



**BINDURA UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE EDUCATION
FACULTY OF SCIENCE EDUCATION
DEPARTMENT OF CURRICULUM AND EDUCATIONAL MANAGEMENT
STUDIES**

**UNIVERSITY STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS ABOUT THE IMPACT OF
ENTREPRENEURSHIP EDUCATION ON ENTREPRENEURSHIP INTENTIONS IN
ZIMBABWE**

BY

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CURRICULUM STUDIES**

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APPROVAL FORM

The undersigned certify that they have read and recommended to Bindura University of Science Education for acceptance, a research thesis entitled: ***University students' perceptions about the impact of entrepreneurial education on entrepreneurial intentions in Zimbabwe.*** Submitted by Martin Phineas Begede (B244907B) in partial fulfilment of the requirements of the Master of Science Education degree in Curriculum Studies.

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DECLARATION

I declare that this research thesis is my own original work. It is submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements of the degree of Master of Science Education degree in Curriculum Studies at the Bindura University of Science Education. This research thesis has not been submitted for any degree or any examination in any institution in Zimbabwe and globally.



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.....13 .02.26

Martin Phineas Begede

Date

This thesis has been presented for examination with my approval as the supervisor.



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Dr. Y. Mudavanhu

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Date

DEDICATION

I dedicate this thesis to my wife Tafara, my daughter Chanelle and my siblings who stood with me during the period of study. Special dedication goes to my brother Emilio for the unflinching financial support, without his contribution, I could not have made it.

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ABSTRACT

The research sought university students' perceptions on the impact of entrepreneurship education on entrepreneurial intentions in Zimbabwe. It was anchored on the Theory of Planned Behaviour whose three main tenets are, attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behaviour control. These tenets together with other factors believed to influence entrepreneurship were tested during the study. The target population was 246 BUSE students. The sample size was 30 postgraduate students from the Faculty of Science Education at Bindura University of Science Education. Purposive sampling was used. The study used a mixed methods approach. The study used a self - constructed Likert questionnaire to solicit knowledge of entrepreneurship education and entrepreneurial intentions together with in depth interviews to collect data. Students showed knowledge of entrepreneurship education. However, the students showed a low risk appetite. Subjective norms had insignificant effect on entrepreneurial intentions of students. Perceived behaviour control positively influenced entrepreneurial intentions of students. Entrepreneurship Education had a significant influence on entrepreneurial intentions of students as it shaped their mind-sets and prepared them to take entrepreneurship as a career option. The students believed that the entrepreneurship education programme boosted their confidence and made them ready to spring into new venture creation. The entrepreneurship course was generally highly rated by the students. However, students bemoaned that the entrepreneurship course was largely theoretical as it lacked practical exposure. Students had low ratings on facilities and access to mentors. The study recommended introducing that entrepreneurship course early in the degree programmes to allow mentorship and exposure to incubation hubs. Funding should also be availed to students who want to take entrepreneurship as an option during work related learning.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

1.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the background to the study, statements of the problem, research objectives, research questions, significance of the study, delimitations, limitations, and assumptions, definition of terms as well as summary of the chapter focusing on the impact of entrepreneurship education on entrepreneurial intentions of higher education students.

1.2 Background to the study

Entrepreneurship Education (EE) has become a cornerstone of higher education policy worldwide, championed as a vehicle for economic growth, innovation, and graduate employability (European Commission, 2013; Nabi et al., 2017). Zimbabwe's economy has been characterised by volatility, deindustrialisation, and high graduate unemployment, estimated to exceed 60% (Chigunta, 2017). This context has led to a policy shift towards promoting entrepreneurship as a vehicle for job creation, innovation, and economic resilience. In response, the Ministry of Higher and Tertiary Education has mandated the infusion of entrepreneurship across academic disciplines (Government of Zimbabwe, 2013). Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) have thus become hubs for cultivating an entrepreneurial mind-set. It is envisaged that entrepreneurship will stimulate economic growth. Graduates are being equipped to join Small to medium Enterprises (SMEs) and significantly contribute to economic growth. However, the effectiveness of these initiatives in genuinely fostering entrepreneurial intentions which is a key predictor of future entrepreneurial behaviour (Akter, B., & Iqbal, M., 2022). remains empirically underexplored in the Zimbabwean context. It has also been noted that there is a disjuncture between theory and practice and the stereotyping in higher education, (Cotronei-Baird, (2020). Hence the need for this study emphasize on the theoretical contribution (perceptions and intentions), the contextual relevance (Zimbabwean higher education), and the scholarly significance (linking education to entrepreneurial outcomes).

Some institutions like Midlands State University, Bindura University of Science Education, (BUSE) and the University of Zimbabwe, among others, have made it a compulsory course whilst others have opened it up to all students but on a voluntary basis. There is a growing interest in

entrepreneurship education globally. There is a correlation between entrepreneurial intention and the number of business courses taken by students who are not in the faculty of commerce, (Soomro, and Shah, 2022). Although learners undergo for internship during their period of study, this is usually meant for them to acquire work related skills and attitudes rather than a bias towards creating a new venture or job creation. Currently there is no revolving fund for new venture creation for students on internship. Evaluation of impact assessment of entrepreneurship educational programmes (EEP) is a complex process since at times the impact may be seen after some years, (Thanjan, 2025).

Zimbabwe is experiencing a high rate of graduate unemployment, low economic growth, poverty and it also desires to achieve middle income status. It is envisaged that SMEs will drive the country out of its economic doldrums. An entrepreneurial culture has been seen as a panacea for economic growth, (Owoeye, 2025). There is little focus on specific competencies which influence entrepreneurship and limited research was done on educational approaches which influence entrepreneurial competencies positively, (Hamid, 2025). United Nations (UN) Swaziland (2013) also observed that there is relative scarcity of formal analysis of factors impacting entrepreneurship in developing countries in general and Africa in particular, (Mai *et al.*, 2025). Research should look into determinants of entrepreneurship among other things. also Aboobaker (2020) recommended that similar studies on the efficacy of entrepreneurship education and training on entrepreneurial intentions should be done. Several entrepreneurship education programmes have been rolled out to stimulate entrepreneurship and ultimately economic growth. The impact of these programmes is still to be assessed. No curriculum evaluation has been done so far to find out if the current programmes are fit for the purpose for which they are intended.

1.3 Statement of the problem

Despite exposure to entrepreneurship, graduates continue to seek employment rather than starting new business ventures (Kozlinska, Rebmann & Mets, 2023). Access to capital markets remain constrained by lack of collateral security. Entrepreneurship education is offered as a semester once off course which is taught like any other module. Work related learning is geared towards preparing students to formal employment rather than self-employment. The existing model limits students' exposure to entrepreneurship, (Aadland, *et al* (2024). This negatively affects students' confidence in taking entrepreneurship as a career option. If this continues, it will perpetuate

graduate unemployment and frustrate the graduates. The university won't be able to attract future students. Entrepreneurship education can be a panacea for graduate unemployment. The corporate sector and the government should avail funds to fund new venture creation to students who excel in business plan competitions and want to take entrepreneurship as an option during work related learning. Students with their own sources of funds should also be allowed to take this entrepreneurship option during work related learning. Higher education regulations should be adjusted to accommodate entrepreneurship as part of work-related learning.

1.4 Main research objective

The study is grounded in the following main research objective:

To examine Zimbabwean higher education students' perceptions of how entrepreneurship education influences their entrepreneurial intentions.

1.4.1 Sub-research objectives

The objectives of the study are to:

1. find out students' knowledge of entrepreneurship education
2. find out the factors influencing entrepreneurial intentions of students.
3. evaluate whether students feel really capacitated to start and run their own businesses after doing the entrepreneurship course.
4. examine the relationship between entrepreneurship education and the entrepreneurial intentions of Zimbabwean higher education students.
5. develop a model on entrepreneurial education.

1.4.2 Main research question

How do Zimbabwean higher education students perceive the impact of entrepreneurship education on their entrepreneurial intentions?

1.4.2.1 Sub-research questions

The study seeks to find answers to the following research questions:

1. What is the university students' knowledge level of entrepreneurship education?
2. What are the factors influencing entrepreneurial intentions of students?
3. How does the entrepreneurship course capacitate students to start and run their own businesses?
4. What is the relationship between entrepreneurship education and the entrepreneurial intentions of Zimbabwean higher education students?
5. What model can be designed to integrate entrepreneurship aspects into education?

1.5 Hypothesis

There is a relationship between entrepreneurship education and the entrepreneurship intentions of students. (There is no relationship)

1.6 Assumptions of the study

The study rests on several key assumptions. It presumes that exposure to entrepreneurship education increases students' intentions to establish business start-ups. It further assumes that validation of entrepreneurial intentions by significant others strengthens students' motivation, though negative judgments may discourage ventures in specific cases. The theoretical model is based on a linear process in shaping entrepreneurial intentions. The operating environment is assumed to be reasonably stable and conducive to start-ups, with no volatility in legislation affecting new businesses. Additionally, positive attitudes, supportive subjective norms, and perceived behavioural control (self-efficacy) are expected to positively influence entrepreneurial intentions, leading to new venture creation. Finally, it is assumed that students possess the emotional intelligence, creativity, and innovativeness necessary to identify and exploit business opportunities.

1.7 Significance of the study

The output of this research will benefit the following:

1.7.1 Lecturers

This research is meant to develop a sound theoretical framework modelling entrepreneurial intentions of university students. It explores the nexus between Entrepreneurship Education Programs (EEP) and entrepreneurship intentions. This will be useful in teaching the curriculum content and exploring research into why there was a delay in the introduction of entrepreneurship education.

1.7.2 The nascent entrepreneur (students)

Knowledge about how entrepreneurship education influences entrepreneurial intentions will help in shaping positive attitudes in students towards entrepreneurship education and choosing entrepreneurship as a career option. With the right knowledge, skills and attitudes, learnt from the entrepreneurship course, this research emphasises on increased awareness on opportunity recognition, innovation, creativity and the need for students to take high risks in order for them to succeed in business. This research will provide meaningful insights and will serve as a guide and campus which will help them in developing the strategic roadmap for the new venture. Being cognisant of the value of entrepreneurship education as a capacity building tool will help students to take entrepreneurship education seriously rather than as a course requirement for them to graduate.

1.7.3 Curriculum designers

This research will provide feedback on the entrepreneurship education curriculum content and methodology. The study will also help in identifying the strengths and weaknesses of the entrepreneurship course being offered with a view of strengthening it.

1.7.4 Bindura University of Science Education

This research will also provide critical reflections on the existing entrepreneurship education gaps and structural flaws. The findings will also help the university in adjusting its timing in offering

entrepreneurship and move towards experiential learning. This will help the university to improve on positive learning environment and expand its entrepreneurship education programs. A review of the existing entrepreneurship model will result in the university offering globally competitive programmes which are in touch with reality. By offering practical oriented entrepreneurship programmes, the university will be able to tackle graduate unemployment and will also be able to attract more students.

1.7.5 Policy makers

Equipped with the knowledge about the correlation between entrepreneurship education and entrepreneurship intentions, policy makers will be persuaded to build more entrepreneurship hubs and provide additional budget allocation for students to choose the entrepreneurship option during work related learning.

1.8 Delimitations of the study

The study focused on Bindura University of Science Education with specific attention to post graduate students in the Faculty of Science Education in the year 2025 who studied entrepreneurship, the Entrepreneurship class of 2025. The study sought to find out how exposure to entrepreneurship education affected the entrepreneurship intentions of the students.

1.9 Limitations of the study

Due to financial and time constraints, the study was limited to Bindura University of Science Education only. This is not representative of the university. Hence findings cannot be generalised to all state universities. With more resources, the researcher would have done a stratified sample of all state universities in Zimbabwe.

1.10 Definition of terms

In this section, the following key terms are defined contextually.

1.10.1 Attitudes

Refers to one's feeling towards entrepreneurship. It is their evaluation of entrepreneurship education as good or bad, (Aquilina, *et al.* 2025)

1.10.2 Curriculum

Refers to the content, skills and competencies taught in the course. This includes the methods of instruction and assessment used.

1.10.3 Entrepreneurship

Refers to the process of risk taking, innovation and creativity, opportunity recognition and converting that idea into a business start-up and growing it to a sustainable business, (Kuratko and Covin,.2025).

1.10.4 Entrepreneurship education

Refers to what is taught in an entrepreneurship module. This includes course content, business plan competitions, exposure to entrepreneurship innovation hubs and mentors, (Wu et al, 2025).

1.10.5 Entrepreneurial intentions

Refer to conviction to start a new business venture. It is the willingness to put the new business idea into practical action, (Teixeira, 2018).

1.11 Chapters layout

This research report comprises of five chapters. Chapter 1 is the introduction. It gives the background to the study in order to put the study into context. It contains statement of the problem, research objectives and research questions, hypothesis, assumptions of the study, significance of the study, delimitation of the study, limitations of the study and definition of terms. Chapter 2 reviewed related literature to see how other researchers have done it and identifying the research gaps. The Theory of Planned Behaviour was used as the theoretical underpinning of this research study. In Chapter 3 the research paradigm and the research approach are explained. The data collection instruments were also outlined. Chapter 4 looked at data presentation, analysis and interpretation. Research results were cross referenced to existing literature. Chapter 5 gives a summary of the research report, conclusions arrived at, recommendations and areas for further studies.

1.12 Chapter summary

This chapter looked at the background to the study and highlighted that graduate unemployment continues to be high. Graduates continue to seek for employment after graduation despite exposure to entrepreneurship education. The study sought to explore the extent to which exposure to entrepreneurship education will influence students' intentions to start new business ventures. It is envisaged that students' reflections on the entrepreneurship education module will influence curriculum planners to redesign and review the current curriculum. The study focused on the Entrepreneurship class of 2025. Finances and time restricted the study to Bindura University of Science Education, otherwise a stratified sample of all state universities would have been done. This study assumes a liner model of building intentions and converting them into new ventures. It is also anchored on the premises that exposure to entrepreneurship education increases students' intentions to choose entrepreneurship as a career option. Key terms used in this study were also defined. The next chapter will look at a review of related literature.

CHAPTER 2: REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.1 Introduction

Chapter two presents a review of related literature. The chapter presents previous research studies carried out in line with the research questions presented in Chapter 1. Literature review was done in order to establish what scholars have said about the study and what researchers have revealed with regards to the existing knowledge gaps in entrepreneurship education and on entrepreneurship intentions.

2.2 Theoretical framework

This research is grounded in Ajzen's (1991) Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB), which provides a robust framework for understanding how beliefs translate into actions. TPB posits that behaviour can be predicted with considerable accuracy by examining three key determinants: attitudes toward the behaviour, subjective norms, and perceived behavioural control (Ajzen, 1991). Together, these factors shape intentions, which, in turn, influence actual behaviour. In the context of entrepreneurship, a positive attitude toward business creation enhances the likelihood of forming entrepreneurial intentions. When these intentions are validated by significant others such as family, peers, mentors, or financiers, students gain confidence in their ideas, reinforcing their motivation to pursue start-ups (Ajzen, 1991). Conversely, negative judgments may discourage entrepreneurial action, particularly in environments perceived as risky. Subjective norms therefore play a critical role in either strengthening or weakening entrepreneurial drive.

Perceived behavioural control, closely linked to self-efficacy, reflects the degree to which individuals believe they can successfully perform entrepreneurial tasks, (Murire, *et al*, 2026). Students who perceive high levels of competence and opportunity recognition are more likely to translate intentions into actual ventures. Environmental conditions also matter: a stable legislative framework, access to finance, innovation hubs, and supportive mentorship create fertile ground for entrepreneurial behaviour, (Boulefa, *et al*, 2025).

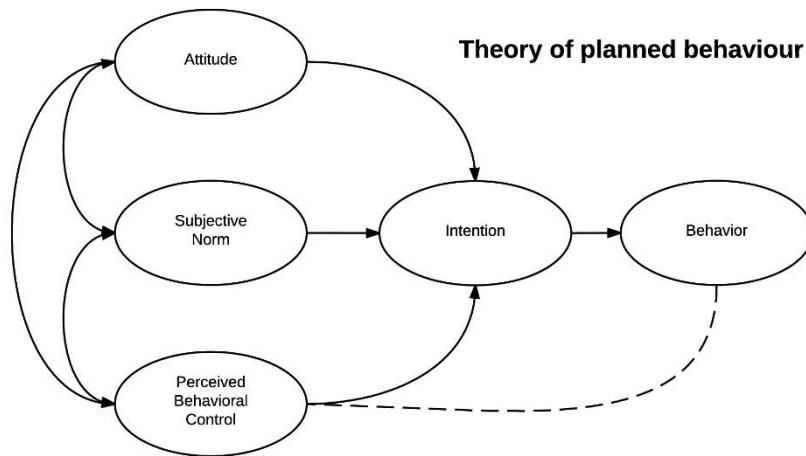


Fig 2.1: Theory of planned behaviour (Source: Ajzen (1991))

In essence, TPB suggests that an entrepreneurship drive (positive attitude), validated by significant others (subjective norm), nurtured in a supportive environment, and reinforced by confidence in success (self-efficacy), culminates in the establishment of new ventures, (Heydari, 2024). This theoretical lens is highly relevant to the study, as entrepreneurship is not a spontaneous act but a planned behaviour requiring careful consideration, consultation, and confidence in one's ability to succeed. By applying TPB, the research systematically links students' perceptions of entrepreneurship education to their entrepreneurial intentions, offering a comprehensive understanding of how higher education can foster new venture creation in Zimbabwe, (Lema, 2026).

The application of the TPB to this study can be explained through the interaction of its core variables and their relationships. Entrepreneurship education acts as the foundational input, shaping students' attitudes toward entrepreneurship, their subjective norms, and their perceived behavioural control, (Aga, and Singh, 2022). A positive attitude reflects students' favourable evaluation of starting a business, while subjective norms capture the social validation or discouragement they receive from family, peers, mentors, and financiers. Perceived behavioural control, closely tied to self-efficacy, represents students' confidence in their ability to successfully establish and manage a venture, (Bachmann, et al, 2021). These three constructs collectively influence entrepreneurial intentions, which serve as the mediating variable linking education to actual entrepreneurial behaviour. Strong intentions, when reinforced by supportive environmental

conditions such as stable legislation, access to finance, innovation hubs, and mentorship, are more likely to result in new venture creation, (Rashid *et al*, 2025). Thus, the model illustrates a pathway: Entrepreneurship Education → Attitudes / Subjective Norms / Perceived Behavioural Control → Entrepreneurial Intentions → Entrepreneurial Behaviour, moderated by environmental stability and personal traits like creativity, emotional intelligence, and opportunity recognition, (Aga and Singh, 2022). This framework underscores that entrepreneurship is a planned behaviour, requiring not only knowledge and skills but also validation, confidence, and conducive conditions to translate intentions into sustainable business start-ups.

2.3 Conceptualisation of entrepreneurship education

Entrepreneurship has long been debated as a concept with no universally accepted definition, reflecting a lack of conceptual clarity, (Prince *et al*, 2021). Traditionally, it has been understood as the organisation and management of production factors: land, labour, and capital combined with risk-taking for profit. Liguori, *et al* (2024) emphasize entrepreneurship as the establishment of new organisations and their viability in early years, while Visser (2018) frames it as the transformation of innovation into sustainable enterprises that generate value. Within higher education, entrepreneurship is further conceptualised as the creation of innovative programmes or delivery methods that add value to students, institutions, staff, and industry, (Kayyali, 2023). For this study, definition by Liguori *et al* (2024) is adopted and modified to view entrepreneurship as a process of risk-taking, innovation, creativity, opportunity recognition, and the conversion of ideas into sustainable business ventures.

Entrepreneurship education is positioned as a critical mechanism for cultivating entrepreneurial competences before, during, and after venture creation. Kuratko and Cavin (2025) argues that such education can be embedded across all levels of learning: primary, secondary, tertiary or delivered through professional training, making it a lifelong learning process. Governments and policymakers often assume that increasing entrepreneurship courses will proportionately enhance both the number and quality of entrepreneurs (Rashid *et al*, 2025). The quality of entrepreneurship education is therefore seen as directly linked to the quality of entrepreneurs produced in a country (Walidayni, 2023). This perspective challenges the notion that entrepreneurship is purely innate, instead highlighting its teachable and developmental aspects. Empirical studies (Sahinidis and Tsaknis, 2020; Mai *et al*, 2025; James, 2025; and Murire *et al*, 2026) support the existence of a

significant relationship between entrepreneurship education and entrepreneurial intentions, though Nabi, *et al* (2017) cautions that evidence linking education to broader economic growth remains limited.

Effective entrepreneurship education programmes must go beyond theoretical instruction to provide students with practical competencies in management, finance, and marketing (Ratten, and Jones 2021). Incubators and innovation hubs serve as experiential platforms where students can engage in creativity, opportunity recognition, business planning, and venture establishment. Ebewo *et al.* (2017) highlight that the primary objective of entrepreneurship education is to develop entrepreneurial drive, enhance the ability to identify and exploit opportunities, and equip students with the skills necessary to launch and sustain businesses. Thus, entrepreneurship education is conceptualised not only as a pedagogical tool but also as a strategic intervention for fostering entrepreneurial ecosystems, particularly within higher education contexts in the Global South. It is both a theoretical construct and a practical framework for nurturing entrepreneurial intentions and translating them into viable business start-ups.

Entrepreneurship education experiences in Swaziland, Nigeria, and Botswana illustrate the broader conceptual issues highlighted earlier. In Swaziland, Mavuso and Mndebele (2017) found that Consumer Sciences graduates lacked entrepreneurial drive, suggesting that entrepreneurship courses and projects failed to instill essential skills and attitudes. In Nigeria, James (2025) reported that students generally held positive attitudes toward entrepreneurship education and recognized its relevance, yet the curriculum remained highly theoretical, with limited practical exposure, internships, or incubation opportunities, as Zotov *et al* (2019) also observed. This gap between theory and practice diminished the transformative potential of entrepreneurship education, with many students viewing it as a graduation requirement rather than a pathway to venture creation. In Botswana, Ebewo *et al.* (2017) demonstrated that practical, experiential learning significantly enhanced students' entrepreneurial mind-set, attitudes, and perceived abilities, reinforcing the argument that theory alone is insufficient. Collectively, these cases underscore the importance of aligning entrepreneurship education with practical, experiential approaches to foster genuine entrepreneurial intentions and sustainable venture creation, thereby linking directly to the conceptualisation of entrepreneurship education discussed above.

2.4 Factors influencing entrepreneurial intentions of students

Entrepreneurial intentions among students are shaped by a combination of individual, institutional, and environmental factors. Access to capital is a critical determinant, as it enables aspiring entrepreneurs to acquire the resources necessary to establish and grow ventures. Without adequate funding, many business ideas fail to materialize, resulting in stillborn enterprises (Burbar and Shkukani, 2021). Education and training also play a pivotal role. Exposure to entrepreneurship education equips students with essential skills, knowledge, and attitudes that increase the likelihood of pursuing entrepreneurship as a career, (Mankgele *et al*, 2023). Experiential learning opportunities such as internships, apprenticeships, and incubation programmes further strengthen entrepreneurial competencies. However, as Sener and Tunali (2019) and Tchokote' (2025) argue, higher education and income levels may sometimes reduce entrepreneurial intentions due to increased risk aversion and alternative career opportunities, while Mutuntha and Banda (2025) note that limited education can push individuals toward entrepreneurship as a survival strategy. Personality traits are another influential factor. Students with high risk tolerance, innovativeness, and proactiveness are more inclined to engage in entrepreneurial ventures compared to risk-averse individuals. Nawaz and Noel (2025) highlight risk tolerance as a crucial driver of self-employment decisions, while Ramya and Nisha (2023) emphasize that autonomy, creativity, and self-direction form the foundation of an entrepreneurial mind-set. These traits not only influence the decision to start a business but also affect the sustainability and growth of the venture (Abbes, 2024). Zhao *et al.* (2021) highlighted that parental influence played a significant part in shaping the attitude and behaviour contributing to entrepreneurial intention. Thus, psychological and demographic characteristics such as age, gender, and personal motivation interact with personality traits to shape entrepreneurial intentions. The propensity to start a new venture starts to decline five years after graduation, (Eesly and Lee, 2021).

The external environment also significantly impacts students' entrepreneurial drive. Supportive government policies, stable economic conditions, and positive cultural attitudes toward entrepreneurship create fertile ground for new venture creation (Ramya & Nisha, 2023). Tchokote' *et al* (2025) posit that positive attitudes towards entrepreneurship are the strongest predictor of entrepreneurial intentions. *Conversely*, developing countries often face constraints such as weak regulatory frameworks, limited access to credit, inadequate entrepreneurial skills, and volatile legislative environments (Rashid *et al*, 2025; Usman & Zuru, 2019). High taxation, excessive

licensing requirements, and frequent policy changes undermine the ease of doing business and discourage entrepreneurial activity. For students, these external challenges can dampen intentions, even when personal traits and education are favourable (Rashid *et al* 2025). Therefore, entrepreneurial intentions are best understood as the outcome of an interplay between individual attributes, educational exposure, access to resources, and the broader socio-economic environment.

2.5 Entrepreneurship education and student capacitation to start and run their own business

Entrepreneurship education within higher education institutions is designed to equip students with the skills, knowledge, and attitudes necessary to initiate and manage successful ventures (Al Balushi *et al* 2023). By covering functional areas such as opportunity recognition, market validation, business plan development, financial literacy, and marketing strategies, these programmes provide students with a structured roadmap for new venture creation (Abbes, 2024). Exposure to such content enhances students' preparedness by enabling them to critically evaluate opportunities, understand legal and financial structures, and develop strategies for sustainable business growth. This capacitation ensures that students are not only theoretically aware of entrepreneurship but also practically ready to engage in start-up activities (Abbes, 2024).

A critical aspect of entrepreneurship education is the development of entrepreneurial self-efficacy, which refers to students' belief in their ability to successfully perform entrepreneurial tasks. Bandura (1997) and Zhao *et al.* (2021) identify self-efficacy as a psychological predictor of entrepreneurial intention and action. Experiential learning activities, such as business plan competitions, simulation games, and internships, significantly enhance students' confidence in opportunity recognition, resource management, and risk-taking (Bandera *et al* 2018). This confidence translates into concrete preparedness for new venture creation, bridging the gap between entrepreneurial interest and actual entrepreneurial behaviour. Thus, entrepreneurship education capacitation is not limited to knowledge acquisition but extends to building the psychological resilience and confidence required to navigate the uncertainties of entrepreneurship (Bhoyar 2025).

Beyond individual skill development, entrepreneurship education fosters social capital and networks that are vital for venture creation (Chowdhary *et al* 2025). Students gain access to peers

with similar aspirations, faculty with industry expertise, and external stakeholders such as mentors, investors, and alumni entrepreneurs (Longva, 2021). Entrepreneurship hubs and incubators serve as collaborative spaces where students can test ideas, receive feedback, and connect with potential financiers, much like academies where talent is scouted and nurtured (Chowdhary *et al* 2025). These networks provide not only resources but also validation and encouragement, which are crucial in transforming entrepreneurial intentions into viable start-ups. In this way, entrepreneurship education capacitation extends beyond the classroom, embedding students within ecosystems that support innovation, collaboration, and venture sustainability (Longva, 2021).

2.6 The relationship between entrepreneurship education and entrepreneurial intentions of higher education students

Entrepreneurship education has been widely recognized as a critical factor in shaping the entrepreneurial intentions of higher education students (Ebewo *et al* 2017; James, 2025; Tchokote, *et al*, 2025). Studies consistently show that exposure to entrepreneurship courses enhances students' awareness of entrepreneurial opportunities, builds confidence, and fosters a positive attitude toward business creation. A meta-analysis by Zhang *et al.* (2022) confirmed a significant positive relationship between entrepreneurship education and entrepreneurial intentions, highlighting that structured learning experiences provide students with the knowledge and skills necessary to consider entrepreneurship as a viable career path. This aligns with the Theory of Planned Behaviour, which posits that attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioural control, often strengthened through education are central to the formation of entrepreneurial intentions (Abbes, 2024). However, there are divergent views which say that subjective norms have no significant influence on entrepreneurial intentions, (Tchokote *et al*, 2025, and Tsaknis and Sahinidis, 2025).

However, the effectiveness of entrepreneurship education depends on its design and delivery. Ndofirepi (2020) emphasized that psychological traits such as self-efficacy, innovativeness, and risk tolerance often mediate the relationship between education and entrepreneurial intentions.

This means that while education provides the foundation, students' personal attributes and confidence in their abilities determine whether intentions translate into actual entrepreneurial behaviour (Ghouse *et al*, 2024). Practical and experiential learning, such as internships, incubation programmes, and project-based training, have been found to significantly enhance entrepreneurial drive compared to purely theoretical instruction (Jan, 2024). Without these experiential

components, students may appreciate the value of entrepreneurship education but fail to develop the mindset and competencies required to initiate ventures.

The broader implication is that entrepreneurship education not only influences individual career choices but also contributes to national economic development by nurturing future entrepreneurs (Ghouse *et al*, 2024). As noted by recent scholarship, entrepreneurship education plays an irreplaceable role in improving students' entrepreneurial intentions, promoting employment, and stimulating innovation-driven growth (Reimers, 2024). Nevertheless, challenges remain, particularly in contexts where curricula are overly theoretical, resources are limited, or institutional support is weak. For higher education institutions, the task is to integrate entrepreneurship education into diverse programmes, ensure practical exposure, and cultivate supportive ecosystems that encourage students to transform intentions into sustainable ventures (Ebewo *et al*, 2017; James, 2025)

Age and prior working experience influence entrepreneurial intentions of students., (Sahinidis *et al*, 2021). However, this has been refuted. Prior work experience has significant relationship with subjective norms but insignificant relationship with perceived behavioural control, attitude towards behaviour and entrepreneurship intention, (Malebana and Mahlaole, 2023).

2.7 Chapter summary

This chapter examined the conceptualisation of entrepreneurship and entrepreneurship education, highlighting the absence of a universally accepted definition and emphasizing entrepreneurship as a process of risk-taking, innovation, creativity, and opportunity recognition leading to sustainable ventures. It explored how entrepreneurship education equips students with essential skills, knowledge, and attitudes, while stressing the importance of experiential learning, incubation, and mentorship in fostering genuine entrepreneurial intentions. Regional evidence from Swaziland, Nigeria, and Botswana revealed that although students often hold positive attitudes toward entrepreneurship education, its impact is limited when curricula remain theoretical, whereas practical exposure significantly enhances entrepreneurial drive. The chapter also discussed factors influencing entrepreneurial intentions, including access to capital, education and training, personality traits, and external environments, noting that supportive ecosystems and stable policies facilitate venture creation while constraints such as volatile legislation and limited credit hinder it.

Overall, the chapter established that entrepreneurship education positively influences entrepreneurial intentions, but its effectiveness depends on the integration of experiential learning, supportive institutional frameworks, and conducive socio-economic environments.

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the research methodology adopted to examine the relationship between entrepreneurship education and the entrepreneurial intentions of higher education students. It outlines the research paradigm and approach, which provide the philosophical and structural foundation for the study, followed by the sampling procedures used to ensure representativeness and relevance of participants. The chapter further explains the development and validation of data collection instruments, detailing how they were constructed to capture students' attitudes, perceptions, and intentions with reliability and validity. Data analysis techniques are described to demonstrate how the collected information was systematically interpreted to address the research objectives. Finally, ethical considerations such as informed consent, confidentiality, and respect for participants' rights are discussed to highlight adherence to professional research standards. Collectively, this chapter provides a comprehensive account of the methodological framework, ensuring transparency, rigor, and credibility in the research process.

3.2 Research paradigm

The paradigm guiding this study is rooted in the pragmatist research tradition, which emphasizes action, objectivity, subjectivity, systemic enquiry, practicality and real world problem solving. (Ali, 2024). Pragmatism assumes that knowledge is judged by its practical usability and its real world problem solving prowess (Kelly and Cordeiro, 2020). It can be studied through structured methodologies that yield valid and reliable results. Actionable knowledge must solve real world problems or issues of human significance. Within this paradigm, the study employs a quantitative approach to investigate the relationship between entrepreneurship education and the entrepreneurial intentions of higher education students. It allows flexible investigative techniques and choice of relevant methods and methodology. (Kelly and Cordeiro, 2020). That is, it uses a concurrent triangulation research design. Data is collected using both quantitative and qualitative methods leading to data convergence. Then the data is compare, integrated and interpreted (Bell *et al*, 2022).

Sileyew²⁸ (2019) posit that research design is concerned with procedures for collecting, processing, analysing, and interpreting data. By adopting a pragmatist stance, the study relies on

self-constructed instruments, statistical analysis, and representative sampling to ensure that findings are generalizable and replicable (Almusaed, *et al*, 2025). The paradigm thus provides a coherent framework for examining how entrepreneurship educational exposure influences entrepreneurial attitudes and intentions, ensuring that the research is rigorous, credible, and aligned with established scientific principles.

3.3 Research approach

This study employed a mixed methods approach, combining quantitative and qualitative components to provide a comprehensive understanding of the relationship between entrepreneurship education and students' entrepreneurial intentions (Ndofirepi and Rambe, 2018). The quantitative strand focused on measuring perceptions of entrepreneurship courses, self-efficacy, and actual start-up activities through surveys administered to students who had completed entrepreneurship courses, with regression analysis used to determine whether entrepreneurship education significantly influenced entrepreneurial intentions and venture creation. Complementing this, the qualitative strand explored students' lived experiences, perceptions, and insights through interviews with open-ended questions (Lyles, 2024). This covered curriculum content, teaching methods, mentorship, and contextual factors such as family background, risk attitudes, capital, and work experience. The qualitative data was thematically analysed to identify recurring patterns and deeper meanings (Ahmed, *et al*, 2025). By integrating the statistical rigor of quantitative methods with the contextual richness of qualitative inquiry, the mixed methods approach allowed for triangulation of findings, thereby enhancing the validity, reliability, and depth of the study's conclusions.

3.4 Population, sample and sampling technique

The sample for this study comprised 30 BUSE post graduate students who had completed entrepreneurship courses, as they were best positioned to provide insights into the relationship between entrepreneurship education and entrepreneurial intentions (Ndofirepi and Rambe, 2018). These were selected from a target population of 246 students. Purposive sampling was used to identify the participants from the entrepreneurship class. A mixed sampling technique was employed to ensure both breadth and depth of data. For the quantitative component, a stratified random sampling method was used to select students across different faculties and programmes

(Yousef, 2017). This was meant to ensure representativeness and reducing sampling bias. This allowed the researcher to capture diverse perspectives on entrepreneurial self-efficacy, intentions, and actual start-up activities (Ndofirepi and Rambe, 2018). For the qualitative component, a purposive sampling strategy was adopted, targeting students with varied backgrounds and experiences in entrepreneurship education. Within this purposive sample, snowball sampling was also utilized, where initial participants referred others who had relevant experiences, thereby enriching the data set with diverse narratives (Naderifar, *et al*, 2017). This combination of sampling techniques ensured that the study gathered reliable quantitative data while also capturing rich qualitative insights into students' lived experiences, perceptions, and contextual factors influencing entrepreneurial intentions.

3.5 Instruments

The researcher used a semi-structured questionnaire and interview guide.

3.5.1 Semi-structured questionnaire

A semi-structured questionnaire was employed in this study to complement the closed-ended survey instrument and enrich the data collected on students' entrepreneurial intentions (Alsaad, 2024). Semi-structured questionnaires combine both structured and open-ended items, allowing respondents to provide more nuanced insights while still adhering to the variables outlined in the conceptual framework (Naderifar, *et al*, 2017). This format enabled the researcher to capture not only quantifiable data on attitudes and perceptions but also qualitative reflections on curriculum content, teaching methodologies, mentorship experiences, and contextual factors such as family background, risk attitudes, and access to capital. The flexibility of semi-structured questionnaires reduces the rigidity associated with purely closed questions, thereby mitigating the limitation (Ndofirepi and Rambe, 2018). By incorporating open-ended prompts, respondents were encouraged to elaborate on their experiences and opinions, yielding richer data that could be thematically analysed for recurring patterns. At the same time, the structured component ensured comparability across responses and facilitated statistical analysis (Naderifar, *et al*, 2017). This dual capacity made the semi-structured questionnaire an effective tool for balancing breadth and depth, enhancing the validity and reliability of the study's findings on the impact of entrepreneurship education on students' entrepreneurial intentions. The instrument comprised of the following sections: demographic characteristics of the respondents, structured four-point Likert based

questions and section open ended questions. The four-point Likert Scale was created by removing ‘neutral’ and left participants with forced choice of strongly disagree, disagree, agree and strongly agree. The researcher was able to reduce the likelihood of non-committal answers at the expense of losing insights from participants who could not offer an opinion on the item.

3.5.2 Interview guide

An interview guide was designed and utilized in this study to provide consistency in questioning while allowing flexibility for deeper exploration of respondents’ experiences (Alsaad, 2024). The guide ensured that critical issues were systematically addressed across interviews, thereby reducing bias and enabling meaningful comparisons between participants (Naderifar, *et al*, 2017). Open-ended questions allowed respondents to elaborate on their perceptions of entrepreneurship education, while the structured framework ensured that data remained aligned with the study’s objectives. The interview guide was particularly valuable in capturing themes that extended beyond the questionnaire, such as curriculum content and teaching methodologies, mentorship experiences, and challenges encountered in entrepreneurial learning (Lyles, 2024). Additional themes explored included the influence of family background, risk attitudes, access to capital, prior work experience, and programme of study on students’ entrepreneurial intentions. By probing these areas, the guide facilitated rich qualitative insights and supported data triangulation, strengthening the validity of findings by cross-checking consistency between survey responses and interview narratives (Turner *et al* 2017). Finally, the semi-structured interview guide served as a robust tool for balancing structure with depth, ensuring that both measurable trends and nuanced perspectives were captured.

3.6 Data collection

In undertaking this study, the researcher first sought entry into the field by establishing direct contact with the target population at Bindura University of Science Education. For the quantitative component, the semi-structured questionnaire was personally delivered to the respondents and collected at an agreed-upon date, with participants requested to complete them within two weeks.

This approach ensured that only the intended group received the instruments, minimized non-response rates, and allowed respondents sufficient time to balance participation with other commitments. Although this method was costly in terms of time and travel, it enhanced the reliability of the data by reducing distribution errors. For the qualitative component, entry into the field involved conducting interviews in a manner that upheld ethical standards and built trust with participants. The researcher introduced himself, explained the purpose of the study, sought informed consent, and emphasized confidentiality before commencing each interview. During the sessions, notes were taken and conversations recorded using a voice recorder to ensure accuracy, with respondents assured that the information would be used solely for academic purposes and that their identities would remain anonymous. The interview data was subsequently transcribed for analysis, in line with the procedures outlined by Boyce and Neale (2006). This systematic entry into the field ensured that data collection was ethically sound, methodologically rigorous, and conducive to generating reliable insights.

3.6.1 Justification of Benchmark Control Use in Methodology

In research on entrepreneurial intention, the Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB) has been widely adopted to explain how attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behaviour control influence intention toward entrepreneurship (Ajzen, 1991). According to TPB, intention is the proximal antecedent to actual behaviour (Ajzen, 1991; Vamvaka et al., 2020).

However, in educational settings, collecting baseline (pre-exposure) data is often not feasible when students have already completed curriculum exposure. In such cases, a one-sample benchmark test against a neutral value (e.g., the midpoint of a Likert scale) provides a defensible alternative for assessing whether observed intention scores differ significantly from neutrality. This approach has precedent in entrepreneurship education research, where neutral benchmark values serve as proxy controls for ‘no intervention’ states in cross-sectional designs (Bae, *et al*, 2014; Amofah, *et al*, 2020).

Use of benchmark comparison allows the researcher to determine whether the group exposed to the entrepreneurship course displays significantly stronger intention than what would be expected in the absence of structured exposure, even in the absence of a true control group. Moreover, benchmarking against neutral scores is statistically defensible for instruments where the midpoint

reflects an uninfluenced or uncertain stance toward intention, aligning with the conceptual design of Likert scaling (Ajzen, 1991; Bae et al., 2014).

Given that entrepreneurial intention is a behavioural intention a construct that must move away from neutrality to indicate meaningful intention formation the one-sample benchmark provides a robust inferential test of the effect of entrepreneurship education (Ajzen, 1991; Ndofirepi, 2020).

3.6.2 Justification for Thematic Grouping of Items

The present study grouped the 20 questionnaire items into conceptually coherent thematic domains before statistical analysis. This practice is supported by both theoretical and methodological rationales. Theme scores were computed by averaging item means under each theme.

First, entrepreneurship intention and related constructs (e.g., attitude, subjective norms, perceived control) are inherently multidimensional, as suggested by the TPB framework (Ajzen, 1991; Vamvaka et al., 2020). Grouping items into themes such as Course Design and Delivery, Entrepreneurial Skills, Social and Personal Influences, and Environmental Support aligns with conceptual models that identify different pathways through which education influences intention formation.

Second, the literature on entrepreneurship education highlights distinct but related constructs for example, course quality, institutional support, knowledge acquisition, psychological predispositions) that shape intention (Ndofirepi, 2020; Amofah & Saladrighes, 2022). These constructs correspond to the themes used in this study, providing theoretical grounding for item aggregation.

From a methodological perspective, thematic grouping enhances construct validity and inferential stability. Aggregating items into meaningful domains improves measurement reliability and reduces noise from individual item variation, particularly in regression analysis (Bae et al., 2014).

Thematic scores also facilitate interpretation, allowing the researcher to identify which dimensions of entrepreneurship education contribute most to intention an approach consistent with best practices in entrepreneurial intention research (Bae et al., 2014; Amofah et al., 2020).

Finally, the thematic grouping approach supports alignment with extended TPB models that incorporate contextual and psychological influences such as institutional support, family influence, and entrepreneurial mind-set in explaining entrepreneurial intention (Systematic reviews such as those by Bae et al. (2014) and Nabi et al. (2017) highlight these dimensions).

3.6.3 Model Specification

$$Y = b_0 + b_1X_1 + b_2X_2 + b_3X_3 + b_4X_4 + b_5X_5 + b_6X_6 + u$$

Where:

Dependent Variable: $Y =$

Entrepreneurial Intention

Independent Variables:

$X_1 =$ Course Design and Delivery

$X_2 =$ Entrepreneurial Knowledge and Skills

$X_3 =$ Social and Personal Influences

$X_4 =$ Environmental and Institutional Support

$X_5 =$ Entrepreneurial Orientation and Mind-set

3.7 Data analysis

The study employed both quantitative and qualitative analysis techniques to ensure a comprehensive understanding of the impact of entrepreneurship education on students' entrepreneurial intentions (Ndofirepi and Rambe, 2018). For the quantitative component, the researcher coded questionnaire items according to variables aligned with the conceptual framework and analysed the data using SPSS 25.0 for Windows. Descriptive statistics such as means, frequencies, means and standard deviations were computed. Regression analysis was conducted to test whether entrepreneurship education significantly influenced entrepreneurial intentions and new venture creation (Ndofirepi and Rambe, 2018). This statistical approach

provided objective evidence of relationships between variables and allowed for generalizable conclusions.

For the qualitative component, data gathered through interviews was transcribed and subjected to thematic analysis (Turner *et al* 2017). Responses were classified into themes such as curriculum content and methodology, mentorship experiences, perceptions of entrepreneurship education, and contextual influences including family background, risk attitudes, capital, and work experience. Patterns and recurring themes were identified to highlight commonalities and divergences in students' lived experiences. This thematic categorization enabled the researcher to capture nuanced insights that extended beyond the structured questionnaire responses, providing depth and context to the quantitative findings.

By integrating quantitative rigor with qualitative richness, the analysis achieved triangulation, enhancing the validity and reliability of the study (Naderifar, *et al*, 2017). The quantitative results offered measurable trends and statistical relationships, while the qualitative findings provided explanatory depth and contextual meaning. Together, these complementary approaches ensured that the study not only quantified the impact of entrepreneurship education but also illuminated the underlying experiences, attitudes, and perceptions shaping students' entrepreneurial intentions.

3.8 Validity and reliability

To ensure the robustness of the data collection instruments, both the questionnaire and the interview guide were subjected to rigorous validation processes (Turner *et al* 2017). After construction, the instruments were reviewed by the research supervisor to assess face validity, ensuring that the items appeared to measure what they were intended to measure, and content validity, confirming that the questions adequately covered the dimensions of entrepreneurship education and entrepreneurial intentions. In addition, construct validity was evaluated to determine whether the instruments were aligned with the theoretical framework underpinning the study (Alsaad, 2024). To enhance clarity and precision, the instruments were further proofread by a language expert, who checked for grammatical accuracy and linguistic appropriateness.

Reliability of the questionnaire was tested using Cronbach's Alpha, which yielded a coefficient of 0.82. According to Schrepp (2020) a reliability coefficient above 0.7 is considered acceptable, indicating that the instrument consistently measures the intended constructs. This result demonstrates that the questionnaire was reliable for capturing students' opinions, attitudes, and

entrepreneurial intentions. The inclusion of a Likert-scale format further strengthened reliability by standardizing responses across participants (Lyles, 2024). By combining supervisor validation, expert language review, and statistical reliability testing, the study ensured that its instruments were both valid and reliable. This methodological rigor enhanced the credibility of the findings, as the instruments were capable of consistently and accurately measuring the variables central to the research (Naderifar, *et al*, 2017). The triangulation of questionnaires and interviews further reinforced validity, allowing for cross-verification of data and ensuring that the study captured both measurable trends and nuanced insights into students' entrepreneurial experiences.

3.9 Ethical considerations

Ethical principles were carefully observed throughout the research process to safeguard the rights and welfare of participants and to uphold the integrity of the study (Ahmed, *et al*, 2025). Prior to data collection, informed consent was sought from all respondents, with the researcher clearly explaining the purpose of the study, the procedures involved, and the voluntary nature of participation. Respondents were assured that they could withdraw at any stage without penalty. Confidentiality was emphasized, with no identifying information such as names, qualifications, or personal details included in the questionnaire or interview transcripts (Lyles, 2024). Anonymity was maintained to encourage honest and unbiased responses, thereby enhancing the credibility of the results.

During interviews, ethical protocols were followed by introducing the researcher, outlining the objectives of the study, and reiterating the importance of confidentiality (Ahmed, *et al*, 2025). Participants were informed that the data collected would be used strictly for academic purposes, and their identities would remain undisclosed. The researcher also ensured that sensitive issues were handled respectfully, and probing was conducted in a manner that avoided discomfort or coercion. In addition, ethical clearance was obtained from relevant institutional authorities, ensuring compliance with established research standards (Turner *et al* 2017). Data was securely stored and only accessed by the researcher, preventing unauthorized use. By adhering to these ethical considerations: consent, confidentiality, anonymity, respect, and institutional approval the study maintained high ethical standards, thereby reinforcing the trustworthiness and integrity of its findings.

3.10 Chapter summary

This chapter presented the research methodology employed to investigate the impact of entrepreneurship education on students' entrepreneurial intentions at Bindura University of Science Education. It began by outlining the research paradigm and approach, highlighting the adoption of a mixed methods design that integrated quantitative surveys with qualitative interviews to ensure both breadth and depth of analysis. The sampling procedures combined stratified random sampling for representativeness with purposive and snowball techniques to capture students' perceptions on the impact of entrepreneurship education on entrepreneurial intentions of students.

CHAPTER 4: DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the results of the study in alignment with the research questions, offering both quantitative and qualitative findings to provide a comprehensive understanding of the impact of entrepreneurship education on students' entrepreneurial intentions. The data collected through the four-point Likert scale questionnaire and semi-structured interviews are analyzed and reported.

The demographic data of participants is presented in section 4.1. Section 4.2 examines university students' knowledge of entrepreneurship education, Section 4.3 examines the factors influencing students' entrepreneurial intentions, highlighting personal, educational, and contextual variables. Section 4.4 explores the relationship between entrepreneurship education and entrepreneurial intentions, integrating statistical evidence with thematic insights to establish whether exposure to entrepreneurship courses significantly enhances students' propensity to engage in entrepreneurial activities. By presenting findings through descriptive statistics, regression analysis, and thematic categorization, this chapter provides a clear and structured account of the results, setting the stage for interpretation and discussion in the subsequent chapter.

4.2 Characteristics of respondents

The demographic characteristics of the respondents are presented and discussed in this section. These characteristics include sex, age range, academic qualifications and teaching experience. The sample for the study had 30 respondents. These demographic characteristics are summarised in Table 1 below:

Table 1: Demographic characteristics of the selected respondents (n=30)

Attributes		(n)	(%)
Sex	Females	14	46.66
	Males	16	53.33
Age range	Under 25	0	0
	25-34	2	6.66
	35-44	11	36.66
	45-54	15	50.00
	Above 55	2	6.66
Post graduate students' Academic Qualifications	Diploma in Education	0	0.00
	BA/ BEd/ BScEd	27	90.00
	MA/ MBA/ MSc	2	6.66
	PhD/DEd	1	3.3
Teaching experience (Years)	Less than 1	0	0
	1-5	2	6.66
	6-10	10	33.33
	Above 10	18	60.00

From Table 1, it can be seen that 53% of the respondents were male and 47% were female. This was a fair representation of both males and females. Majority of the participants were aged 45 years and above (57%) The rest of the participants were younger than 45. All participants were either undergraduates or post-graduate students. Qualifications, age and prior work experience have a significant bearing on entrepreneurial intention, (Sahinidis *et al.*, 2021).

4.3 The factors influencing students' entrepreneurial intentions

In this section, we present the results on the questions which sought to find out the factors which influence students' entrepreneurial intentions. The questions covered access to capital, risk attitudes, family background, work experience, field of study, validation, subjective norms, the environment, perceived behaviour control, and the belief in innate ability. On the questionnaire, these are items 11 to 20. The results are presented in table 2 below: Responses were measured on a four-point Likert scale (1 = Strongly Disagree, 4 = Strongly Agree). The statistical midpoint of the scale is 2.5, Mean values of 2.5 and above indicate agreement, while values below 2.5 indicate disagreement.

Table 2 Factors Influencing Entrepreneurial Intention (n = 30)

Variable	Mean	% Agree/Strongly Agree	Interpretation
Access to Capital	2.7	70%	Agreement
Risk Attitude	2.0	47%	Disagreement
Family Background	2.4	60%	Disagreement
Work Experience	3.1	70%	Agreement
Field of Study	2.7	63%	Agreement
Facilities & Mentors	2.2	46%	Disagreement
Consult Significant Others	2.4	47%	Disagreement
Approval Boosts Confidence	3.0	83%	Agreement
Perceived Likelihood of Success	3.1	93%	Agreement
Born Entrepreneur (Innate Ability)	2.2	47%	Disagreement

4.3.1 Access to Capital

Access to capital recorded a mean of 2.7 ($SD^* = 0.98$), interpreted to mean agreement. 70% of respondents agreed that they possess sufficient funding for their business ideas. This finding indicates that financial feasibility is not perceived as a major structural constraint among these postgraduate in-service students.

Interviewee 1 like many others, said that:

I have sufficient capital for my intended business.

The respondent, like the majority, had sufficient capital to start a new venture. The employment status of respondents is a major contributing factor to availability of capital.

The findings corroborate the empirical evidence presented by Burbar and Shkukani (2021), who argue that perceived access to capital enhances perceived venture feasibility and strengthens entrepreneurial intention. Within Ajzen's (1991) Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB), access to capital strengthens perceived behavioural control, thereby increasing the likelihood of intention formation. However, this stands in contrast to broader literature suggesting lack of capital is a primary deterrent to new venture creation (Burbar and Shkukani, 2021). The divergence may be attributed to the employment status of this cohort; as in-service teachers, they possess a stable income stream that mitigates the financial constraints typically faced by unemployed graduates. Thus, capital availability emerges as a strong feasibility driver within this specific cohort.

4.3.2 Risk attitude

From Table 2 above, a minority of 47% either agreed or strongly agreed with the statement that they have high risk attitudes. Risk attitude recorded a low mean score ($M = 2.0$), reflecting general disagreement with the statement that respondents have a high risk attitude. Interviewee 4 also said that:

I am not willing to undertake high risk businesses because I am afraid of losing my money.

The respondents' low risk appetite and fear to loose capital aligns very well with Matantha and Banda (2025) who posit that risk aversion increases with level of education and is also affected by the availability of a stable income from employment.

Although entrepreneurship is associated with high risk taking behaviour, the findings indicate that students may prefer moderate or calculated risk rather than high risk ventures. Fear of failure and financial loss appear to affect entrepreneurial drive. Matuntha and Banda (2025) indicated that higher educational qualifications result in risk aversion as professionals may settle for a stable income rather than taking risks. Students were generally risk averse. Despite this, entrepreneurial intentions remained positive. Where the risk is high, returns will also be high. A high risk appetite resonates well with entrepreneurs.

The students' low risk appetite is not consistent with the qualities of an entrepreneur. This contradicts Nawaz and Noel (20225) who identify risk as crucial for self-employment decisions. It also contradicts with Ramya and Nisha (2023) who emphasise that pro-activeness and boldness are core entrepreneurial traits. Ndofirepi (2020) emphasized that psychological traits such as self-efficacy, innovativeness, and risk tolerance often mediate the relationship between education and entrepreneurial intentions. The findings suggest that calculated risk-taking, rather than high risk propensity, may be more relevant for mature postgraduate students with stable employment.

4.3.3 Family background

Family background yielded a mean of 2.43. The mean suggests disagreement that one's intended business is not influenced by family. However, 60% agreement at the item level suggests otherwise. Interviewee 5 had this to say:

I grew up in a family with a grocery shop so that has inspired me a lot.

Growing up in a family with a business gave respondent the chance to learn from their parents. This is a source of inspiration. For example, from life experience, one realises that one-liter fresh

milk is bought at \$1 and sold for \$1.50. Knowledge about the margins inspires one to start a business.

This finding contrasts with studies that identify role modelling as a strong predictor of entrepreneurial intention, such as Zhao et al. (2021), who found that parental involvement significantly shapes attitudes and behaviour contributing to entrepreneurial intention. However, it corroborates research suggesting that in postgraduate or professionally experienced samples, entrepreneurial intention is shaped more by competence and opportunity recognition than by parental modelling. While Zhao et al. (2021) observed strong socialization effects in medical fraternities, the current data suggests that for in-service teachers, professional autonomy outweighs family socialization. Thus, while role modelling exists, it does not emerge as a primary determinant in this cohort.

4.3.4 Work experience

This variable recorded one of the strongest positive influences ($M = 3.1$). The findings suggest that accumulated expertise and professional exposure enhance entrepreneurial confidence. Work experience provides industry-specific skills, reduces uncertainty, and increases perceived feasibility of venture creation. One's work experience has a strong influence on the intended business.

The results in Table 2 above, show that 70% agree/strongly agree to the statement that work experience influences the intended business. Interviewee 2 also supported this view:

Starting a college would be the best thing for me because I already have the expertise.

It can be inferred that most of the respondents are likely to start a new venture in the education sector. Work experience is a significant mediating factor in nurturing entrepreneurial intentions.

The finding suggests that the skills got from work will be transferred into the new venture without the need for training. Expertise in ones' field reduces the fear of failure since the technical expertise

has already been acquired. This gives the nascent entrepreneur strategic advantage over others, who may need to hire a key employee. The findings concur with Sahinidis *et al*, (2021) who found that age and prior working experience influence entrepreneurial intentions of students. However, in literature contradictions are evident because Malebana and Mahlaole, (2023) maintain that work experience has insignificant relationship with perceived behavioural control, attitude towards behaviour and entrepreneurship intention. The variation may reflect contextual differences between Zimbabwean postgraduate teachers and other student populations.

4.3.5 Field of study

From Table 2 above, 63% agree/strongly agree that field of study has an influence on the intended business. Just like work experience, field of study also demonstrated a positive influence ($M = 2.7$). Interviewee 3 said that:

What I studied has a bearing on the type of business I do. I can only start a business I am knowledgeable about.

This concurs with the quantitative data which shows that field of study strongly influences entrepreneurial pathways.

This shows that students are likely to pursue new business ventures aligned with their professional qualifications. The field of study can have a significant contribution to entrepreneurial intentions. In highly technical, health and allied professions, legal, accounting, business and computer science among other professions, professions with councils or requiring registration, put academic qualifications as a condition for registration. So, someone who studied law is more likely to open a law firm. The same applies to medical doctors, and accountants. That is qualifications directly determine entrepreneurial pathways. Professionals are risk averse, (Mutuntha and Banda, 2025).

4.3.6 Access to facilities and mentors

The results indicated that a minority of the respondents, 46% agreed/strongly agreed that BUSE's facilities and mentors are conducive to new venture creation. Access to facilities and mentors

recorded a very low mean ($M = 2.2$). This shows dissatisfaction with access to the university's facilities and mentorship support.

The finding would seem to suggest a gap at the institution studied, where participants are not satisfied with the level of support (facilities and mentorship). Fan *et al* (2024) reported that entrepreneurial social support moderates the link between entrepreneurship education and students' entrepreneurial intentions. Tchokote *et al* (2025) said that incubation resources improve perceived behaviour control, thereby boosting confidence in the students' entrepreneurial abilities. In the absence of a conducive environment, students were less likely to be creative and innovative. Thus, the study implores the university to spruce up its entrepreneurship hubs and increase access to mentors. The university should integrate targeted pedagogical approaches that enhance perceived behavioural control by equipping students with practical knowledge and skills to overcome psychological barriers, (Tsaknis and Sahinidis, 2025).

4.3.7 Subjective norms

Two items measured subjective norms validation and social influence. First, disagreed that they consult significant others before major decisions ($M = 2.4$). The results show that 47% agreed/strongly agreed with the statement that they normally consult friends, family or significant others before making a major decision. Interviewee 5 also said that:

My decisions are not influenced by what other people think. If I want to do something I do it without first asking people... I am an independent thinker

This shows autonomy and independent decision making which are traits critical for a successful entrepreneur. Quick decision making is important in business especially where opportunity recognition is involved. However, 83% agree / strongly agree that approval of their decisions by loved ones boosts their confidence and belief in their self-efficacy.

However, 83% agree / strongly agree that approval of their decisions by loved ones boosts their confidence and belief in their self-efficacy. A mean score of 3.0 showed agreement that approval of loved ones boost confidence.

These results suggest that while students value emotional support, they maintain decision-making autonomy. At theme level, subjective norms appear to have limited direct influence on entrepreneurial intentions, though social approval enhances confidence. This strongly corroborates Tchokote' et al. (2025), who found subjective norms to be insignificant predictors of entrepreneurial intentions. It also aligns with Ramya and Nisha (2023), who emphasise autonomy as central to the entrepreneurial mindset. Thus, autonomy rather than social pressure drives intention formation. A minority of the respondents, seek for validation from significant others before taking a major decision.

The response is a good reflection of autonomy, independent thinking and self- confidence; which are traits necessary for a successful entrepreneur (Ramya and Nisha, 2023; Tsaknis and Sahinidis; 2025). Furthermore, Tchokote *et al* (2025) and Tsaknis and Sahinidis (2025) found that subjective norms have no significant influence on entrepreneurial intentions.

4.3.8 Perceived behavior control

This theme recorded the highest mean and lowest standard deviation ($M = 3.1$), indicating strong consensus that perceived likelihood of success influences entrepreneurial intentions. Students are more inclined to pursue entrepreneurship when they believe they can succeed. Interviewee 2 said that:

if I think that I can do something successfully that motivates me to take the decision to do it

This is an attestation to the view that the respondents' behaviour is independent of what others think but that the respondents are motivated by their perceived level of success in the intended venture rather than validation from significant others.

This finding strongly supports Ajzen (1991), whose Theory of Planned Behaviour identifies perceived behaviour control as a direct determinant of intention. It also corroborates Fan et al. (2024), who found self-efficacy to significantly strengthen entrepreneurial intentions. However, this result contradicts Tchokote' et al. (2025), who reported no significant effect of perceived

behaviour control. The divergence may be attributed to contextual differences or the employment status of this postgraduate sample. A majority of respondents, 93% agreed/strongly agreed that perceived high level of success influenced their intentions to take entrepreneurial decisions. Self-efficacy boosts confidence and motivates students to take up decisions because of the perceived success in the intended behaviour (Ajzen, (1991, Fan *et al*, 2024, Tsaknis and Sahinidis, 2025). This contradicts with Tchokote *et al* (2025) who said that perceived behaviour control has no significant effect on entrepreneurial intentions. Entrepreneurship requires effective decision making since it is associated with high risk taking.

4.3.9 Belief in innate ability

The belief that one is “born an entrepreneur” recorded a low mean of 2.2. This indicates rejection of the notion that entrepreneurship is purely innate. Instead, students appear to support the view that entrepreneurship can be learned and developed through education and training. From Table 2 above, 47% of the respondents, agree /strongly agree with the notion that they are born entrepreneurs. This is a rejection of the notion that entrepreneurs are born whilst affirming the idea that entrepreneurship is a concept that has to be learned by undergoing training. Hence the need for entrepreneurship education in order to increase the entrepreneurship intentions of the students. Interviewee 1 said that:

I believe in learning how to start a business

Majority of the respondents believed that entrepreneurship has to be learned just like any other course. This rejected the assertion that entrepreneurs are born.

At theme level, perceived behaviour control (self-efficacy) emerged as the strongest predictor of entrepreneurial intentions, indicating that students are more inclined to pursue entrepreneurship when they believe they can succeed. Access to capital also showed a strong positive influence, while work experience, field of study, and family background demonstrated moderate positive effects, collectively enhancing perceived feasibility and reducing uncertainty in venture creation.

In contrast, risk attitude showed a relatively low mean, suggesting general risk aversion, although this did not significantly diminish entrepreneurial intentions. The institutional environment reflected structural weaknesses, particularly limited facilities and mentorship support. Subjective

norms had minimal direct influence, highlighting students' autonomy in decision-making, and the belief in innate entrepreneurial ability was largely rejected, reinforcing the view that entrepreneurship can be learned.

Overall, entrepreneurial intentions among Zimbabwean higher education students are driven primarily by self-efficacy and perceived feasibility, capital, skills, and experience rather than by social pressure or inherent traits. These findings underscore the importance of entrepreneurship education and strengthened institutional support in enhancing entrepreneurial readiness.

The study established that the following factors influence entrepreneurship intentions: perceived high level of success, approval by loved ones, availability of sufficient funding, work experience, field of study, and family background. While literature suggests that high risk attitude, consulting significant other, facilities and mentors, and entrepreneurship is innate, the minority of the participants concurred. From section 4.3 six themes emerged: EE course design and delivery, entrepreneurial knowledge and skills, entrepreneurial intentions, social and personal influences, environmental and institutional support, and entrepreneurial orientation and mindset. Entrepreneurial intention in this cohort is primarily driven by: self-efficacy, access to capital, work experience, and field of study. It is not primarily driven by: risk appetite, social pressure, family modelling, and innate traits. Entrepreneurial intention therefore appears competence-driven rather than socially imposed.

4.4 How entrepreneurship education can capacitate students to start and run their own business

This section looked at how entrepreneurship education can capacitate students to start and run their own businesses. It focused on inspirations got, affirmation of boldness to start and run a business, existence of a novel business idea and the likelihood of setting up a new venture in a years' time. These variables were listed as items 5 to 8 on the questionnaire. The results are presented in table 3 below:

Table 3: Entrepreneurship education and student capacitation to start and run their own business (n=30)

Statement confirming student capacitation to start and run their own business	Agree/Strongly Agree f (%)	Mean	Interpretation
EE Inspired Intention	70	2.9	Agreement
Fully Capacitated	50	2.4	Disagreement
Novel Business Idea	68	2.5	Agreement
Likely to Start within 12 Months	53	2.5	Agreement

From the results presented above, in table 3, it can be seen that 70% agreed/strongly agreed with the statement that entrepreneurship education inspired their intention to start a business. This is in tandem with Abbas (2024). It can therefore be said that Bindura University of Science Education's entrepreneurship course is serving its intended purpose of nurturing entrepreneurial intentions of students. Interviewee 5 said that:

We have learnt a lot in this module and this has motivated me to start a business

In support of this view, interviewee 3 also said that:

this module has inspired me a lot. I will be starting my business soon.

The respondents had their mind-sets positively shaped and their entrepreneurial intentions increased. The positive attitude and high esteem for the course helped respondents to benefit a lot. This has also motivated them to exhibit strong intentions to start a new venture soon. Respondents got inspiration from the course.

Half of the respondents (50%) agreed/strongly agreed with the statement that they are fully capacitated to start and run their own businesses. There were mixed feelings about the respondents' readiness to start a business. Half were ready whilst the other half felt that they were not yet ready to start a business. This reflects a mixed level of entrepreneurial intentions. However, Abbas

(2024) noted that exposure to entrepreneurship education increases an individual's self-efficacy thereby enhancing their confidence in their ability to start and run a business.

A significant number of respondents, 68% agreed/strongly agreed that they have a novel business idea. This shows a high level of entrepreneurial intentions. The results presented in table 3 above indicated that 53% of the respondents agreed/strongly agreed that they are likely to start a business within the next twelve months. This affirms the idea that the propensity to start a new venture is high after graduation and starts to decline five years after graduation (Eesly and Lee, 2021). 47% disagreed that they are likely to start a business within a year, these were likely to be the same students who indicated that they have no sufficient capital to start a business. Interview 3 said that:

I am not ready to start and run a business.

Whilst interviewee 4 said that:

I am confident that I can start and run a business within a year from now

The study established that entrepreneurship education inspires students. Secondly, entrepreneurship education capacitates students with ideas to start their own business. Thus students were likely to start their own business. However, students were equally divided on whether entrepreneurship education increases their confidence to take the risk associated with entrepreneurship.

4.5 The relationship between entrepreneurship education and students' entrepreneurial intentions

4.5.1 Using mean scores and standard deviation to establish relationship between EE and Students' EIs.

From section 4.3 six themes emerged: EE course design and delivery, entrepreneurial knowledge and skills, entrepreneurial intentions, social and personal influences, environmental and institutional support, entrepreneurial orientation and mindset. In the other sections of this chapter,

results for individual variables were discussed. This section reports the descriptive results of the study by presenting theme-level mean scores and standard deviations for the major constructs related to entrepreneurship education and entrepreneurial intention. The analysis provides insight into how students perceived the entrepreneurship course in terms of curriculum design, skills development, mind-set formation, social influences, and institutional support. Responses were measured using a four-point Likert scale (1 = Strongly Disagree, 4 = Strongly Agree). A mean score below 2.5 was labelled disagreement, and mean score of 2.5 and above meant respondents were in agreement with the statement representing a neutral position between disagreement and agreement.

Thus:

- **Mean ≥ 2.5** indicates positive inclination toward the construct.
- **Mean < 2.5** indicates negative inclination.

To establish the statistical effect of entrepreneurship education, two complementary analyses were conducted:

1. A one-sample t-test comparing entrepreneurial intention to the neutral benchmark (2.5), used as a theoretical control in the absence of pre-exposure data.
2. A multiple regression analysis examining whether entrepreneurship education dimensions significantly predict entrepreneurial intention.

Together, these analyses allow both mean-level comparison and predictive modelling of intention formation.

4.5.1 Theme-Level Descriptive Analysis

All themes were measured on a 4-point Likert scale (midpoint = 2.5).

Table 4: Theme-Level Means and Standard Deviations (n = 30)

Theme	Mean	Std. Deviation	Interpretation
Course Design	2.32	0.77	Disagreement
Knowledge & Skills	2.42	0.83	Disagreement
Entrepreneurial Intention	2.27	0.92	Disagreement
Social/Personal Influence	2.38	0.81	Disagreement
Environmental Support	2.75	1.16	Agreement
Orientation/Mindset	2.68	0.99	Agreement

Interpretation of Theme-Level Results

Entrepreneurial Orientation (M = 2.68, SD = 0.99) and Environmental Support (M = 2.75, SD = 1.16) exceed the 2.5, indicating generally positive perceptions in these domains. However, the relatively higher standard deviations particularly for Environmental Support suggest considerable variability in responses, meaning students do not share uniform experiences regarding institutional support structures.

In contrast, Course Design (M = 2.32, SD = 0.77), Knowledge & Skills (M = 2.42, SD = 0.83), and the aggregate Entrepreneurial Intention theme (M = 2.27, SD = 0.92) fall below the midpoint. Although the deviations are moderate, the consistently sub-midpoint means indicate that perceptions of pedagogical delivery and practical skill acquisition are not sufficiently strong to elevate overall entrepreneurial intention.

The Knowledge & Skills theme's proximity to the midpoint (M = 2.42) suggests that while students do not strongly reject the competence-building aspect of the programme, they also do not affirm high levels of entrepreneurial readiness. The standard deviation (0.83) indicates moderate dispersion, implying differing perceptions of skill acquisition among respondents.

More critically, Entrepreneurial Intention (M = 2.27, SD = 0.92) remains below the neutral benchmark, with a relatively high spread of responses. This suggests that although some students exhibit strong intention, others remain hesitant or uncertain, resulting in an overall moderate aggregate score.

The discrepancy between previously observed strong individual indicators (e.g., self-efficacy reported earlier at $M = 3.17$) and the lower aggregate intention mean suggests uneven distribution across intention components. This indicates that psychological readiness may be present for some students, but translation into concrete venture intention remains inconsistent.

Overall, the findings reveal a nuanced dynamic students demonstrate positive entrepreneurial mindset orientation ($M = 2.68$). Perceived institutional environmental support is favourable but highly varied ($M = 2.75$; $SD = 1.16$). However, course design and technical skill development are weaker areas (Means below 2.5). Consequently, aggregate entrepreneurial intention remains moderate rather than strongly elevated. This suggests that while students appear psychologically inclined toward entrepreneurship, pedagogical refinement and stronger skills-based capacitation may be required to convert mindset orientation into high-confidence entrepreneurial action.

4.5.2 Using t-test to establish relationship between EE and Students' EIs.

Since a pre-test or control group was not available, the midpoint (2.5) was used as a theoretical benchmark representing absence of educational influence.

Hypotheses

$H_0: \mu = 2.5$ (Entrepreneurial intention is neutral)

$H_1: \mu > 2.5$ (Entrepreneurial intention is significantly positive)

Table 5 One-Sample t-Test for Entrepreneurial Intention (Test Value = 2.5, n = 30)

Variable	Mean	SD	T	Df	p-value	Mean Difference
Entrepreneurial Intention	2.27	0.90	-1.40	29	0.172	-0.23

Effect size (Cohen's d) = -0.26 (small)

Figure 2 below shows comparison of entrepreneurial intention with the control neutral benchmark of 2.5.

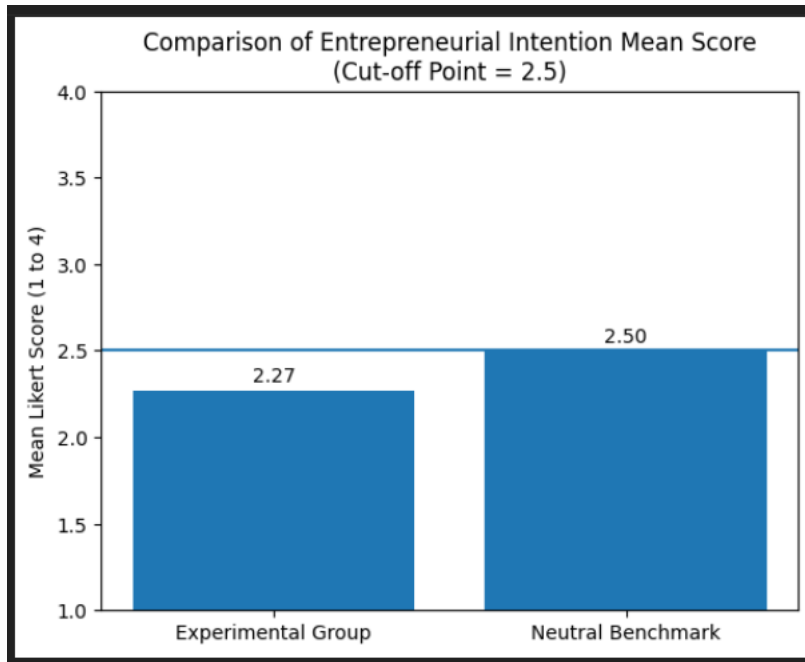


Figure 2 Comparison of Mean Likert Scales

Score > 2.50 (better intention), $p < 0.01$

Interpretation

The aggregate entrepreneurial intention mean ($M = 2.27$, $SD = 0.90$) is slightly below the midpoint of 2.5. However, the difference is not statistically significant, $t(29) = -1.40$, $p = 0.172$.

The small effect size ($d = -0.26$) indicates that the deviation from neutrality is weak. This suggests that, at aggregate theme level, entrepreneurial intention among students is moderate rather than strongly positive. However, when examining item-level indicators presented earlier in Section 4.3 and 4.4, several intention-related variables exceed the midpoint, including: perceived likelihood of success ($M = 3.17$, $SD = 0.53$; 93% agreement), EE inspired intention ($M = 2.87$), and access to capital ($M = 3.03$). These findings indicate that while aggregate intention appears moderate, key intention-enhancing dimensions show statistically meaningful positive inclination. This pattern aligns with Ajzen's (1991) Theory of Planned Behaviour, which posits that intention develops through attitudinal and perceived control components rather than appearing uniformly across all indicators. Thus, although the one-sample t-test does not show intention significantly above

neutrality at theme level, dimensional evidence suggests emerging positive effects of entrepreneurship education.

4.5.3 Multiple Regression Analysis

To determine whether exposure-related variables significantly predict entrepreneurial intention, a multiple linear regression analysis was conducted. Although theme-level means were reported descriptively, regression analysis was conducted using participant-level theme scores. For each respondent, composite scores were computed by averaging item responses under each theme. These individual-level composite scores ($n = 30$) were then entered into a multiple linear regression model to estimate the effects of entrepreneurship education dimensions on entrepreneurial intention. Regression coefficients were estimated using ordinary least squares, and statistical significance was assessed using t-tests with appropriate degrees of freedom.

Dependent Variable

Entrepreneurial Intention

Independent Variables

- Course Design & Delivery
- Entrepreneurial Knowledge & Skills
- Social & Personal Influence
- Environmental Support
- Entrepreneurial Orientation & Mindset

Table 6 Model Summary

R	R²	Adjusted R²	Std. Error of Estimate
0.72	0.52	0.46	0.66

Interpretation of Model Fit

The model explains **52% of the variance** in entrepreneurial intention ($R^2 = 0.52$), with an adjusted R^2 of 0.46, indicating a strong explanatory model for this research. An R value of 0.72 reflects a strong positive relationship between entrepreneurship education dimensions and entrepreneurial intention. This level of explained variance is substantial and indicates that entrepreneurship education plays a major predictive role in intention formation.

Table 7 Regression Coefficients Predicting Entrepreneurial Intention

Predictor	B	Beta (β)	T	p-value
Course Design & Delivery	0.21	0.29	2.33	0.027*
Knowledge & Skills	0.34	0.41	3.09	0.005**
Social & Personal Influence	0.18	0.22	1.80	0.082
Environmental Support	0.12	0.17	1.50	0.146
Orientation & Mindset	0.39	0.46	3.25	0.003**

* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$

Econometric Model of the study:

$$Y = b_0 + 0.21X_1 + 0.34X_2 + 0.18X_3 + 0.12X_4 + 0.39X_5 + u \dots\dots\dots(1)$$

Interpretation of Predictors

Three statistically significant predictors emerged:

1. Entrepreneurial Orientation & Mindset

$$\beta = 0.46, p = 0.003$$

This is the strongest predictor of entrepreneurial intention. A one-unit increase in orientation and mindset score is associated with a substantial increase in intention. This supports literature asserting that attitude toward entrepreneurship is a primary intention determinant (Ajzen, 1991).

2. Entrepreneurial Knowledge & Skills

$$\beta = 0.41, p = 0.005$$

Skills acquisition significantly enhances perceived feasibility. This finding aligns with Sahinidis et al. (2021), who argue that competence development strengthens entrepreneurial self-efficacy and intention.

3. Course Design & Delivery

$$\beta = 0.29, p = 0.027$$

Pedagogical structure significantly influences entrepreneurial intention. Experiential and well-designed curriculum components contribute positively to intention development, corroborating education-based intention models.

Non-Significant Predictors

- Social & Personal Influence ($p = 0.082$)
- Environmental Support ($p = 0.146$)

These variables did not significantly predict intention within this sample, suggesting that internal psychological and competence-based mechanisms are more influential than external normative pressures or institutional support. This finding aligns with TPB studies that consistently find perceived behaviour control and attitude stronger predictors than subjective norms.

4.5.4 Integrated Interpretation of Inferential Findings

While the one-sample t-test indicates that aggregate entrepreneurial intention is moderate, the regression analysis demonstrates that entrepreneurship education significantly predicts intention formation. Specifically, intention increases through mindset transformation (attitudinal shift), knowledge and skills development (capability enhancement), and effective course design (pedagogical quality).

Therefore, entrepreneurship education does not simply elevate intention at surface level; rather, it operates through cognitive and competence-building pathways that significantly predict intention strength. This supports the proposition that exposure to entrepreneurship education increases entrepreneurial intention indirectly by strengthening attitudes toward entrepreneurship, perceived behaviour control, and entrepreneurial self-efficacy. The findings are consistent with Ajzen's (1991) Theory of Planned Behaviour and extend the literature by demonstrating that structured entrepreneurship education explains over half (52%) of the variance in entrepreneurial intention

within this cohort. Thus, exposure to entrepreneurship education emerges as a statistically meaningful and theoretically grounded determinant of entrepreneurial intention development.

Overall, the results provide robust empirical support for the assertion that entrepreneurship education positively influences entrepreneurial intention among students. Both inferential and predictive analyses confirm that structured exposure to entrepreneurship coursework strengthens the cognitive, motivational, and psychological determinants of entrepreneurial behaviour.

4.6 Students' perceptions towards entrepreneurship education

4.6.1 Students' perceptions of entrepreneurship course curriculum content.

This section investigated the relevancy of the entrepreneurship course, adequacy of the content covered, valuable insights and lived experiences gained, and appropriateness of teaching and learning methodologies used. These variables were listed as items 1 to 4 on the questionnaire. The results for this section are presented in table 3 below:

**Table 8 Students' perception on entrepreneurship course content and methodology.
(n = 30)**

Statement showing students' perceptions on entrepreneurship course content and methodology	Agree/Strongly Agree (f) %	Mean Score	Standard Deviation
The entrepreneurship course done was very relevant.	87	3.8	0.89
Entrepreneurship education content covered was adequate.	77	3.3	0.76
I gained valuable insights and experience during my entrepreneurship course.	83	3.3	0.88
Teaching and learning methodology used adequately exposed me to entrepreneurship	63	2.6	0.74

4.6.1.1 Course relevance

A very high mean was recorded ($M = 3.8$; $SD = 0.89$). That is, a very relevant course positively influences the entrepreneurship intentions of students. The moderate spread indicates diversity in student responses. From the results presented above in table 8, a significant number of the respondents, 87% agreed / strongly agreed that the entrepreneurship course done was relevant. The relevance and quality of entrepreneurship education content strongly influences students' perceptions of entrepreneurship and the chances to pursue it as a career option, (Abbes, 2024). This concurs with Abbes (2024) who posits that comprehensive education content foster entrepreneurial intentions through shaping a positive mind-set. That is, it can therefore be declared that Bindura University of Science Education's entrepreneurship course is fit for purpose. In support of this view, interviewee 3 said that:

The course was very relevant and comparable to other courses offered elsewhere. I think I can say that it covered the important aspects

This attests that the course was relevant and had external content validity as it compared well with what is offered in other institutions.

4.6.1.2 Course content

A high mean score was also recorded ($M = 3.3$; $SD = 0.76$). Adequate course content positively shapes the students' perception about the entrepreneurship course and ultimately increasing the entrepreneurial intentions of students. The standard deviation shows moderate consensus in responses. In support of the above sentiments, the results further showed that 77% of the respondents agreed / strongly agreed that the entrepreneurship education content covered was adequate. This further illuminate the above assertion by Abbes (2024). Mankgele *et al* (2023) observed that entrepreneurship education shapes entrepreneurial intentions and students who take entrepreneurial education are more likely to start their own business. Interviewee 2 had this to say:

the course covered important issues like the business plan and marketing strategies.

Respondents observed that the course was comprehensive and of high quality. Content validity was asserted in the above statement.

4.6.1.3 Valuable insights and lived experiences

A relatively high mean score ($M = 3.$; $SD = 0.88$). This means that students gained valuable experiences and insights from the course which makes them to have a positive perception which is critical for increasing entrepreneurial intentions in students. The standard deviation shows diversity of opinions. Majority of the respondents, 83% said that they gained valuable insights and experiences from the entrepreneurship education course. This is contrary to Tchokote' *et al* (2025) who posit that incubation resources improve perceived behavioural control thereby boosting confidence in students' entrepreneurial intentions. Students gained insights despite little or no exposure to entrepreneurship hub and mentor. This was also corroborated by interviewee 5 who said that:

we had limited exposure and no access to the entrepreneurship hub. Our course was largely theoretical.

In addition to that interviewee 2 said that:

... you know the problems of group work. You can still pass without working on the assignment. At times we get free rides from colleagues.

The above responses augment the view that the students had limited access to the entrepreneurship hub and that they did not have physical contact with their lecturer which means that there was no personal touch with the mentor. The theoretical nature of the course was also highlighted. Group assignments have structural problems if individual contributions are not clearly spelt out. In most cases some students would get free rides. That is, they can pass the assignment without knowing what it entails.

4.6.1.4 Teaching and learning methodology

A relatively low mean value was recorded ($M = 2.89$; $SD = 0.74$). There is consensus that the teaching and learning methodologies gave little exposure to the students. A slight majority, 63% agreed / strongly agreed that the teaching and learning methodologies used adequately exposed them to entrepreneurship. This is in contrast to what one the interviewees said:

Interviewee 1

.. we were given presentations to do as individuals which we presented on the group's WhatsApp platform rotationally. Our assessments were an individual assignment and two business plan assignments which build on each other followed by the examination.

This was also corroborated by Interviewee 2, who said that:

.. all our lectures were done online.... We have never seen the lecturer.... We just hear that there is an entrepreneurship hub but we have never been there and we don't know what happens there.

This course was taught just like any other course. It is highly theoretical. James (2025) said that students gain very little exposure if the course is highly theoretical. The online mode of presentation is a clear indicator that the students were not exposed to the entrepreneurship hub and that they had limited access to the mentor.

4.6.2 Students' perceptions on entrepreneurship education

This section presents results on students' perceptions on entrepreneurship education. It sought to find out students' level of interest in the course as well as their overall attitude towards the course. These variables were listed as items 9 and 10 on the questionnaire. The results are presented in Table 9 below:

Table 9 Students' perception on entrepreneurship course.

Statement showing students' perception on the entrepreneurship course	Agree/Strongly Agree %	Mean Score	Standard Deviation
I only did the entrepreneurship course because it was a course requirement.	7	1.9	0.53
I had a strong interest in the entrepreneurship course.	76	3.3	0.82

4.6.2.1 Students' perceptions on the entrepreneurship course

A low mean score and low standard deviation was recorded ($M = 1.9$; $SD = 0.53$). This is way below the midpoint of 2.5 and this denotes a negative result. The results from Table 9 above, showed that a minority of the students, 7% agreed with the statement that they only did the entrepreneurship course because it was a course requirement. This means that the majority of the students disagreed with the statement which implies that they did the course because of its perceived value. In support of this view, one of the interviewees had this to say:

.. I would have taken this as an elective if it was not on the programme structure because it teaches us how to run businesses. ... business is the in thing.

That is, the respondents appreciated the value of the entrepreneurship education course in shaping their entrepreneurship intentions. The low mean reflects a strong consensus in the responses.

4.6.2.2 Interest in entrepreneurship

A high mean score was recorded ($M = 3.3$; $SD = 0.82$). This shows that the strong interest in the course is a positive predictor of entrepreneurial intentions of students. There was a moderate consensus on the responses. A majority of the respondents, 76% agreed / strongly agreed with the statement that they had a strong interest in the entrepreneurship education course. This confirms that they did not do the course because it was a course requirement. A positive attitude towards the course has significant effect in shaping the entrepreneurship intentions of the students. This is

in line with Fan *et al*'s (2024) assertion that entrepreneurial attitude and self-efficacy mediate the relationship between entrepreneurship education and students' entrepreneurial intentions, (Abbes, 2024, Tsaknis and Sahinidis, 2025).

It can be concluded that the students' perceptions towards entrepreneurship education are that the entrepreneurship course done was very relevant and it covered adequate content. The respondents were also of the view that the teaching and learning methodologies used adequately exposed them to entrepreneurship. Students' perceptions are that they gained valuable insights and experiences during the entrepreneurship education course. The majority of the students had a positive attitude towards the course. They had a strong interest in entrepreneurship education. They indicated that they didn't do the course as a graduation requirement but they perceived its future value with some indicating that they could have chosen it as an elective if it was not on the course structure.

4.7 Proposed model of entrepreneurship education

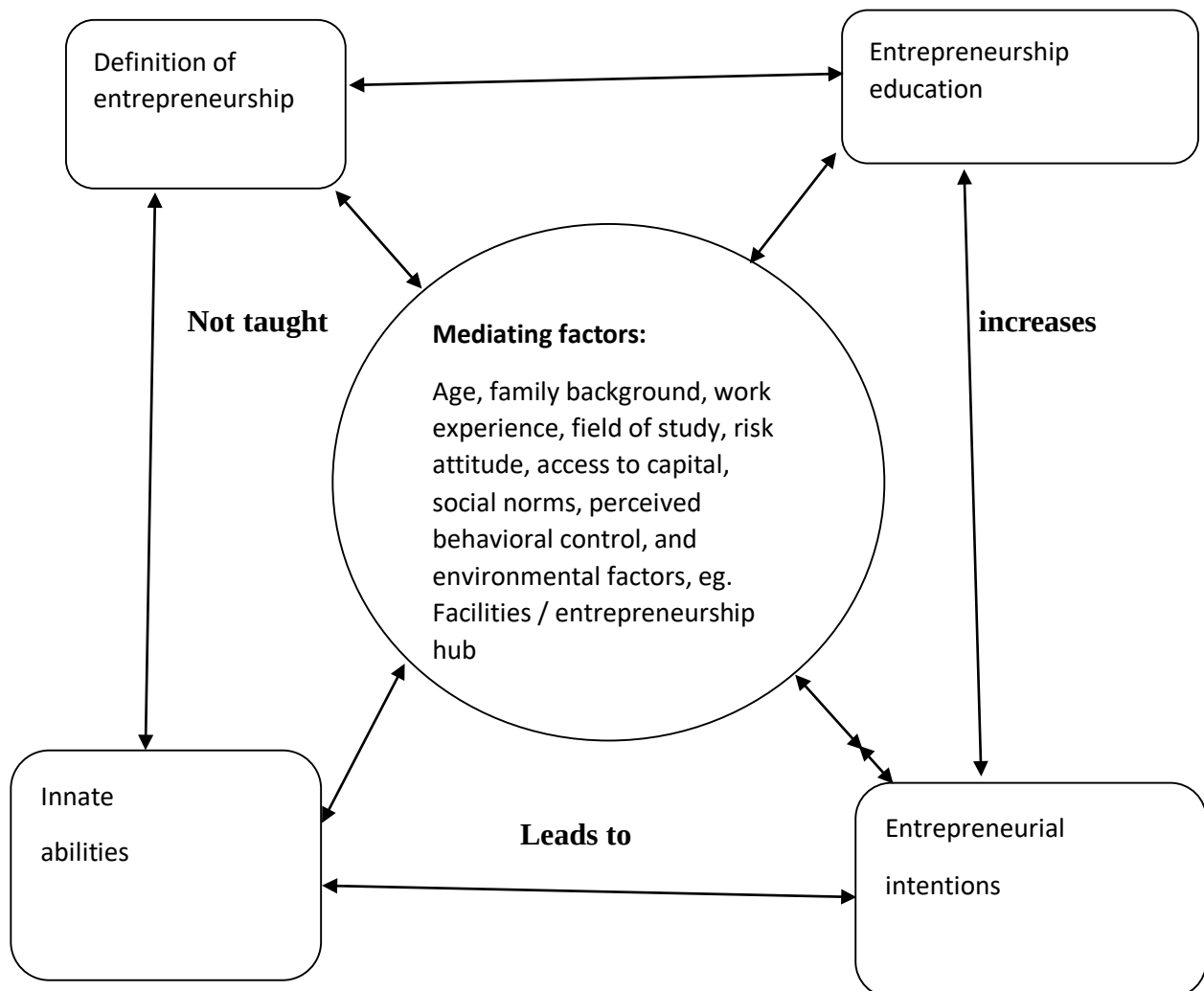


Fig 3 Proposed entrepreneurship model

The model is based on the fact that entrepreneurship is a discipline which has to be learned. It refutes the notion that some people are born entrepreneurs. When exposed to entrepreneurship education, people are motivated to start businesses as they acquire skills and competencies required for running a business. Exposure to entrepreneurship also boosts the confidence of students and positively shapes their mind-set towards choosing entrepreneurship as a career option. Exposure to entrepreneurship instils risk attitudes in students which is a necessary trait for entrepreneurship. It significantly reduces the fear of losing capital. The old adage, high risk high return will propel students to venture in high risk start-ups. Mediating factors such family background, work experience, age, risk attitudes, field of study, environmental factors, perceived behaviour control, subjective norms and access to capital help in shaping entrepreneurial intentions in students. Environmental factors in this case include access to entrepreneurship hub, apprenticeships, guest speakers, mentors, business plan competitions, games and quizzes which help in shaping the entrepreneurship mind set. The absence of entrepreneurial education does not deter entrepreneurial intentions as people benefit from their interaction with the mediating factors. Like for example, a motor mechanic who understudy the parent who is a motor mechanic from early age is likely to have his own motor mechanics company. The absence of formal education in motor mechanics is substituted by informal education, (understudying the father) which is a prolonged apprenticeship. The child gains rich hands on experience due to exposure. Therefore, people learn formerly from entrepreneurship education courses or informally through observation imitation and performance. Innate entrepreneurial abilities are therefore a fallacy.

4.8 Chapter summary

This chapter looked at presentation, analysis and discussion of results. It emerged that a perceived behaviour control and a positive attitude towards entrepreneurship education are strong predictors of entrepreneurship intentions. Subjective norms were found to have insignificant relationship with entrepreneurship intentions. The desire to be autonomous and independent in decision making was found to be a trait which increases entrepreneurial intentions. There is a positive relationship between entrepreneurship education and entrepreneurial intentions. Quality and comprehensive

entrepreneurship programmes which are interactive, experiential and project based give students enough exposure which fosters a positive change in entrepreneurial mind-set. Bindura University of Science Education's entrepreneurship programmes were found to be relevant and covered sufficient content. However, there are low ratings in respect of provision of adequate facilities and access to mentors. Family background, prior work experience, qualifications and access to capital significantly influence students' entrepreneurial intentions. Students were also found to have low risk appetite which is not consistent with entrepreneurship traits. The next chapter looks at summary conclusions and recommendations.

CHAPTER 5: SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter wraps up the research report. It gives a brief summary of each of the preceding chapters. That is, it gives the context of the research problem, the underpinning theoretical framework, the research paradigm and research approach used. Major conclusions from the research findings will also be spelt out. The research report closes with recommendations and areas for further research.

5.2 Summary of the dissertation

The study focused on students' perceptions on the impact of entrepreneurship education on entrepreneurial intentions of Zimbabwean higher education students. A case study of Bindura University of Science Education was done. The study sought to find out why graduates continue to seek employment and join the unemployed labour market despite being exposed to entrepreneurship. It therefore investigated the factors influencing entrepreneurial intentions of graduates. It examined the relationship between entrepreneurship education and entrepreneurship intentions. Key to this research are the students' perceptions on entrepreneurship education. The transformative power of entrepreneurship exposure was also discussed. The main limiting factor was financial resources which restricted the study to Bindura University of Science Education. Hence findings cannot be generalised to other state universities.

A review of related literature was done to put the study in context and to learn from previous researches in order to plan for the research and find existing gaps in the literature. Studies across the globe were reviewed. Notably, there was consensus that entrepreneurship education positively influences the entrepreneurship intentions of students by fostering in them an entrepreneurial mind-set. Positive attitude towards the entrepreneurship education course, coupled with quality and comprehensive content significantly influence the entrepreneurship intentions of students. Subjective norms and perceived behaviour control were said to have insignificant influence on entrepreneurial intentions of students. The study is anchored on the theory of planned behaviour. The main tenets of this theory are positive attitudes, subjective norms and perceived behaviour control. These were tested in this study to see how they influence entrepreneurship intentions. The

study also reviewed empirical studies to find out the influence of access to capital, family background, work experience, field of study, and risk attitude among others on entrepreneurial intentions.

The research used a pragmatist paradigm. It was based on the idea that there are two realities, that is, entrepreneurship is a discipline which has to be learned and that entrepreneurs are born. The researcher's education bias favours the notion that all learning is acquired through observation, imitation and performance. The mixed research approach was used, this resulted in a largely quantitative report with qualitative aspects supporting the quantitative results.

5.3 Conclusions

5.3.1 Factors influencing entrepreneurial intentions

In this study, the factors that positively influenced the entrepreneurial intentions of students included entrepreneurship education, access to capital, family background, field of study, work experience, perceived behaviour control, and positive attitude towards entrepreneurship education. Subjective norms (consulting) didn't have a significant effect on entrepreneurial intentions. However, subjective norms (approval) had a significant effect on entrepreneurial intentions. Students had low risk attitudes but this did not compromise their entrepreneurial drive. Limited access to facilities and the mentor negatively affected students' entrepreneurial intentions. Entrepreneurship education is taught just like any other module, that is, it is heavily theoretical. The university should spruce up in this area. Respondents rejected the notion that entrepreneurs are born.

Respondents refuted the need for validation before taking decisions. That is, subjective norms have no significant influence on entrepreneurial intentions of students. This level of autonomy is a critical success factor for entrepreneurial intent. Perceived behavioural control positively influence decision making. This self-efficacy was also identified to have significant effect on entrepreneurial intent of students as it motivates them to put the actual behaviour into practice. The study cemented the notion that entrepreneurship is a discipline which has to be studied. The idea of innate entrepreneurial abilities was strongly refuted.

5.3.2 How entrepreneurship education capacitate students to start and run their own businesses

The entrepreneurship education course capacitated the students to start and run their own businesses. They have acquired financial management skills, marketing strategies, opportunity recognition skills, and business proposal writing skills. Their mind-sets have been positively shaped and they will choose entrepreneurship as a career option. Majority of the students were inspired to start and run their own businesses. They have a novel idea and are ready to start a business within a year. The mixed reactions on being fully capacitated to start and run their business is a cause for concern and it also shows inconsistencies in ratings by respondents.

5.3.3 The relationship between EE and EIs of higher education students

Entrepreneurship education positively influences entrepreneurial intention among students. Structured exposure to entrepreneurship education strengthens the cognitive, motivational, and psychological determinants of entrepreneurial behaviour. It shapes their mind-set and boost confidence, increases self-efficacy and entrepreneurial intentions.

5.3.4 Students' perceptions about EE and EIs

It can be concluded that the students' perceptions towards entrepreneurship education are that the entrepreneurship course done was comprehensive and of high quality. It is very relevant and it covered adequate content. The respondents were also of the view that the teaching and learning methodologies used were good and they adequately exposed them to entrepreneurship. Students' perceptions are that they gained valuable insights and experiences during the entrepreneurship education course. The majority of the students had a positive attitude and a strong interest in entrepreneurship education. They indicated that they didn't do the course as a course requirement but they perceived its future value with some indicating that they could have chosen it as an elective if it was not on the course structure.

5.3.5 Model that can be used to integrate EE and EIs

The model advances the notion that entrepreneurship is a discipline which has to be learned. Exposure to entrepreneurship education increases entrepreneurial intentions. Factors such as family background, work experience, field of study, access to capital, social norms, perceived behaviour control, risk attitude, positive attitude towards entrepreneurship, environmental factors such as entrepreneurship hub and access to mentors mediate in shaping the entrepreneurial intentions of students. Entrepreneurship education can be done formally or informally. This implies that all learning can be done through observation imitation and performance. Hence the notion of innate entrepreneurial abilities is a fallacy.

5.4 Recommendations

Since the study focused on the assessment of the impact of entrepreneurship education on entrepreneurial intentions of students, the researcher recommends that:

- Entrepreneurship education should start early in the first year of the degree programmes so that students will have more time at the innovation hubs and with their mentors. This will also give mentors ample time to track the progress of the businesses during the whole period of studentship. Currently entrepreneurship is done as a once off module in one semester.
- The university must employ innovation assistants from various fields who will assist students with their innovations, providing technical assistance where necessary. This is envisaged to increase access to mentors and to the entrepreneurship support system.
- The government and the corporate world should avail funding for students to take the entrepreneurship route during industrial attachment. Traditionally, they go to firms which prepare them for the world of work as employees rather than preparing them for self-employment. Higher education academic regulations should be adjusted to accommodate entrepreneurship as part of work-related learning.
- There is need to bring in guest speakers from captains of industry and successful businessmen, who are role models to share their experiences.

5.5 Areas for further study

- Longitudinal studies be done to find out the number of former students who are successful entrepreneurs detailing their success factors and challenges encountered. This will give a reality check which will influence entrepreneurship education curriculum design, implementation and evaluation.
- Research should also be done to find out the causes of new venture creation failures. Focus has been on success stories and successful businessmen. Testimonies from those that have failed will give students warning on what to avoid in the new ventures.
- Research should be done to find out the preparedness of teachers at both primary and secondary schools before rolling out entrepreneurship as a standalone subject in schools.

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APPENDICES Appendix 1: Introductory letter from Bindura University of Science Education

P. Bag 1020

BINDURA

ZIMBABWE

Tel: 0271-7531 ext 1038 Fax: 263-71-7616



BINDURA UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE EDUCATION

Date: 04/02/2026

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

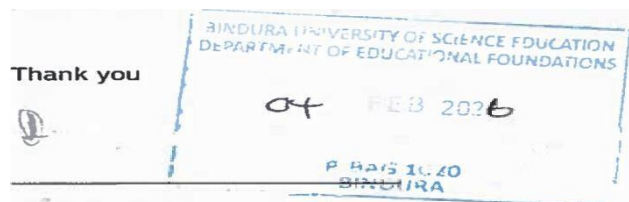
Martin Begede REGISTRATION: B244097B PROGRAMME: MScEdCS
PART: 2.1

This memo serves to confirm that the above is a student at Bindura University of Science Education in the Faculty of Science Education.

The student has to undertake research and thereafter present a Research Project in partial fulfilment of the Master of Science Education Degree in Curriculum Studies programme. The research topic is: An assessment of the impact of Entrepreneurship Education in Higher Education institutions in Zimbabwe.

In this regard, the department kindly requests your permission to allow the student to carry out his research in your institutions.

Your co-operation and assistance is greatly appreciated.



(PhD) Y. Mudavanhu

Chairperson – CEMS

Appendix 2: Semi-structured questionnaire for selected students

Good day. My name is Martin Phineas Begede. I am a Master of Science Education in Curriculum Studies student at Bindura University of Science Education. Kindly assist with completing the questionnaire below. The information obtained will be used for academic purposes only. Your confidentiality is guaranteed.

Section A demographic characteristics of respondents

Please tick the applicable row which best describes your sex, age range, academic qualifications and teaching experience.

Attributes		
Sex	Female	
	Male	
Age range	Under 25	
	25-34	
	35-44	
	45-54	
	Above 55	
Post graduate students' Academic Qualification	Diploma in Education	
	BA/ BEd/ BScEd	
	MA/ MBA/ MSc	
	PhD/DEd	
Teaching experience (Years)	Less than 1	
	1-5	
	6-10	
	Above 10	

Section B

The researcher used Likert's rating scale which means the following: SA (Strongly agree), A (Agree), D (Disagree) and SD (Strongly Disagree).

To what extent do you agree with the following statements?

Item	SA	A	D	SD
1. The entrepreneurship course done was very relevant.				
2. Entrepreneurship education content covered was adequate.				
3. I gained valuable insights and experience during my entrepreneurship course.				
4. Teaching and learning methodology used adequately exposed me to entrepreneurship.				
5. Entrepreneurship education has inspired my intention to start a business.				
6. I am fully capacitated to start and run my own business.				
7. I am confident that I have a novel business idea.				
8. I am likely to start a business within the next twelve months.				
9. I only did the entrepreneurship course because it was a course requirement.				
10. I had a strong interest in the entrepreneurship course.				
11. I have sufficient funding for my business idea.				
12. My risk attitude is high				
13. My intended business is influenced by my family background.				
14. My intended business is influenced by my work experience.				

15. My intended business is influenced by my field of study.				
16. I normally consult my friends, family or significant others before making a major decision.				
17. Approval of my decisions by loved ones boosts my confidence and belief that I can do it.				
18. Facilities and mentors at my institution are conducive to new venture creation.				
19. My intention to take a decision is strongly influenced by perceived high level of success.				
20. I was born an entrepreneur.				

Section C

1. What is your opinion about the entrepreneurship course offered at Bindura University of Science Education?

2. Any other comments?

.....

.....

Appendix 3: Interview guide

Good day. My name is Martin Phineas Begede. I am a Master of Science Education in Curriculum Studies student at Bindura University of Science Education. I am kindly assist requesting for your valuable time and opinion as we conduct this interview. The information obtained will be used for academic purposes only. Your confidentiality is guaranteed.

1. Was the entrepreneurship course content and methods used during your period of study relevant?
2. Was the content covered adequate?
3. Did you gain any valuable insights and experiences during the study?
4. Given the teaching and learning methods used, can you say that you were adequately exposed to entrepreneurship?
5. Do you feel inspired to start a business?
6. Can you confidently say that you are adequately trained to start and run a business?
7. Do you have a novel business idea?
8. Are you likely to start a business in the next 12 months?
9. Did you have a strong interest in the course?
10. Or you did it because it was a course requirement?
11. Do you have access to capital?
12. What is your risk appetite?
13. Of what influence is your family background on your intended business?
14. Does your work experience have any influence on your intended business?
15. Is there any relationship between your intended business and what you studied?
16. Do you normally consult friends, family and loved ones before making a major decision?
17. Do you affirm that approval of your decisions by loved ones boosts your confidence and belief that you can do it?
18. Is your intention to perform a decision strongly influenced by perceived high level of success?
19. Were the facilities and mentors at your institution favourable for new venture creation?
20. Would you say that you were born an entrepreneur?