conducted in a Ghanaian higher educational institution, purposefully chosen because of its history of mainstreaming entrepreneurship education into its undergraduate programme. The institution introduced entrepreneurship education in response to the then emerging global trends and the Ghanaian government's invitation to higher education for interventions for addressing the escalating graduate unemployment. The institution has four campuses in the southern part of the country offering day-time and evening undergraduate and graduate academic study programmes to students from varied backgrounds, including high school leavers, diploma holders, workers, business owners, and bureaucrats.

At the institution, entrepreneurship education is offered in two forms - as a core module for its undergraduate programme, and as a stand-alone undergraduate degree programme. The objectives of the modular entrepreneurship education programme were threefold, namely to promote entrepreneurship as an alternative career path, foster entrepreneurial mindsets, and develop students' entrepreneurial skills for business start-ups. The curriculum consisted of study topics which matched the objectives. These were the nature and role of entrepreneurship; creativity and innovation; opportunity and ideas generation; market assessment; business model and business plan; new venture creation; entrepreneurial venture team formation; founders' issues; types of business ownerships; entrepreneurial finance; business ethics; family business; franchise; and the entrepreneur.

Entrepreneurship education was taught by a heterogeneous set of part-time and full-time teachers from academia and practice. A wide range of pedagogical approaches and methodologies, such as lectures, guest entrepreneur visits, classroom discussions, group learning, group project work, case study analyses, quizzes, and examinations were used for the programme. The compulsory modular entrepreneurship education programme was the focus of the study.

3.3 Population

Since the study was seeking teachers' insights on the entrepreneurship education objectives and curriculum, the study's population consisted of nine past and present entrepreneurship education teachers at the selected institution. These two groups of teachers were included in the study because of their common background as teachers of entrepreneurship at the study institution and their familiarity with the objectives and curriculum, as well as facilitating the study's search for theoretical generalizability (Vasileiou et al., 2018).

3.4 Sampling

Sampling was based on Yin's (2011) approach for first selecting the case for a study, followed by the selection of its potential data sources and Patton's (2015) typologies of purposive sampling strategies. Consequently, the purposive non-probability sampling approach was used at two levels to select the study institution, the research participants, and secondary data sources. The study institution was selected because of its over 15-year history of mainstreaming entrepreneurship education in its undergraduate degree programmes. Participants' selection, on the other hand, was based on their perceived capacity to provide appropriate answers to the research question (Creswell, 2014).

In view of the small size of the population, the purposive complete target population sampling method was first considered for selecting the entire teacher population as research participants for the study (Patton, 2015). However, owing to challenges in locating all of them, this method was revised to the purposive homogeneous and maximum variation sampling methods to select a smaller sample based on their shared backgrounds as entrepreneurship teachers, and their diverse characteristics respectively for this purpose. This resulted in the selection of four teachers (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Maxwell, 2012; Patton, 2015; Yin, 2011). These sampling methods ensured that those who possessed the characteristics germane to entrepreneurship teachers indicated in theory and literature, and were capable of providing relevant answers to the research question were included in the research study (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Palinkas et al., 2013). Four teachers were consequently selected for the study. They consisted of one full time teacher from academia and one part-time teacher from practice; both were then teaching at the study institution during the data collection process. Two former part-time teachers from industry were also selected.

3.5 Instrumentations and Data Collection

Primary and secondary data were collected in the study. The primary data was collected through face-to-face interviews to elicit the detailed rich information and knowledge of the four research participants. A total of four face-to-face interviews were moderated by the researcher using a two-part semi-structured interview schedule. The interviews lasted between 60 and 75 minutes.

The structured section of the interview schedule consisted of a core set of closed questions that were asked in a systematic order to elicit demographic data on the respondents' formal entrepreneurship educational and entrepreneurial experience backgrounds. The unstructured part of the interview schedule, on

the other hand, contained unstructured open-ended questions that sought insights on the teachers' experiences of the discipline's objectives and curriculum. The open-ended questions enabled participants to give as much detail as was possible that enriched the data (Ogden & Cornwell, 2010). The wording and order of questions during the unstructured part of the interview varied from one interview to the other according to the dictates of the emerging data. The interviews were audio-recorded with the full knowledge of the participants to ensure the sanctity of the data. The recordings were supplemented by hand-written notes of observed non-verbal and verbal communication by the researcher. This backup prevented the loss of valuable information. Prior to every interview session, the times and venues were agreed upon by the researcher and research participants.

Artefacts such as course outlines, teachers' notes, textbooks, and extant documents provided additional data that served as methodical triangulation. They helped to clarify and authenticate the data collected from the interviews, thereby enhancing the validity of the data collected (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010).

The researcher's role in research is crucial for its rigour and validity. For a this study, the researchers served as the data collection and data analysis instrument and were therefore responsible for moderating and audio recording all the face-to-face interviews, reviewing extant documents, and analysing all the data. Measures such as allowing respondents to tell their own experiences, the verbatim presentation of their stories, and subjecting the research to peer review were adopted to prevent researcher bias in view of the researchers' close association with entrepreneurship education.

3.6 Data Analysis

In conformity with the dictates of the research design, the absence of a unitary formula for transforming qualitative data into findings, and owing to the large volume of data generated from the data collection processes, several qualitative data analysis methods were used to analyse the data. The data was analysed manually by the researchers. This ensured a close interaction with the data and avoided the loss of valuable data. A major approach adopted was analysing the emerging data simultaneously with the data collection process. It involved the verbatim transcription of the data recorded in the researchers' hand-written notes and audio recordings into narrative data after every interview. This was followed by an initial reading of the transcripts by the researchers, after which they were clarified and authenticated with the participants, thus maintaining the data's integrity (Akinyode & Khan, 2018; Cohen et al., 2011). The final transcripts were processed using content analysis, interpretive phenomenological analysis, and thematic and case-oriented analysis (Babbie, 2011; Braun et al., 2019). These methods helped to reduce and organise the data into identifiable codes, themes, categories, relationships and causalities for their relevance to the theoretical dimensions of the study (Akinyode & Khan, 2018; Creswell, 2014). It also provided a holistic view of the data for its subsequent presentation, interpretation, and discussion (Creswell, 2014; Yin, 2011). The use

of these data analysis methods ensured the preservation of valuable information and the reporting of participants' own voices in their purest form (Akinyode & Khan, 2018; Creswell, 2014; Long, 2014; Sutton & Austin, 2015).

4. Ethical Considerations

Measures were adopted to maintain high ethical standards and the integrity, validity, and trustworthiness of the entire research process and the data. They included ensuring due diligence in the selection of the study site and research participants, the data collection and the data analysis processes, and safeguarding the anonymity of research participants', the research institution and the researchers. A high level of assiduousness was attached to the accurate interpretation and presentation of the respondents' views (William & Morrow, 2009). Permission was duly sought for and granted by the study institution, while the respondents were given the opportunity to give their informed consent to participate. The time and venue for each interview were agreed upon by the respondents and the researchers before each session. The identities of the four respondents were protected by the use of the alphabetical codes T1, T2, T3, and T4.

5. Presentation of Findings

The data collected on teachers' experiences of the entrepreneurship education objectives and curriculum yielded the following findings:

5.1 The teachers had diverse backgrounds as illustrated in Table 1

It was observed that all the teachers had practical experience in entrepreneurship and had at different times either worked in family businesses or founded their own business start-ups such as farms, trading, transportation and consulting services. Their entrepreneurial experiences included failures, challenges and successes. T1, for instance, had operated a number of businesses intermittently with different degrees of success over the years. She recounted that:

I have done so many things...I set up a game centre. And then I went to school...so there was problem with supervision, so I closed it...I set up a distribution business...water distribution. I had to go back to school...that one too, I close it down...now I have ventured into plantation farming.

Childhood entrepreneurial experience was common to T2, T3, and T4. In the case of T2, this dated back to his primary school years when he helped his mother to sell foodstuff at home and on the streets. He revealed that:

...in primary school, my mother used to sell foodstuffs in our house. Sometimes I did the selling in the house, other times I hawked in our area....currently, I have a transport business.

A slight deviation on teachers' childhood entrepreneurial experience was T4's disclosure that his encounter with business was a deliberate decision to make extra money for his own personal needs as a school boy. According to him:

When I was growing up, I actually engaged myself in all sorts of trading. At one point I used to pluck mangoes and sell them after school. It was my own business. I currently own a consulting business.

With regard to academic background in entrepreneurship education, the data showed that only T1 had formal qualification in entrepreneurship education. Coupled with her practical entrepreneurial background, she was therefore the ideal entrepreneurship education teacher.

According to the literature, having practical experience in entrepreneurship enhances teaching because it provides opportunities for the sharing of real life insights on challenges, failures and successes of entrepreneurship. In addition, it fostered students' confidence in the teacher's abilities to teach entrepreneurship theory and practice (Bosma et al., 2012). In spite of this, it is also argued that the ideal entrepreneurship education teacher ought to have a combination of both practical and academic competencies in entrepreneurship. The data confirms that entrepreneurship education teachers consist of practitioners from both industry and academia. It also supports the viewpoint that formally qualified entrepreneurship teachers are in the minority, a situation considered inimical to the development of the discipline (Carlson et al., 2012).

Table 1: Demographic profile of teachers and programme coordinators

Respondents	Teaching tenure	Entrepreneurship education background	Practical entrepreneurial experience
T1	Full-time	Formal	Own businesses
T2	Part-time	No formal	Parents' and own businesses
T3	Part-time	No formal	Parents' and own businesses
T4	Part-time	No formal	Own businesses

5.2 The entrepreneurship education objectives and curriculum were considered diverse and broad, and some study topics ambiguities

All the teachers maintained that the objectives and curriculum were quite broad, containing many diverse topics to be covered in one semester. They were also of the opinion that some of topics in the curriculum were vague. Specifically, T1 indicated that *"'innovation' and 'creativity' lacked clarity, and either conflicted or overlapped with each other"*. T2, on the other hand pointed to topics such as 'marketing' and 'creative thinking' as being *"too open and difficult to interpret" ...by 'marketing', are we looking at principles? If it is 'creative thinking', which aspect should be emphasized?"*

5.3 There were drawbacks associated with the diverse, broad, and ambiguous nature of the objectives and curriculum

One drawback was the low topic completion rates of the objectives and syllabus. This was evident from T4's revelation that *"the time was too short to cover all the topics"*. This was corroborated by T1's assertion that *"the large volume of topics to be covered made it extremely difficult to teach all of them in one semester. I think only about 70% of the content is covered by the end of the semester."* Another challenge was the superficial teaching and learning of theories and skills in view of the

time constraints imposed by the loaded nature of the objectives and curriculum. Teachers also had difficulties with interpreting and differentiating between some of the topics in the curriculum owing to their vagueness or overlapping with each other. This finding corroborates the observations of Neck et al. (2014) and Sirelkhatim and Gangi (2015) that teachers often had to grapple with the ambiguities and similarities of some of the topics. Furthermore, high levels of stress in trying to cover the greater part of the objectives and curriculum were experienced by teachers such as T3 who disclosed that the lack of standardization made *“it difficult and stressful designing lesson notes and teaching”*. In addition, there was a lack of uniformity in what was taught and learned because of teachers' arbitrary selection of topics to cover. This is reflected in T2's explanation that *‘I think some topics are not clear...so what we do is left to you the lecturer's discretion. This means that people will be teaching different things and the students will not have the same knowledge’*. , thus resulting in variations in teaching and learning of content and a lack of depth in what was taught (Neck et al., 2014; Sirelkhatim & Gangi, 2015). A further drawback was the neglect of some topics that could have enhanced students' learning of entrepreneurship theories, skills and mind-sets. An additional problem was the large number of topics which hampered in-depth teaching and learning.

5.4 The entrepreneurship education objectives and curriculum were considered relevant for fostering entrepreneurial behaviour in students

Teachers maintained that the objectives and curriculum were essentially necessary for an in-depth and holistic understanding of entrepreneurship and for motivating students to develop entrepreneurial skills and mindsets for embracing self-employment. To illustrate his point, T4 argued that:

If I am training somebody to be a driver, the objective is that after the training, the person should be able to drive a car. So if I am training somebody to learn how to start a business then after the training that person should be able to start and run his or her business if the person wants to do that...In my opinion, I think all the relevant topics are captured in the curriculum.

Teachers similarly indicated that the objectives and curriculum topics enhanced students' efficiency, creativity, and productivity despite their broad range and vagueness. In support of this observation, and based on his encounters with some of his past students, T2 disclosed that

Some walk up to me on campus or outside to tell me about the businesses they have started. Just recently, a former student told me she had started the delivery of fresh and frozen foods thanks to the course. She said she was making gradual progress and was about to have her business legally registered.

Similarly T3 found it reassuring that

Even though it is impossible to create the real life business experience within the semester long course...for me, I think the entrepreneurship education objectives and topics as they stands now is the way to vamp up student's interest in entrepreneurship and business start-ups and create entrepreneurially minded individuals for the work place.

The teachers were also of the view that the heterogeneity and broadness of the objectives and curriculum helped to address the divergent needs of the heterogeneous students, and were hence necessary as reflected in T2's views that

"I think the objectives are okay because they cut across the needs of the students, because some are entrepreneurs who want tips for their businesses, and others only need skills to enhance their creativity in their offices."

These views were indicated by Neck et al. (2014) and Weiming et al. (2019) and hence were also relevant.

5.5 Teachers' strategies for dealing with the drawbacks of the objectives and curriculum

One such strategy adopted by T1 was attempting to complete all the objectives and topics of the curriculum within the stipulated one-semester duration of the programme.

To address time constraints, some teachers also selected and prioritised teaching certain aspects of the objectives and curriculum that they felt were more important in achieving the aim of entrepreneurship education. T2, for instance, explained that *"I focus on the topics that I think develop an awareness of entrepreneurship as a socio-economic activity, and also the stages of the entrepreneurial process."* T1, on the other hand, disclosed that his emphasis was *"on the entrepreneurial personality, entrepreneurial mindset, and innovative behaviour."*

Other strategies reported by the teachers were mentoring and coaching of students outside classroom sessions to address the inadequacy of credit hours for teaching. To circumvent the ambiguities in some of the topics in the curriculum, all the teachers once again clearly indicated that they relied on their own interpretations and discretion. In the words of T4, *"I did not go strictly according to the curriculum...I did not use the normal structure...I used my own which I knew would achieve the goals of the course outcome"*.

5.6 Teachers' proposed institutional interventions for addressing the drawbacks of the entrepreneurship education objectives and curriculum

The first was the call for the standardization of topic definitions to address the ambiguities associated with some topics, thereby bringing clarity to them. This was elucidated by T2, *"if we are talking about 'innovation' we will know whether it is about the system or the types."* Doing so, according to them, would provide some guidance to teachers and students alike regarding the true nature of the curriculum topics and the objectives. T1 noted that

I think the school will have to get the topics to be clearly defined. They should be standardized. If they are standardized, everybody will know this is what we are going to do and teach. Or this is the book we are going to use....The standard description of the topic will guide the lecturer on what to do.

Another proposed intervention was the teachers' appeal for more credit hours to make it possible to cover all the objectives and curriculum topics which they had indicated were essential for in-depth teaching and learning of entrepreneurship. They argued that this would support the development of students' entrepreneurial skills and mindsets. As noted by T1:

...the current one-semester programme doesn't help students to really understand the theory and practice of entrepreneurship. It is too short to learn theories and come up with a business project. Two semesters will help them to come up with prototypes at the end of the first term. Then during the vacation, they can go out and test them in the market. By the time they come back for the second semester, they will know if their businesses were viable...When they have done this, then they can say they have learnt some entrepreneurial skills.

The teachers also proposed regular meetings by the entrepreneurship teachers at the study institution for the exchange of ideas and best practices. In support of this intervention T3 proposed that:

There should be collaborations among the teachers so that there is agreement on definitions and answers. I think this will reduce the situation where we, the teachers, use our own discretion and interpret the course in our own way.

Similarly T4 stated that:

I would advocate for collaboration between entrepreneurship lecturers at the school. There are a lot of areas that we can learn from each other like as how to introduce innovation in the way we teach entrepreneurship for the benefit of everyone.

A final intervention proposal by the teachers was introducing in-service entrepreneurship education training for teachers to ensure uniformity in the teaching of the different topics.

6. Implications and Recommendations

In the literature, the objectives and curriculum of entrepreneurship education are described as heterogeneous and ambiguous, and their contents as lacking consensus and therefore a source of concern and a challenge to the programme. These points were corroborated by the findings of the study, as presented above. However, despite their drawbacks, the teachers also found some merits in the objectives and curriculum. The measures they had devised and the institutional interventions they proposed for addressing the drawbacks of the objectives and curriculum have implications for policy and practice.

The implications for practice are that the findings provide clear examples of the challenges teachers encountered with the objectives and curriculum as well as the measures and strategies they adopted for addressing them in their work as facilitators of learning. They also point to the resultant lack of uniformity in the instructional methodologies used and in what was taught. The institutional interventions proposed by the teachers themselves appear to be more effective ways of addressing the drawbacks. For instance, the introduction of faculty

programmes for teachers to facilitate networking and interact with each other, share ideas and experiences, and work in teams would introduce standardisation in the interpretations of course objectives and the ambiguous topics in the curriculum. This would, in turn, reduce the variations in what was taught and learned. It is evident from the study that such an institutional intervention would boost morale in view of the difficulties encountered in using their own remedies.

The differences in understanding of the objectives and curriculum among the teachers (who are major stakeholders of entrepreneurship education) stem from the absence of clear definitions and standardisation in the programme guidelines, as well as their varied backgrounds in entrepreneurship education and industry. Therefore, providing standard definitions and clear guidelines to teachers could easily remedy this situation through regular staff meetings and in-service teacher training. These meetings would provide the platform for discussions on difficult topics, as well as strategies and methodologies for teaching the different topics. The variations in understanding topics also highlight the need for collaboration with other institutions providing entrepreneurship education, and other stakeholders such as the business community within the wider entrepreneurship system.

Entrepreneurship education, as with every educational programme, demands certain necessities for its success. An implication for policy from the teachers' experience of the objectives and curriculum is an obligation by the institution to resource the programme with teaching and learning resources, and in-service teacher training. From the study, the loaded nature of the curriculum had become an issue because of the inadequate credit hours and resources for innovative teaching and learning projects, and not because they considered some topics irrelevant. By the teachers' reckoning, successful entrepreneurship was supported by a deep understanding (awareness creation), the learning of skills (developing entrepreneurial skills and mindset), and recognising the different stages of the entrepreneurial process (fostering entrepreneurship). This implies that introducing more credit hours or increasing the number of semesters for entrepreneurship education as suggested by the teachers would ameliorate this challenge rather than reducing the number of objectives or topics in the curriculum, as suggested by some researchers. Increasing credit hours would also guarantee the in-depth teaching and learning of the theories, as well as sufficient time for practice projects. Therefore it is not enough for critics to refer to the packed nature of the objectives and curriculum without linking it to the failure of policy-makers and programme managers to resource the programme with the requisite inputs such as textbooks, internships, funded practice projects, and sufficient credit hours. More funding and resources could also support the development of textbooks the content of which reflects the local socio-economic and cultural entrepreneurship context by including local cases and examples. This would ultimately motivate teachers to strive to cover all the topics in the objectives and curriculum.

The study's findings point to the need for further research on stakeholder perceptions and experiences of the objectives and curriculum of entrepreneurship education. The teachers exhibited certain behaviours, such as deliberately choosing certain topics over others due to their perceived relative importance. In addition, there were time constraints that led to differential teaching and learning. This can be investigated further to identify the real impact of the drawbacks of the entrepreneurship education objectives and curriculum on teaching and learning. Similarly, additional research is needed to replicate this study on a wider scale in the study institution, as well as in other institutions, to enhance theory.

7. Conclusions

This study investigated teachers' experiences of the heterogeneous, broad, and ambiguous objectives and curriculum of entrepreneurship education. It contributes to knowledge by providing insights into teachers' varied experiences of these, and how they try to address some of the challenges imposed by them.

The study findings affirm the viewpoint in the entrepreneurship education literature that the objectives and curriculum of entrepreneurship education are heterogeneous, broad, and ambiguous. The study likewise found that the ambiguities in some aspects of the objectives and curriculum resulted in differences in teachers' interpretations that led to variations in what was taught by the teachers and ultimately in what students learned. The findings also indicate that, despite their limitations, the teachers perceived the study topics and objectives to be necessary for achieving entrepreneurship education's aims of creating awareness about entrepreneurship, developing entrepreneurial skills and mindsets, and creating business start-ups. This observation by teachers should be taken seriously and explored by provider institutions with the support of additional resources and increased credit hours. The study suggests that, rather than being fixated on their drawbacks, researchers, practitioners, and policymakers should focus on how best to maximise their usefulness in their present form. The findings indicate that designing entrepreneurship courses to conform to prevailing global standards or trends ought to be accompanied by adequate resources, funding, teacher training, and teacher collaborations and networking.

Though limited in scope, this study extends the knowledge on the objectives and curriculum of entrepreneurship education through the lenses of teachers by affirming their limitations, and pointing to their appropriateness for meeting the goals of entrepreneurship education if the requisite funding, resources, teacher training, and the time allocations are increased. It offers direction for future research and policy interventions for improving the quality of the objectives and curriculum of entrepreneurship education.

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