

Full Length Research Paper

Entrepreneurship education and the professionalisation of higher education

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Considerable concern is being paid to the professionalization of education. Professionalising higher education in a way in many countries is trying to build a bridge between theory and practice. First of all, it is important to know and understand that academics cannot be professionalised. This paper aims to explore a way to professionalise higher education. Data for the study is based on books and interviews with business people and university management/entrepreneurship students. A total of 225 interviewees, were distributed as follows: Undergraduate management/entrepreneurship students, 100; MBA students, 61; EMBA students, 14; business people, 50. Frequency distribution table was used to analyse the data collected. The result suggests that some areas of education can be professionalised, by making it practical through the introduction of plays, games, storytelling and using proverbs. The research suggests a democratic approach whereby the opinions of students are listened to and considered in the process of teaching and learning. The conclusion is that, activities such as self-paced design projects of taking students outside the lecture halls or classrooms either for practical work or discussions under a more relaxed and perhaps more conducive, attractive and enabling environments need to be adopted. This approach is likely to provide a new view of teaching and motivations for creative and innovative ideas generation to take place with greater dividends to the overall progress of professionalisation and society. Proactive policy recommendations are progressive.

Key words: Academics, creating, excellence creating new teaching environments, professionalisation, practical work, creativity, innovation.

INTRODUCTION

The paper begins with a lengthy quote from Nancy S. Alder of the faculty of Management, McGill University, Canada, "Whereas the challenge to compete successfully globally has been brandished most frequently at business executives, the challenge is equally, but to identically, compelling for government leaders. In today's interdependent world, no leader-whether government or corporate, whether from the for-profit or not-for-profit sector has the luxury of narrowing the scope of his/her thinking to within predefined, political, economic, or

cultural boundaries. Expanding beyond historic boundaries requires that we learn to manage and to think differently (Adler and Jelinek, 1986)." If I may add, it should be done creatively, responsibly, and innovatively.

The threat to quality of education has major implications for the future of Cameroon's development, if the trend is not reversed. In the 1990s, when the University of Buea in the South-West of Cameroon, the Department of Economics and management started, all students of

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Accounting, Banking/Finance, Management and Marketing were obliged to go on internship. In soliciting for placement positions, business units refused to offer positions to economic students arguing that the students have little to offer them. On asking why they were unwilling to take economic students, the lecturer said: *Being one of the lecturers taking students to the field, I asked why they were unwilling to take economic students, the answer was, "economics is abstract", we need students who will come and just feed in. Economic students can be sent to government offices". I then realized the usefulness of professionalization. It came to my mind that: accountability, financing, management, marketing and organisation (Forje, 2010a) are in all of man's functional activities.*

Examining entrepreneurship elements, all the mentioned factors feature in it, it became clear that entrepreneurship knowledge could be used to professionalized higher education. Individual businesses, organizations and institutions must understand that the new rules of doing business in the present world's economy will prosper those that follow the new rules, and those that do not follow will perish. It is no longer business as usual. Global competition has forced businesses and government leaders to recognize that if they and their businesses are to survive, let alone prosper, they will have to learn to manage and to think very differently (Mitroff, 1987).

Entrepreneurship as a subject cuts across all disciplines, all walk of life enabling people to think creatively, because it goes beyond strategic management, and is dominated by critical thinking. Small business creation and management is often used to illustrate entrepreneurial achievement, though not limited to that. In Forje (2010a), accounting/finance, management, marketing and organisation are present in all establishments and all human activities and all the mentioned elements are embedded in entrepreneurship behaviour.

According to a World Bank Policy Study (1989), higher education's contribution to development in Africa is being threatened; firstly, it produces too many graduates of programs of dubious quality; secondly, the quality of outputs in many countries show signs of doubtful fundamental effectiveness; thirdly, the cost of higher education is needlessly high; fourthly, the pattern of financing higher education is socially inequitable and economically inefficient. To comment on this, more than thirty years ago since this observation was made, there have been changes in the development of schools, but the quality of education has in a way deteriorated. However, reacting to the third point above, it is important to note that the cost of higher education in many African countries is low, in Cameroon for example, students pay \$100 US dollars as fees for a year. The problem is not that of high or low fees, but that the professionalisation of higher education is enforced without due consideration of the availability of infrastructure and manpower. While it is

equally vital that the quality of education especially at the higher level is maintained to meet with global knowledge standard of excellence and to further knowledge creation. Geuna and Rossi (2015) provide a concise critical survey of how universities' teaching, research, and technology transfer activities contribute to economic growth; while cautioning decision-makers not to rely over much on popular statistical indicators of that performance. With privatisation, many higher education institutions, universities sprang up, some of them having programmes haphazardly prepared, no teachers, no structures and conducive environment for teaching and learning. Many private schools are observed to have deplorable structures, lecturers overloaded with courses with extremely high students' intake. It is possible to find a lecturer teaching 600 h or 10 courses per academic year. How efficient can the lecturer be? This among other things is the source of poor quality output in higher education. Concerning professionalisation, focus is on creating small businesses, ignoring other areas that professionalization of education accounts for and requires. The result of a study carried out in the university of Zambia on Quality education recommended that the university reduces student intakes, reducing the number of teaching departments, rationalising overlapping research units, introducing a more flexible semester system and instituting a broad range of incentives to stem the loss of teaching staff (Beebe et al., 2003). Such a remedial move could help to enhance lecturers' commitment and make them more professionals.

Child (1969) states that the professional employee, such as the industrial scientist, the engineer or the company lawyer, has typically internalised a clearly defined set of norms that relate to his/her conduct. A professional tends to be strongly committed to his/her work and which he/she has attested technical competence to carry out. Lecturers teaching 10-15 courses simply because they have experience and might have done a course as part of his/her discipline cannot exercise that technical competence as suggested by (Child, 1969). According to Jerome and Perreault, Jr. (1988 4th ed.), professionals provide special services that support the operation of an enterprise which can be a hospital, government administration, or home management. Professionalizing higher education reiterates the need to make education more practical and tied to commercial and the working culture. So, it is important to select a neutral subject that can enable the professionalization process of higher education. This study finds entrepreneurship education appropriate for the professionalisation objective.

The start of entrepreneurship teaching in some cameroon universities

Entrepreneurship teaching in Cameroon universities is

about 12-13 years old. It was not until 2007 that the subject was introduced on the syllabus of the Department of Economic and Management in Buea University. In 2008, the talk of professionalizing higher education started gaining grounds and they saw a need for teaching entrepreneurship at all levels of higher education. The growing demand for entrepreneurship specialist lecturers and the opening of business schools became overwhelming. In Cameroon, both universities and the corporate world compete for professionalized staff like elsewhere, so the demand for more professionalized workers has increased and the need to professionalize higher education intensified. The question is how is this going to be achieved? Narayan et al. (2010) in Aasir and Arshad (2018) suggest that internship can be used, and that utilising internships as a tool in Activity Base Learning (ABL) for business students is not only productive for faculty, schools and businesses involved in the internship process, but also increases the proficiencies abilities, opportunities, financial strength and motivation of business students.

While accepting this claim, other means such as plays, games, storytelling and self-paced design projects of taking students outside the lecture halls or classrooms either for practical work or discussions under a more relaxed and perhaps more conducive, attractive and enabling environments could be used. For this to happened, we need professional teachers, and this seems to be in short supply. Professionalisation requires expert knowledge and commitment. It is observed that there are also no intrapreneurs among the administrative staff (commonly known as support staff) due to constant transfer of such staff from one faculty to the other which slows the level of work. Professionalisation of higher education is deemed to face many problems some of which are numerous. First there is lack of domestic organisations willing to devote time and finances to give the students the kind of orientation they need during the internship training. Secondly, the companies where these students go for internship are in many cases foreign own, who are not in a country to train people to replace them at retirement, but to produce only as long as the necessary resources are available and when finished, they take off. Also, the companies receive no payment for training and monitoring the students, and will not be able to cover the cost of mistakes made by the interns during their internship period. This reduces the interns to lifting files from one table to the other, or restricted to activities that hinder access to useful work practice. In addition, some universities assumed that lecturers once they have Ph.D. can teach everything, especially in the social science disciplines. Teaching thus, becomes like reading a novel to a crowd of people. This weakens the professionalisation process, as it equally contributes to poor quality output of students. Furthermore, there are no intrapreneur administrative staff (usually called support staff), due to constant transfer of such staff from one

faculty to the other. Teaching students to become good employees and also employers requires a framework that is constantly fitted with information. Chia (1996) suggests a deliberate educational strategy. Students need to be oriented to think critically and constructively about happenings in the society and the resources therein. After all, learning the argot forms a major obligation in professionalization.

Objectives

The study is aimed at exposing both students and lecturers to the problems surrounding the professionalisation of higher education; to enlighten lecturers on what professionalisation of higher education outside the already professionalized subjects such as, law, medicine entails, and the power of expertise in a discipline; to prepare lecturers to understand and respect professionalism in order to inculcate in students the norms, values and skills which according to Hampton et al (2009) they possess; to seek different means of exposing students to the world of work; and to exploit the possibilities of making students professionals within their disciplines.

LITERATURE REVIEW

According to scholars (Realin, 1987; Wallace, 1995b in Hampton et al., 2009), professionals are atypical employees because of the tasks they perform and their profession-derived beliefs and behaviours that include a high level of expertise, freedom to manage the task, task commitment, identification with peers, a system of ethics, and a means to maintain standards. Downie (1990) gives a generalised definition of profession and professionalism by saying that, profession is a full-time occupation by which a person might earn his living, and which is characterised by a body of knowledge and skills.

Professionalisation of education aims at helping students to achieve their own individual development and advancement. According to Thomas (2016) the conventional method for learning is not adequate (to professionalise education), since organisations have changed regarding what they require from students (as future employees). Kolb et al. (1974, 1971) define professionalism using a number of characteristics:

1. Professional decisions are made by means of general principles, theories or propositions which are independent of the particular case under consideration;
2. Professional decisions imply knowledge in a specific area in which the person is expert, not a generalised body of wisdom. The professional is an expert only in his/her profession, not an expert in everything;
3. The professional's relations with his/her clients are

objectives and independent of particular sentiments about them;

4. A professional achieves his status by accomplishment not by inherent qualities such as birth or relationship. (This implies that professionalism is not a trait);

5. A professional's decisions are assumed to be on behalf of the client and to be independent of self-interest;

6. The professional typically relates to a voluntary association of fellow professionals, and accepts only the authority of these colleagues as a sanction on his own behaviour. The manager or teacher in this respect is least like the professional in this regard, in that he is expected to accept a principle of hierarchical authority (of his/her establishment);

7. A professional has sometimes been called someone who knows better what is good for his client than the client.

Examining characteristic 6 above, we find that it poses a problem in that the professional teacher stands to be criticised by none professionals in his/her domain due to the hierarchical order. Attempting to train students as professionals is socialising them to a set of professional values which are, and could be in severe and direct conflict with values of the hierarchy of higher education. This implies that both the hierarchy and teachers of higher education need to be educated to understand how professionalism functions. According to Thomkins (2020), the challenges of leadership takes us beyond the demand that leaders should be competent at what they do, and concerned about the moral and emotional politics of their influence on others. Presently, higher education in Cameroon now place emphasis on internship, as it exposes students to work in the real world. This suggests that higher education hierarchy should also learn how to direct professionals without exercising much influence on them. Professionals have skills in the coordination and leadership of specialists. More so, professionals are subject to special rules relating to the particular profession. The professional man in business has a powerful base of independence. It is this independence that we are trying to impart in the students of higher education.

From this perspective, entrepreneurship becomes a neutral subject that cuts across all disciplines, empowering people to do their work diligently and be committed. It also empowers people with the knowledge that makes them think critically and creatively. Being creative, more jobs are created and employment opportunities increases. Entrepreneurship knowledge also enables employees to work effectively and efficiently to sustain employment. According to Jerome and Perreault, Jr. (1988 4th ed.), professionals provide special services that support the operation of an enterprises and they are those whose skills lie in the coordination and leadership of specialists. According to Wickham (2001), despite some very high-profile academic success stories,

(some) young entrepreneurs are often met with suspicion. There may be a concern that whatever their 'theoretical' knowledge, they lack experience in the realities of business life. In many cases professional specialised services are often hired to support a firm's or institutional' operations. Morgan et al. (2017) discusses how China's education has developed, and how it is likely to develop in future. This suggests that education is an important factor in any change likely to take place in a country. So, lecturers have to be oriented to understand professionalism and professionalising the higher education system. Although, it is argued that professional values and traditions can prevent an organisation from changing its conventional behaviour patterns to fit new service missions tuned to changing social needs, it is however agreed that professionals have rather clear ideas about which activities are, and which are not within their province. The professional employee, such as the industrial scientist, the engineer or the company lawyer, has typically internalised a clearly defined set of norms which relate to his conduct.

According to Forje (2010b), entrepreneurship knowledge cuts across all walks of life and disciplines, and not only tied to the world of business. It is also a social as well as an economic activity, and goes far beyond business creation. The author goes on to say that in every organisation, institution, be it private or public, the subjects: accounting/finance, management, marketing and organisation are conspicuously present in all areas of successful work, and there is no work that can be done without these concepts featuring. This supports the idea that entrepreneurship seems appropriate as a tool to professionalise higher education. The most important is for higher education to acknowledge and respect professionalism. Lecturers should be assigned to their area of specialty. It is common to find a lecturer who has geography as first degree (BA), education as a second degree (MA), and third degree (Ph.D) in political science taken as an expert to teach political science. Such a lecturer is likely to have difficulties in expressing him/herself in the subject assigned to him/her. People can change educational disciplines, for example, a person can study law with some courses in political science at the BA level, and then does a postgraduate diploma in political science in order to transfer to the political science discipline. Lecturers need to deepen their knowledge in their discipline of competence in order to be innovative.

To tap from general industrial experience, a student centre can be established where practitioners can come and deliver seminars to enhance both lecturers' practical knowledge and student's practical ability for them to make the best use of their competences and experiences in their particular subject. For example, woodwork students can be thought how to season wood before using it to make furniture. To achieve professionalisation and also maintain theory, national educational policies

need to adopt strategies that enable students to practice what they learn in the classrooms as well. Entrepreneurial centres where students can go and practice their interest, hobbies and other recreational activities of their interest are needed. There are of course disciplines that are professionally orientated, (medicine, and law and business administration). These disciplines first of all start with the theoretical concepts grounding students in the discipline. Although professional institutions must continue to exist, an educational system that enables people to think creatively, imagine and engage in beneficiary activities is worth embarking on. Entrepreneurship education emphasises holistically, flexible and creative thinking.

Entrepreneurship and professionalisation

The definition of entrepreneurs varies across countries, depending among other things “unique economic, cultural and social situation” (Suna et al., 2017). Lessem (1986) posits that no individual displays in equal degree, the full range of entrepreneurial attributes. This of course is obvious because individuals also have different talents. Wickham (2001) on his part suggests that entrepreneurship is about creating and managing vision and communicating that vision to other people. The two views intertwined simply because there is no one source to entrepreneurial activities as to where reference can be made. This suggests therefore that the foundation of any theoretical approach must be based on the level of the economic development, culture and the social structure of the country in question. Innovation can, and should take place, but should be based on these three elements in a society (Forje, 2015). In trying to professionalised education, these mentioned elements need to be taken into consideration. Thomas et al. In Aasir and Arshad (2018) argue that professionalisation simplifies detailed planning but adds rigidity. They go on to say that the strong service orientation of most not for profit organisations however, tend to encourage the development of static professional norms and attitudes. This may change as not-for-profit organisations attempt to become more business-like. From this perspective, it is important to say that individual disciplines will professionalize following the norms of their disciplines. Although the study suggests that entrepreneurship be used as a tool to professionalized higher education, variables within a discipline seen likely to influence the professionalisation of the study area will have to be sorted and use during the teaching.

There is also the idea that entrepreneurs have particular characteristics traits. This is partially true, but cannot be the whole story. Entrepreneurship can be learned, the most important thing is to identify the various elements that form the character of an entrepreneur and look for ways on how to incorporate them in teaching.

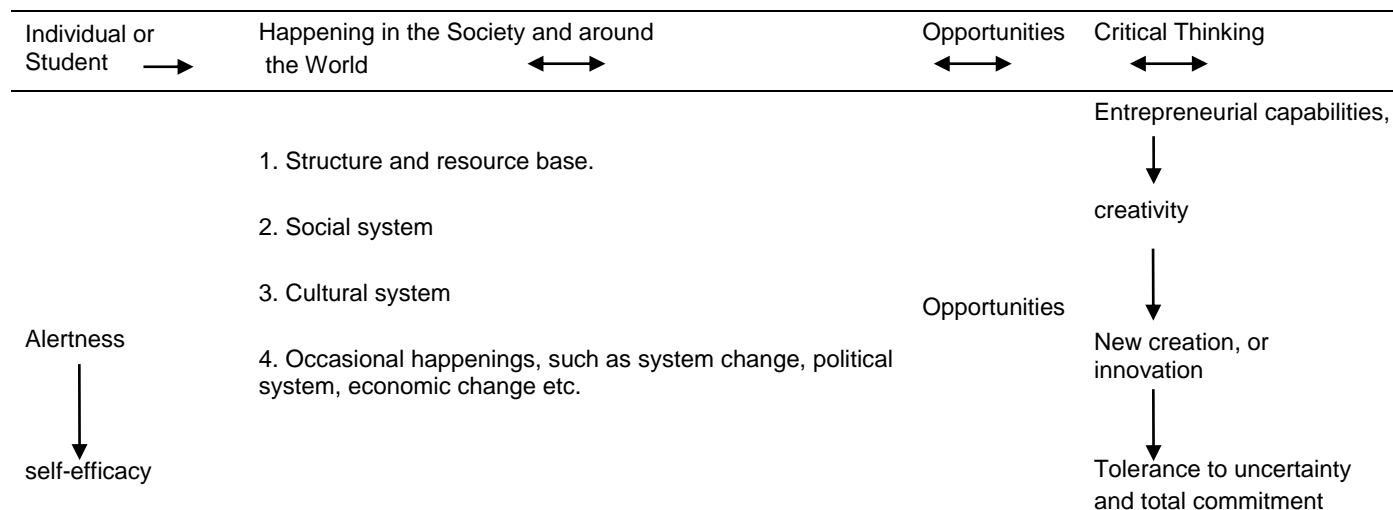
Take for example, the “Bamilekes” ethnic group in Cameroon, their quest for self-reliance and independency instilled in them the traits of business (passion for small business creation). The determination to succeed and be self-reliance constitutes an element in the entrepreneurial character. Determination and commitment characterise a professional, thus, entrepreneurship can facilitate the process of professionalisation. Examining the Kirznerian alertness to opportunities that exist in and out of our societies, we see that we need entrepreneurship education to empower us with the ability to spot these opportunities. The capability approach to knowledge acquisition emphasizes social and tacit nature of knowledge. It goes on to suggest team work and the fact that some knowledge acquired through team work can neither be transmitted nor made explicit (Frederic, 2006). Professionalisation and entrepreneurship have no direct theory; both can work together and strengthen each other.

Orientating students to be job creators/seekers

Orientating students to graduate as both job creator/seekers requires sorting out factors that influence the start of entrepreneurial activities and examine. Table 1 suggests a view based on alertness as suggested by Kirzner (1979). The quality of education as it is now, is observed to be crossly watered down and needs to be updated to create a solid foundation for professionalization. To update the syllabus, we need to take a holistic view of the individual student, the society and tailor our professionalization process to fit it. The factors in table 1 need to be considered.

Alertness provokes students to examine their capability to do things. From there, they start examining the society to see the opportunities that exist there. To make use of the resources existing in the society, they have thought critically and creatively. Ferreira and Fayelle et al. (2018) focus on the knowledge of economics, outline the importance of understanding the role that entrepreneurial universities play through collaboration with policy makers. The authors go further to evaluate how universities can engage communities, while also balancing stakeholders' considerations, and exploring how universities should manage the future in order to integrate into the global society effectively. There is a wide variety of approaches to entrepreneurship learning. Gibb (1996) asserts that opportunity alertness and factors likely to influence the start of businesses need to be emphasised in the teaching of entrepreneurship. Table 1 suggests that once an individual or students understand what entrepreneurial practices is all about, knowledge of the society and the resources available therein, the social and cultural systems, occasional changes within these factors are likely to open up business opportunities. Tony et al. (2012), argue that we should evaluate scientific knowledge not in terms of how accurately it tells us what

Table 1. Opportunity alertness and business creation.



Source: Lema Catherine Forje using some of Kirzner’s views.

the case in the world is, but instead, in terms of how well it informs human actions in the world. Using entrepreneurs in entrepreneurship teaching is to induce self-reliance and move people away from being dependent. Students should be encouraged to visit entrepreneurial expos such as the Entrepreneurial Promo 2019 that took place in Yaoundé Cameroon and brought entrepreneurs from many nations. In expos of that nature, students see and feel what professionalism can offer and such activities instil in the students entrepreneurial spirit.

Neck et al. (2014) advocate teaching entrepreneurship using a portfolio of practices, including empathy, creation, experimentation, and reflection. Together, these practices help students develop the competency to think and act entrepreneurially in order to create, research and exploit opportunities of various kinds in a continuously changing and uncertain world. We live in a digital age, which is impacting seriously on the economy and our ways of life. Zorn et al. (2018) show how higher education sector is moving online. To add to this, before, results of university students were published on blackboards, it is published online. This is also part of professionalism and technological advancement. However, Zorn and Glachant question how digital disruption is seen in other sectors of relevance for both academics and management in higher education. Ferreira et al. (2018) expands the issue on teaching entrepreneurship in universities from the perspective of inter-disciplinary practise, university management roles and policy matters. Fayolle et al. (2019) bridge the persistent research and practice gaps in entrepreneurship education theory and practice as well as its relationship to main stakeholders. According to Michael (1982:289), human resource constitutes the ultimate bases. Capital and natural resources are passive

factors. Human beings are the active agents; they exploit natural resources and give added values to these resources. With this knowledge in mind, it therefore suggests that exploitation requires different types of skills thus, it is important that teaching be made to incorporate skills needed for such exploitation. Matthews and Liguori (ed.) (2018) on their part examine past practices, current thinking and future insights into the over expanding world of entrepreneurship education. Fayolle (2018) notes that entrepreneurship education has received renewed impetus by the advent of experiential learning and student entrepreneurship. Politis (2005) suggests that some formal entrepreneurship programmes integrate experiential learning, that enables students to start and run an enterprise for the period of the school year within a low risk framework be put in place to enable students work through the steps of starting, running and closing down a business. This way, the students experience what Politis (2005) calls “intelligent failure”. One learns better through failure.

Internship and professionalisation

Aasir and Arshad (2018) emphasises Activity Base Learning (ABL) arguing that internship project can have two major outcomes for a business student: first, it builds it professionally, develops the students by enhancing career opportunities for him/her, developing their network with the industry and exposing them to real life challenges. Secondly, internship can increase skills, zeal, enthusiasm and self-confidence in students in form of personal development. Besides these two advantages, students can also learn time management. It is observed that newly recruits have difficulties managing their time

which is epitomised by constant late coming to work, and also not creating time to rest well after work. ABL is acknowledged (Knouse and Fontenot 2008) as an educational/teaching method that provides an ideal learning environment that enables students to do field jobs and also enables teachers to demonstrate realistic challenges and provide practical life opportunities to students to develop their personality and professional capabilities. This teaching method is seen to contribute heavily to the teaching and learning of business studies and the professionalisation of higher education. Although members of a profession (university lecturers) for instance often work independently from one another, one common focus is students (Chapman and Pyvis, 2005). ABL coupled with internship can be seen to fortify the professionalisation of higher education. To achieve the objective of professionalism, it is necessary to combine theoretical teaching by providing students with a practicum, that draws on each of the course specialties and should be specifically designed to teach a student how to translate his professional knowledge into viable action programs at whatever level (Kolb et al., 1974 op.cit). The authors go on to say, we need to be more involved in the student's effort in career planning and coordinate our activities more closely with company recruiters and the university placement officers. The University of Reading UK has such an organ, (career office) and it plays a very useful role in students' career orientation. The problems the universities in Africa and Cameroon in particular are likely to face are: high number of students; lack of professional teachers in some disciplines; and lack of infrastructures.

Alain et al. (2019) aim to bridge persistent research and practitioner gaps in entrepreneurship education theory and practice, as well as its relationship to main stakeholders. This is what the myriad of theories is trying to do. According to Tuntufye and Phindile (2013), good quality and relevant education at higher education will lead to the production and availability of employable graduates and professionals in all walks of life. Entrepreneurship can be exercised in public administration or in any activity undertaken by man (Forje, 2010a). From the above discussion, this paper bases its professionalisation of higher education approach as shown in Table 1 on Neck et al. (2014) advocate that teaching entrepreneurship requires using a portfolio of practices. Todaro (1982) states that providing the kind of training and education that would promote literacy, numeracy, and basic skills while encouraging classical education are required. Entrepreneurial approach to teaching enables the introduction of students to three occupational subgroups of rural areas-farmers and farm workers, persons engaged in nonfarm rural enterprises as suggested by Michael Todaro and companies as well as public employees. All these encourage and sustain critical thinking and creativity.

Harts (2018) looks at the impact of entrepreneurship

education being maximised when multi-disciplinary approaches are used. Harts offers a dynamic and robust series of tools for education to create their own hyper-involved classroom regardless of their discipline to prepare students to impact the real world. This suggests that entrepreneurship teaching is based on a trial and error, where every factor deemed likely to impact it is examined. For example, it is important to devoid higher educational and its professionalisation ideas from political party interferences. Ferreira et al. (2018) expands the issue on teaching entrepreneurship in universities from the perspectives of inter-disciplinary practice, university management roles and policy matters. Fayolle et al. (2019) bridge the persistent research and practice gaps in entrepreneurship education theory and practice as well as its relationship to main stakeholders. According to Michael Todaro (1982), human resource constitutes the ultimate bases. Capital and natural resources are passive factors. Human beings are the active agents; they exploit natural resources and give added values to these resources.

With this knowledge in mind, it therefore suggests that exploitation requires different types of skills thus, it is important that teaching be made to incorporate skills needed for such exploitation, and such an approach is entrepreneurial. Matthews and Liguori (ed.) (2018) on their part examine past practices, current thinking and future insights into the over expanding world of entrepreneurship education. Fayolle (2018) notes that entrepreneurship education has received renewed impetus by the advent of experiential learning and student entrepreneurship. It is therefore imperative that entrepreneurship education be made to contribute to our understanding of the direction and effectiveness of it. Entrepreneurship from the discussion cuts across all disciplines, empowering people with the ability to act professionally, think critically and creatively and do their work diligently and be committed. It is therefore seen by this study as a subject capable of assisting in the professionalization of higher education.

METHODOLOGY

No method of research is perfect; we can only apply a method that allows us to get valuable data for a particular study. Maylor and Blackmon pp 220 in Hampton et al. (2009) state, qualitative methodologies such as interviews, focus groups, or open-ended questionnaires might present attractive options, taking account, as they do, of the fact that people ascribe meanings, thoughts, and feelings to the situation in which they find themselves, adding that organisations are both social systems and the setting for social behaviour. Holloway in Hampton et al. (2009) obtained rich data from students by way of qualitative survey methods that can provide managers and teachers with a clearer and potentially more useful picture of surveys satisfaction than by a tick-box survey. According to Holloway (1997 op.cit), one such qualitative method is the "Critical Incident Technique" (CIT). In Flanagan (1954) in Hampton et al. (2009) view, "a critical incident is any observable human activity that is sufficiently complete in itself to permit

inferences and predictions to be made about the person performing the act, and that has a clear purpose and intent, the consequences of which are sufficiently definite to leave little doubt concerning its effects”.

Based on the discussed views, this study draws data from interviewing a total of 225 people distributed as follows: 100 undergraduate management/entrepreneurship students, 61 MBA students, 14 EMBA students and 50 independent business people. The Executive Masters in Business Administration (EMBA) is not a mainstream university course; universities offer the course following demand. These students are specialist in their various domains who happen to find themselves in business enterprises, or wish to create and manage their own businesses and as such would expect high level specialist to give them the brief business knowledge they need to manage their businesses. The EMBA students have worked for more than two years and are still working in different enterprises. Among the MBA students, 20 work for private companies, 21 are government workers, and 20 have their own businesses. For the EMBA students, 5 are government workers and 9 are working for private companies. The 50 business people were drawn from the two English speaking regions of Cameroon. Crucial data included ideas that prompted them to start their own businesses; new innovative ideas gathered in the cause of operating the business; how they will want entrepreneurship to be taught in order to professionalise teaching and imparts the spirit of creativity into the students. In this light, the only question is; how should entrepreneurship be taught for professionalisation to take place in higher education? The variables used were, storytelling/proverbs, use of internship, and classroom teaching. Interviewees were also asked to express their views freely in discussing the variables, giving the pros and cons of each, on what they think should be put in place to facilitate the professionalisation of higher education. Questionnaires were served and the interviewees were advised to express themselves freely, and this was done in three days using head count.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 2 (Figure 1) presents views of interviewees. In putting up the table, the variable “classroom teaching” being theoretical was recommended arguing that there must be theory before practical. Concentration was on variables such as, stories/proverbs, games and internship. Frequency distribution table was used to ascertain the importance of each teaching approach as suggested by the interviewees. It is qualitatively analysed as qualitative research produces collective and obvious understandings of rich, related and normally unstructured, non-numerical and non-statistical data of the participants (Creswell, 2017; Aasir and Arshad, 2018).

A percentage relative frequency is calculated as follows:

$$\text{Percentage relative frequency} = \frac{f}{\sum f} \times 100$$

Where, f = the frequency; \sum = the sum of Type equation here.

$$\text{Stories, games, and proverbs} = \frac{199}{225} \times 100 = 88.4\%$$

$$\text{Internship} = \frac{167}{225} \times 100 = 74.2\%$$

$$\text{Classroom teaching} = \frac{198}{225} \times 100 = 88\%$$

$$\text{Lack of infrastructure:} = \frac{210}{225} \times 100 = 93.3\%$$

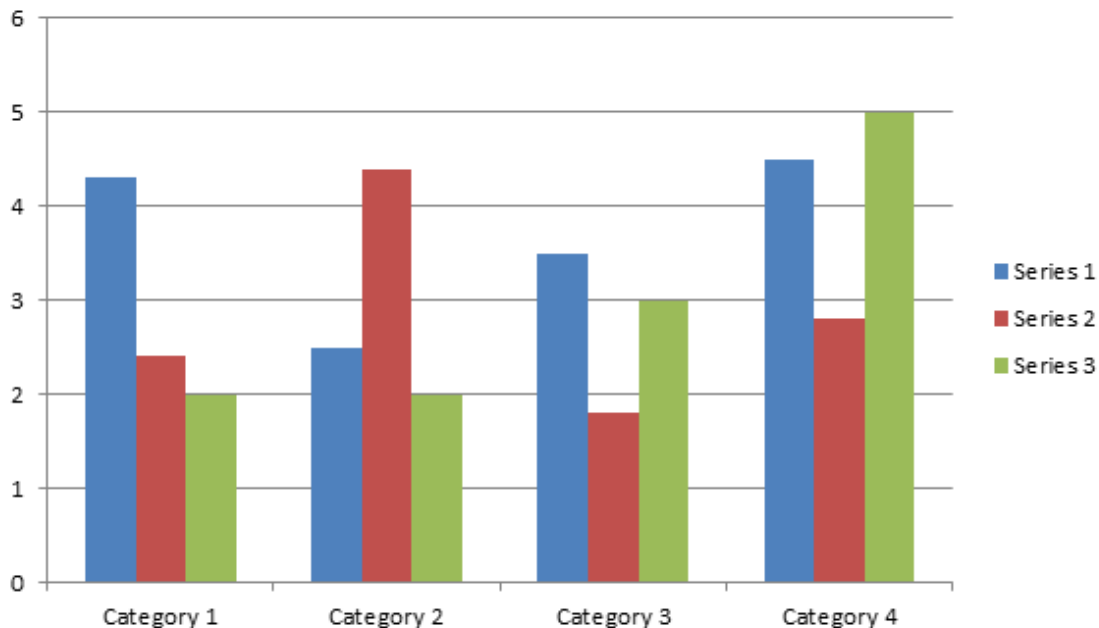
From the interview findings, 88.4% of the opinion given falls positively for the use of storytelling, proverbs and games to teach entrepreneurship. Proverbs in the form of storytelling was very much used by the elders to direct the youth and even adults who seemed lazy and confuse. It is still being used, though not as common as before. Forje (2010b) found proverbs very effective in sensitising mostly the youth in a study, “Knowledge-Based Communication and Entrepreneurship Learning in Cameroon: The Proverb Perspective”. The EMBA students, being mature complained about lack of experience of some of the lecturers teaching them. EMBA is usually taught by experience teachers in their disciplines. It is not just about a lecturer having a Ph.D certificate. EMBA students are people who need to be well drilled for them to get the knowledge they are looking for. When a university is not yet ready to offer such a course, it is important not to start. These are people that the institution offering it can learn from, in terms of knowledge transfer through classroom discussions, and can also benefit in terms of internship places.

Concerning proverbs and storytelling as tools for professionalization, they were seen imparting into students indigenous knowledge which forms the basis of critical thinking and idea generation. According to Tuntufye and Phindile (2013) indigenous knowledge is different from the body of knowledge produced by institutions and universities, local knowledge, folk knowledge, traditional wisdom forms the information base of a society. When such knowledge is in the students and the society, professionalization is enhanced. From this perspective, the creation of an entrepreneurial centre where students can spend time discussing their experiences with friends can be an important approach to professionalizing education. Proverbs are loaded with meanings that go beyond the world of activities, and set souls searching creatively and entrepreneurially (Forje, 2010a). Politis (2005) suggests that some formal entrepreneurship programmes integrate experiential learning, that enables students to start and run an enterprise for the period of the school year within a low risk framework be put in place to enable students work through the steps of starting, running and closing down a business. This way, the students experience what Politis (2005) calls “intelligent failure”. One learns better through failure.

Reflecting on the school syllabus of the Anglophone Cameroon before the referendum creating the unitary government in 1972, primary schools’ time tables had provisions for storytelling, proverbs and games. This is in line with what happens in some developed countries. Games such as ‘Monopoly’ and ‘Chess’ expose children to investment decisions and practices right from nursery schools through to secondary schools. Games stimulate critical thinking and creativity and enables students

Table 2. Views presented by interviewees.

Variable	Total number of interviewees 225 and views obtained				
	Undergraduates students (100)	MBA students (61)	EMBA students (14)	Business people (50)	Total 225 views (%)
Stories/proverbs and games	95	45	12	47	199 (88.4)
Internship	75	30	14	48	167 (74.2)
Classroom teaching	90	57	12	39	198 (88)
Lack of Infrastructures	95	55	12	48	210 (93.3)

**Figure 1.** Grafic presentation of table 2.

(people) to also think strategically. Game theory presumes that players are rational and seek to maximise their own payoffs. Harts (2018) discusses how classroom exercises engage students in all aspects of the entrepreneurial process and challenges students to master new ways of entrepreneurial thinking and acting. This highlights the importance of human capital in meeting the goals of development. When leaders invest in the creation of knowledge through entrepreneurial education and skills development, innovation and economic growth will follow (Lee et al., 2018). Susan de De Janasz and Crossman (2018) echo the same message on engaging and enhancing knowledge and skills in a wide range of breathing life into human resource management.

The “once upon a time” type stories told in primary schools in Cameroon brought about soul searching. The pupils imagine themselves in another world and in another form through creative thinking which encouraged

children to develop the spirit of critical thinking. While playing a game, people concentrate and it leads to devising winning strategies, be innovative and adopting a thinking mode that enables the discovery of new visions about the world and what to make use of. Such a centre existed in the then Victoria, now Limbe in South-West Cameroon near the Centenary Stadium, where primary school teachers were assigned to guide pupils during handicraft classes. Concerning structures, creating an entrepreneurship centre wherein students can go to during their free time and discuss whatever idea they have is important. In such a centre, students will discuss things in their vernacular and the problem of translation and losing meanings will be reduced. Some of the students bemoan the fact that they think critically in their language (mothers tongue), and translating it into English or French loses some of its meanings. This can be solved by allowing students to avoid translating ideas into foreign languages and write whatever new idea generated

in their mother tongue. According to Tuntufye and Phindile (2013), language is a source of identity and more broadly, it is the self-consciousness of a given people. In view of this, it is important to encourage and orientate students to explain things in their mother tongue. Struggling to translate an idea conceived into a foreign language creates an "Idea Drain" syndrome. English and French do not have all of African values and properties. As we all know, the argot of a language forms a major obligation in professionalisation. Language also confines the way persons think of and perceive their world. Honigmann (1963) claims that, action often follows from the way men think and perceive, language thus, shapes a large part of human culture.

Proverbs according to the result provokes as well as kick start creative thinking. Proverbs are embedded with meanings that entrepreneurial activities can spring from. It enables soul searching. When a person gets frustrated, not knowing what to do, one proverb can ignite a thinking mode that opens a new path to a world of opportunities. Take for example, a Cameroon proverb; "The rain comes and goes, and a fat lazy man keeps beating his chest" is often directed to lazy people. A proverb such as this can provoke critical thinking that eventually leads to one doing something useful. There is no road map for opportunity identification. Sometimes it comes as lightening and if not taken advantage off, it can be lost forever. This is why attributes such as those outlined, but not limited to those in Table 1 could be presented in the classroom to alert the students on the opportunities that can spring out from a society and these can also enhance the professionalization process in that discussing an idea together in an opened space is like having oral internship.

Internship as a tool for professionalisation

Seen from the interview result, the idea of using internship as a means of professionalising higher education scored 74.4%. Students' complains were that companies are not ready to let out or take students in areas that might lead students to benefit much in fear of mistakes that may cost the business high. So, the interns are limited to administrative and none production activities. What they benefit is that it puts them within the frame of working life as regards to: time management and discipline. Internship as practiced in Cameroon does not provide students with appropriate and much practical knowledge except in those professionalised disciplines like medicine, nursing, law, teaching etc. There is always complain of time wastage and incremental cost and this inhibits the organisations concerned from giving the students the orientation they need. The EMBA is not a regular mainstream university course; it is a course designed to suit the request of various class of people admitted into the course. The participants are people

from different disciplines such as Engineers, Medical Doctors, Lawyers etc., who may want to start their own business and need to have knowledge of business administration. It was observed that this course is being duplicated as a normal Master in Business Administration (MBA) in some universities. The EMBA candidates are loaded with working experiences that lecturers can through discussions benefit from. Putting them in the same class with MBA students is undermining the program. However, concerning internship, the students suggested that negotiations could be made for payments to be made to the organisations offering internship services. Classroom teaching scored 88%; the interviewees very well understood that although by definition there is no theory that can be said to be "the theory of entrepreneurship and professionalisation", there must be directives on how to bridge theory and practice. It is left for individual universities to research into the factors that can best influence and motivate students to be entrepreneurial. From this view, a solution could be for universities to establish mini super markets (businesses) that assist in providing internship for students since according to Forje (2010a) the four pillars of business management (accounting/finance, management, marketing and organisation) are present in every establishment whether small or big.

Lack of infrastructure for entrepreneurial take off is endemic. This can be seen by the percentage of views assigned by students (93%). Such infrastructure problem is also an impediment for professionalisation. The provision of infrastructure should not only be left in the hands of the government alone. Communities should be encouraged to put up buildings (hostels) in universities. Levitt et al. (2019) looks at public-private partnership development that allows government to procure long term infrastructure services from private providers. Hodge and Greve (2019) looking at today's economic turbulence, public, private partnership (PPP) fills the gap between infrastructure needs as available financing widens government and business. Both must seek new ways to make contemporary. PPP approach work for the good of teaching and society. University/private sector partnership should be encouraged and intensified for the growth of internship and development of society. It requires looking into policy problems and policy designs, as outlined by Peters (2018) for the reason that internship initiate students to the realities of the working world, it is a form of combining theory and practice and building a spirit of entrepreneurial skills in students from different perspective. The success of internship and the professionalisation of higher education call for a harmonious interplay between the state, society and the private sector. Steiner-Khamsi and Draxler (2018) show the effects of public funding of private entities by examining the ways in which they affect the quality, and equity of services. To summarise, internship provides students with advantages, as in Figure 2, of internship's benefit to students.

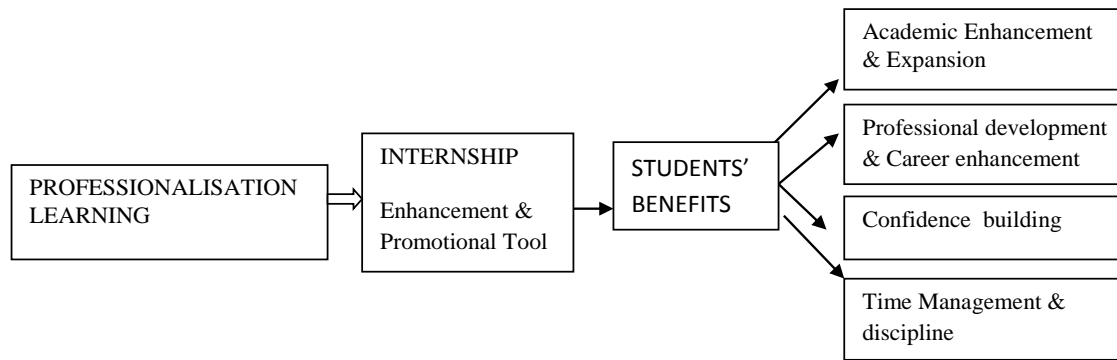


Figure 2. Internship's benefit to students. Source: Forje (2021).

The research makes contributions to theory, teaching and public policy. It develops the understanding of entrepreneurship as an imperative tool that builds and sustains knowledge in students. Professionalisation of education without the comprehension of what professionalisation means is playing around with the word. Entrepreneurship teaching should be made to form the corner stone of professionalisation and should not be taught like other mainstream subjects having theoretical base. Its teaching should be made to follow a pattern of life in the society which people already have an idea of. This will motivate and encourage learning. Learning from best practices and what works should be at the back of the mind. People need to understand the importance of entrepreneurship education and entrepreneurial practices in a society as the corner stone of sustainable economic development. Professionalisation comes into play when people know how to exploit and use available resources in a proper way.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

The objective of this study was to examine how entrepreneurship education can be used to ease the professionalisation of higher education. Internship was one of the main factors and unearths numerous advantages that benefit students, both personally and professionally. Although students complained about lack of adequate companies to undertake internship, individual universities can set up small business centres for such purpose. The research suggests a democratic approach whereby the opinions of students are listened to and considered in the process of teaching and learning. The conclusion is that opened door activities should be part of the professionalization agenda. This approach is likely to provide a new view of teaching and motivation for creative and innovative idea generation to take place.

Professionalising university education by introducing entrepreneurship teaching in the classroom empowers students with the ability to think critically, work

consciously, be committed and exercise professionalism in whatever work they are doing. Being an administrator is professional, it is all about thinking creatively and generating ideas that can improve and ease the work of students and other citizens in a society. Professionalising higher education should aim at producing a society that can according to Kirby (2003) not only cope with change, but can anticipate and initiate it. Entrepreneurial thinking focuses on generating ideas that can positively encourage creativity. As Wayne (2015) claims, education has to condense the collective knowledge we have built over thousands of years into a curriculum that can be learnt by our young so that they can us further, or at least ensure our survival. It is creative thinking that can generate solutions to the problems of establishments, industries and organisations. To achieve this, universities need to invest, create structures and put in place equipment as well as create an enabling atmosphere that motivates freedom of thoughts and action. Universities need to put up training centres; this would increase the employability of graduates, as employers will appreciate their practical experiences.

Storytelling that constitute the foundation of a society thinking mode need to be included in school's syllabus; an entrepreneurship centre that enables and encourages students to practice their ideas and discover their talents needs to be put in place; communities should be sensitised and encouraged to assist the universities by putting up buildings, and infrastructural problem would be solved; disciplines should be respected and professionals sent to teach in their area of specialty; the role of entrepreneurship in a university should be emphasised; and policies that can remedy economic imbalances and incentives distortion need to be put in place.

The road ahead for African countries is getting in and getting on with professionalised higher education system focusing to build a capable human capital and knowledge system for creative and productive activities. The success of internship and the professionalisation of higher education call for a harmonious interplay between the state, society and the private sector.

CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

The author has not declared any conflict of interests.

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