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**JOB AVAILABILITY AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP EDUCATION AMONG
UNDERGRADUATE UNIVERSITY STUDENTS IN KENYA**

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UNDERGRADUATE UNIVERSITY STUDENTS IN KENYA**

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Abstract

Purpose: The purpose this study was to ascertain the connection shared by job availability factors and entrepreneurship education as a specialization among undergraduate students within universities in Kenya.

Methodology: This research was designed as a descriptive survey, correlation quantitative research. The study population of 2,043 students was drawn from 3rd year undergraduate business students who had already selected their areas of specialization. The Krejcie & Morgan sample formula for finite samples was used to yield a sample of 327 students that participated in the research. Questionnaires were the primary data collection instrument and the collected data was modeled through regression model and analyzed using SPSS version 24.

Results: Job availability and entrepreneurship education are positively and significantly related ($\beta = 0.406, p = 0.000$). Therefore, a unit increase in job availability would lead to increase in preference for entrepreneurship education by 0.406. Factors like career utility, probability of advancing in one's occupation, flexibility in terms of work-life balance; economic growth and stability; and the unemployment levels in Kenya are the major driving forces in determining an area of specialization for students.

Unique contribution to policy and practice: The study recommends that students should look at themselves as a consolidation of traits and skills and not just an occupation. This will help them achieve major skills an entrepreneur which are versatility, agility, innovativeness, determination, relationship and communication skills, the ability to constantly study and improve on previous drawbacks, and the ability to manage work, time, and money.

Key words: *job availability, entrepreneurship education.*

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Entrepreneurship as a field of study and career choice is deemed important when the society around the individual considers it as noteworthy. In addition, the opportunity to interact and learn from mentors in the field, breeds or stimulates intention to act entrepreneurially. Whenever the society has invested in a field and views it as an important field, it allows for those new to it to gain more information. Therefore, this socially supportive environment allows an individual to have access

to quality information but also allow the use of vast resources that are now available to them. This environment breeds more and more desire to get into the entrepreneurial field as it provides an opportunity to appreciate strides made in entrepreneurship. Direct exposure and experiences in the entrepreneurial field boosts the desirability of the field as it enables an individual to weigh both benefits and challenges that are found therein (Malebana, 2014).

Direct experience is a learning experience and offers a window into the positive and negative effects of a career and so if the resultant attitude is positive the person is most likely to decide to pursue the field in a tertiary institution Malebana, 2014).

Research carried out on the motivations to be an entrepreneur shows that positive outcomes are greatly influenced by exposure, the amount of experience in that discipline and attitudes (Hessels, van Gelderen, & Thurik, 2008). Secondary experiences or indirect activities in entrepreneurship are seen to result in positive feedback in addition to boosting entrepreneurial intention (Karimi *et al.*, 2013).

According to Kirkwood (2009), focusing on the perceived surroundings however poses several theoretical and practical challenges. This is because there is evidently a difference in individual response to similar environmental conditions. It is not uncommon to encounter people who have succeeded despite the environment not favoring them; while others seemingly failed in their ventures despite having an advantage in the environment, they were in. Career development can therefore be said to be influenced by both objective and perceived determinants in the surroundings.

Objective factors include the quality of education and the financial muscle behind the individual so that they can pursue the variety of training options available at their disposal. Such factors can potentially affect ones career development regardless of one's comprehension of that fact (Kirkwood, 2009). Exactly how one responds to a particular objective factor determines the effect of the particular objective factor. Individuals can thus be affected positively or negatively by occurrences that they do not have a hand in or might not even be aware of. Their interpretation of the surroundings and themselves gives a personal attribute to their career development. The notion of perceived "opportunity structure" and "contextual affordance" emphasizes that chances, resources, hindrances or enablers existing in a certain environmental variable are a matter of an individual's understanding of the same.

Entrepreneurship education surpasses the need to create enterprise owners but rather creating an environment where entrepreneurial skills of creativity and innovation can flourish. It aids in the achievement of goals set out by individuals by making them not only innovative, responsible, having the right attitude but also attain the required skills and knowledge. It is proven that individuals who have received this type of education have higher chances of gaining employment. Training on entrepreneurship has been on the upsurge around the world which has resulted in a system being put in place to make it grow even more due to the perceived benefit of the said education (Hejazinia, 2015).

According to Bwisa (2011), Kenya is among the first African countries to introduce entrepreneurship education in its training system which happened in the 1990's (Ongwae, 2013). The training program is highly developed in the country with it being offered in both undergraduate and MBA programs which does not speak for other nations that are lagging behind. The Vision 2030 was introduced by countries to serve as a roadmap for their development agenda between years 2008 to 2030. It is built on three "pillars": which are three aspects; political aspect, social

aspect and economic aspect. The outline of this goal which is Vision 2030 is seen to bring hope to entrepreneurship education in Kenya (Vision, 2030).

1.1 Statement of the problem

The varying range in interest in entrepreneurship around the globe has been telling and widely recognized. This can be attributed to the hostile and insecure regulatory environments, poor infrastructure, inadequate resources as well as economic instability. There is a disconcerting attitude in developing nations where entrepreneurship is not considered a valid career option but rather a recourse thus it is termed as necessity or need driven entrepreneurship (Davey, Plewa & Struwig, 2011). Although governments have been offering support for the field through passing laws and policies the rate of its uptake has not been as fast as expected (Ketter & Arfsten, 2015).

Even though entrepreneurial education is offered as a compulsory common course at institutions of higher learning it is not taught at the primary level and is barely tackled in Business studies in High school. This approach is seen as a rescue intervention strategy or a measure of last resort. The fact that the learners at the tertiary level have already fully formed ideas, misconceptions, attitudes and perceptions that are fully formed, it will be difficult to navigate them to the viewpoint that the entrepreneurship discipline can be a worthwhile career or occupation (Otuya, Kibas & Otuya, 2013).

A common trend in universities that can be observed is that entrepreneurial education is offered as a major or concentration area for business related courses and a minor for those pursuing non business concentrations. This trend goes to further affirm a shift towards improved and more entrepreneurial exposure and training at the tertiary level refuting studies that depicted otherwise (Winkel *et al.*, 2013). This will be done by investigating whether entrepreneurship is perceived as a valid career choice by relating job opportunities to entrepreneurship education among undergraduate students within Kenyan universities.

1.2 Objective of the Study

The study objective was to ascertain the connection shared by job availability factors and entrepreneurship education as a specialization among undergraduate students within universities in Kenya.

2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Theoretical Review

Instrumental to career development theory is the Maslow's hierarchy of needs. According to Maslow, the drivers of human behavior are presented in form of a pyramid of needs and wants. At the very bottom are physiological needs. Once these needs are met, we are propelled to move up the pyramid to other needs. Maslow's theory maintains that when basic needs are met is when high level needs can now be satisfied. It is an ongoing process which is multi-tracked in nature. It is not about a milestone kind of satisfaction of needs but it is gradual ongoing development process. A person's needs decide their habits. He also looked at other motivators such as interest in knowledge and its comprehension and aesthetic needs that share a relationship with other needs (Maslow, 1962).

Accordingly, needs that have a relationship to work begin at the second level right up to the fifth and final hierarchy in the needs pyramid. The second level of needs is for safety which includes safety of employment, property and resources. The need for love and belonging which propels an

individual to start working and developing their career paths is found in the third level. The fourth level consists of individual self-esteem which drives them to strive to achieve a career status. Self-actualization which leads to an individual feeling comfortable and trusting previous experiences as well as the judgments they make is in the fifth and final level of needs (Maslow, 1962).

2.2 Empirical Review

At a macro-economic level, innovation, risk propensity, identification of new opportunities and inventions are recognized as having the general responsibility of creating a prosperous society. Thereby job creation, economic development and growth, poverty alleviation, solving issues of unemployment and underemployment in developing countries, falls squarely on the above-mentioned factors. Those eligible for entry level employment opportunities now see entrepreneurship as a valid option and not a fall back option (Gemed, 2015).

Reemployment, retrenchment and keeping one's employment have become a major challenge especially after the great economic slump a decade ago. The aftershocks of the economic slump are still being felt ten years later. Unemployment in Kenya is a major youth challenge with approximately 800,000 young Kenyans being churned out to the labor market every year and 80% of unemployed Kenyans are below 35. Currently, the unemployment rate being estimated at an all-time high of between 35% and 40% among youth, in comparison to 10% of the entire population. To tackle this, private sector, academia and the government need to work together to develop innovative business models, relevant and current industry curricula and business enabling national policies (Business Call to Action, 2016)

Job satisfaction refers to a positive state of mind and emotion that deems one's job as beneficial and the level to which one places her job is based on their own personal opinions. Shifts in one's surrounding, viewpoints, feelings and habits can also affect satisfaction level either positively or negatively (Lent and Brown, 2008). In as much as the SCCT has attracted attention from researchers in different parts of the world, the majority of research do not look at social and cultural environments like availability of job opportunities (Sheu & Boden, 2016).

SCCT has made major contributions to understanding how individuals' approach or avoidance of job-related academic and career interests, choices, performance and persistence. Nevertheless, attention paid to outcome expectations is relatively scarce. Career attraction refers to level to which an individual view their occupation will positively satisfy them. Entrepreneurship as a valid career choice should be based on the ability for it to offer the opportunity to meet one's economic, social and personal needs. Research indicates that there is a positive relationship between entrepreneurship education and career intentions of students in tertiary institutions as one of its major goals is to increase knowledge of the entrepreneurial process (Oliviera, Taveira, Cadime & Porfeli, 2015).

Conklin, Dahling and Garcia (2012) tested a model based on the satisfaction model of Social Cognitive Career Theory that links the emotional identification that students feel towards their area of study with career decision self-efficacy and outcome expectations. The results indicated that career decision self-efficacy mediates the relationship between affective commitment to the major or specialization and career outcome expectations.

Kim and Seo (2014), investigating the applicability of SCCT in a cross-cultural setting examined the relationship between various social cognitive variables of engineering students in South Korea and their engineering interests and specialization choice goals. It was revealed that the SCCT interest and major choice model offered an adequate overall fit to the full sample. The findings

also indicated that the SCCT interest and choice model provided an acceptable fit to the data across university type and gender. Data further revealed outcome expectations drove interests and choices in majors.

Inda-Caro *et al.*, (2016) examined the relative contribution of emotional state and gender-role attitudes variables to technological interests among a sample of 2364 10th grade Spanish students. They used path analysis to test the Social Cognitive Career Theory (SCCT). The results, however, did not support the hypothesis that outcome expectations contribute to career interests.

Alexander *et al.*, (2010) examined the effect of, among others, outcome expectations on career choices of new students intending to major in computer related courses in two South African universities. The paper reports on an extensive survey about career choice and associated motivational factors amongst new students, only some of whom intend to major in computer-related courses, at two South African universities. The data were analyzed using some components of Social Cognitive Career Theory, namely external influences, self-efficacy beliefs and outcome expectations. The study revealed that outcome expectations did not have a significant effect on student career choices.

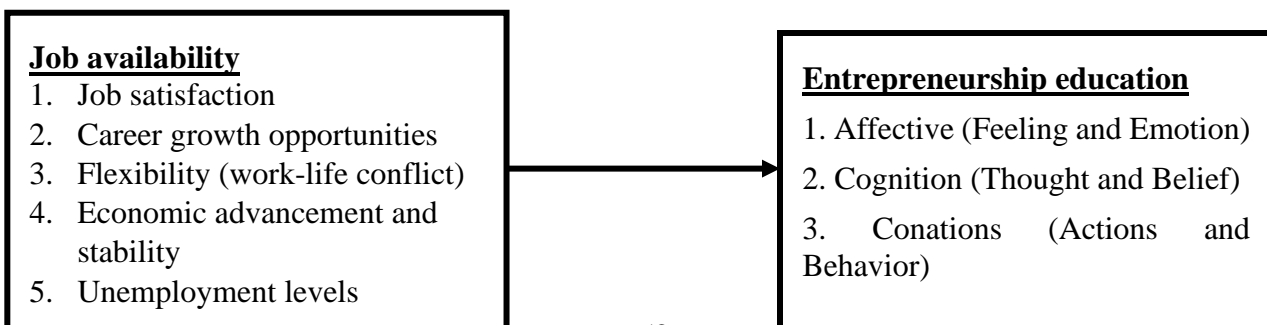
Kochung and Migunde (2011) investigated whether outcome expectations, among other factors, affected student career choices. The study was conducted using descriptive survey design with a population of 332 students. The data for this study was collected using questionnaire and interview schedules. The study used quantitative methods to analyze data collected from secondary students in Kisumu municipality Kenya. It revealed that outcome expectations play an influential role in student career choices.

Gavo (2014), examined the extent to which factors of opportunity influence making career choices among students in Kenyan universities. The target population under the study was the USIU students. Simple random sampling technique was employed in this study where a sample of 100 respondents was selected randomly. Data was collected using questionnaires, coded, sorted and analyzed using regression analysis in the statistical package for social sciences (SPSS). Presentation of data was in bar charts. His study found out that most students felt that opportunity factors play a great role in determining student career choices.

Researches based on vocational theories have been carried out on the effects of unemployment and reemployment however there has been limited focus by studies to facilitate understanding on the intricate link and the much theorized relationship between person inputs and back ground affordances; namely culture, education, socio economic status etc. Future research considerations should look into how macro-economic opportunity structures of a society shape and influence adaptive career behaviors as these are direct influencers of personal inputs and adaptability to unemployment (Thompson *et al.*, 2016).

2.3 Conceptual framework

Independent variables



3.0 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research was designed as a descriptive survey, correlation quantitative research. The target population was sourced from 9 Kenyan chartered universities that offer entrepreneurship among available specialization options. The study population of 2,043 students was drawn from 3rd year undergraduate business students who had already selected their areas of specialization. The Krejcie & Morgan sample formula for finite samples was used to yield a sample of 327 students that participated in the research. Questionnaires were the primary data collection instrument and the collected data was modeled through regression model. It allowed several unique models that could be compared and the strength of each independent variable assessed against dependent variable. The analysis was done using SPSS version 24. Data was presented in form of comprehensive tables that depict the relationships within the variables of the research.

4.0 RESULTS AND FINDINGS

The study sought to find out the correlation between job availability and uptake of entrepreneurship as a specialization among undergraduate students in Kenyan universities.

4.1 Response rate

The total number of questionnaires distributed and collected in the nine universities for the study was 287 out of the expected 327. This gave the questionnaire response rate at 87.7% that allowed the researcher to confidently analyze the data. The summary of the data is shown in detail in table 1.

Table 1: response table data summary

	Valid		Missing		Total	
	N	Percent	N	Percent	N	Percent
Job Availability	279	97.2%	8	2.8%	287	100.0%
Entrepreneurship Education	279	97.2%	8	2.8%	287	100.0%

Job availability variable had 94.1% valid cases processed for analysis. 17 questionnaires were excluded from the analysis as they did not fit the analysis criteria. Table 2 shows the summated descriptive statistics on job availability.

4.2 Descriptive Statistics

Job availability variable had 94.1% valid cases processed for analysis. 17 questionnaires were excluded from the analysis as they did not fit the analysis criteria. A reliability test was conducted to affirm that the questions under job availability were reliable for analysis. The overall Chronbachs' s alpha was 79.6% indicating that the questions were fit to measure the relationship between job availability and entrepreneurship education.

Eight items were used to measure job availability on a five point likert scale to which the respondents were required to answer whether they strongly agreed, agreed, were neutral, disagreed or strongly disagreed. On analysis, the data revealed that most of the respondents were neutral to the statements as evidenced by an overall mean of 3.64. The deviation in responses as evidenced by the standard deviation with seven out of eight questions having a deviation of above 1 from the mean. The table 2 and Table 3 demonstrated this in detail

Table 2: Job Availability Items Descriptives

	Item Description	Mean	Std. D	N
Question 1	Among the business course specializations available in my university, there are those that are generally more valuable than others in the Kenyan job market	4.0000	1.03471	270
Question 2	Pursuing entrepreneurship as a specialization would make me feel good about myself and my accomplishments	3.6630	1.08098	270
Question 3	Specializing in entrepreneurship would help me achieve the changes I desire economically and socially	3.8519	1.02401	270
Question 4	Specializing in entrepreneurship would allow me to earn an attractive and acceptable salary	3.7148	1.15530	270
Question 5	Specializing in entrepreneurship would allow me to get a job more easily than my friends in other specializations	3.2481	1.32516	270
Question 6	Pursuing a degree in entrepreneurship would offer me diverse career opportunities	3.7852	1.05876	270
Question 7	An entrepreneurial career would deprive me of time with my friends and family	2.8593	1.40981	270
Question 8	A degree in entrepreneurship would enhance my ability to trust my own decisions especially in a work set up	4.1444	.94331	270

Table 3: Summated Statistics of Job Availability

		Statistic	Std error	
Job Availability	Mean	3.6418	.04351	
	95% Confidence Interval for Mean	Lower Bound	3.5561	
		Upper Bound	3.7275	
	5% Trimmed Mean	3.6532		
	Median	3.6250		
	Variance	.528		
	Std. Deviation	.72678		
	Minimum	1.50		
	Maximum	5.00		
	Range	3.50		
	Interquartile Range	1.00		
	Skewness	-.120	.146	
Kurtosis	-.095	.291		

A response rate of 270 was analyzed that yielded a mean of 3.64 and a standard deviation of 0.73 was achieved. The kurtosis results showed that the probabilities distribution was -0.112 and the skewness indicated that the data was slightly skewed to the left at -0.101.

4.3 Correlation Analysis

A Pearson correlation test was performed to determine if the variables in the study had a linear relationship. The results indicated that the variables were positively correlated as depicted in Table 4. A Pearson product-moment correlation analysis to determine the relationship between job availability and entrepreneurship education specialization and the results revealed that there was a moderate positive relationship between job availability and entrepreneurship education specialization, which was statistically significant ($r=0.470$, $N=283$, $p<0.01$). This therefore allowed the conclusion that job availability has a significant effect on entrepreneurship education specialization thus rejecting the null hypothesis that stated job availability has no significant effect on entrepreneurship education specialization.

Table 4: Pearson Correlation Static among Variable

		Job Availability
Entrepreneurship Education	Pearson Correlation	.470**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
	N	283

4.4 Regression summary

Regression analysis was done to determine the extent to which job availability affects entrepreneurship education specialization. The results in Table 5 presented the model summary.

Table 5: Effect of Job Availability on Entrepreneurship Education Regression Model summary

Model Summary				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.470 ^a	.221	.218	.558
a. Predictors: (Constant), Job Availability				
b. Dependent Variable: Entrepreneurship Education				

Job availability was found to be satisfactory in explaining entrepreneurship education and this was supported by coefficient of determination i.e. the R square of 22.1%. This shows that job availability explains 22.1% of the model that linked the relationship between job availability and entrepreneurship education. This indicated that 77.9% of the variation in the dependent variable is attributed to other variables not captured in the model. Table 6 shows the regression coefficients of the model.

Table 6: Coefficients of effect of Job availability on Entrepreneurship Education

Coefficients ^a						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	2.598	.169		15.369	.000
	Job Availability	.406	.045	.470	8.932	.000
a. Dependent Variable: Entrepreneurship Education						

The results in Table 6 revealed that job availability and entrepreneurship education are positively and significantly related ($\beta =0.406$, $p=0.000$). Therefore, a unit increase in job availability would

lead to increase in preference for entrepreneurship education by 0.406. The results revealed that job availability has a significant effect on entrepreneurship education specialization.

These findings agree with those of Kochung & Migunde (2011), Conklin, Dahling & Garcia (2012), which found that affective commitment to area of specialization highly correlates to outcome expectations and that outcome expectations play a great role in determining career choices. The findings of Inda-Caro *et al* (2016) and Alexander *et al* (2016) contradict the findings of this research as they found that there was no significant effect and correlation between outcome expectations and career choices.

4.5 Discussion

Jobs determine how we view ourselves in terms of self-worth and self-image and also act as our base of survival economically. They consume a large proportion of our psychological and physical energy and determine our social existence including status, lifestyle, associations, residence attitudes and opinions. The importance of deciding on the occupation one has to choose is largely because of its irreversibility. Occupational decisions are usually made at an early stage in life and may determine one's lifestyle and occupational environment for the rest of one's active time in their occupation. Propensity to behave in a certain manner is influenced by the strength of belief in the results of such an action and how attractive the said consequence is to the perpetrator.

The career planning process needs to shift accordingly with economic changes Availability of job opportunities is an external determinant that influences career choice and which people make their decision based on prevailing economic conditions. The benefit that is pegged as a possible outcome from pursuing a particular career is one of the major factors influencing the decision not excluding the present state of the nation's economy, possibility to grow further ahead from the current position and satisfaction

Choice of career has often been linked with issues relating to job availability which include outcome expectations, innovation, risk propensity, market sensing and inventions (Gemedda, 2015). Conklin, Dahling and Garcia (2012) tested a model based on the satisfaction model of social cognitive career theory that links college students' affective commitment to their major with career outcome expectations and found out that career decision self-efficacy mediates the relationship between affective commitment to the major and career outcome expectations. Further students' perception of abilities-demand fit with their major interacts with affective commitment to moderate these direct and indirect effects.

The study by Borchet (2002), done in the USA, examined, among other factors, the significance of opportunity in making career choices among high school students. The study employed quantitative methods of research and concluded that though students are aware of economic issues, at this level, these issues are of little significance to their life choices. There is therefore little or no substantial value that can be drawn from this research since it covers a population in a very different socio-cultural background as well as level of education. The research method, though quantitative, are also quite different from the ones employed in this research. This study tests, among others, the effect of job availability on entrepreneurship education specialization among university students in Kenya which is much more specific.

Kim and Seo (2014) set out to determine the effect of outcome expectations on SCCT interest among South Korean engineering students and did not find any relationship of importance shared by the two. There is however a probability that a different fit would be observed in a different socio-cultural background among students in a different field of specialization. This study thus

investigated the influence of outcome expectations on SCCT choices among entrepreneurship students in Kenyan universities.

Inda-Caro *et al.*, (2016) examined, among other factors, contextual variables to technological interests among 10th grade Spanish students. Their study employed path analysis and was supportive of social cognitive career theory indicating that perceived social support and barriers were related to technological interests. The results, however, did not support the hypothesis that outcome expectations contribute to career interests. The study was conducted among Spanish teenage students and therefore there is a probability that the conclusions drawn could be different if applied to Kenyan university students pursuing a career in entrepreneurship.

Alexander *et al.*, (2010) examined the effect of, among others, outcome expectations on career choices of new students intending to major in computer related courses in two South African universities. The study revealed that outcome expectations did not have a significant effect on student career choices. As stated earlier the South African study cannot be wholly used to draw conclusions on the subject at hand. Our study therefore seeks a more localized, field specific and quantifiable answers the question “what factors affect student career choices”

Kochung and Migunde (2011) investigated whether outcome expectations, among other factors, affected student career choices. The study used quantitative methods to analyze data collected from secondary students in Kisumu municipality Kenya. It revealed that outcome expectations play an influential role in student career choices. Since the study was conducted among secondary school students there is a need to find out if the same applies for university students. It is also not automatic that the motivation for choice of career is the same for students who specialize in entrepreneurship education. Furthermore, there was need to employ more discreet research methods.

Gavo (2014) also examined the extent to which factors of opportunity influence making career choices among students in Kenyan universities. His study found out that most students felt that opportunity factors play a great role in determining student career choices. However, as stated earlier, though this research was conducted in a similar socio cultural background and similar research methodology used it only focused on one university and, at the same time different field of specialization leading to the conclusion that a different result may be observed if we focused entrepreneurship education in various universities.

This study therefore set out to determine the influence of job availability on Entrepreneurship education specialization in Kenyan universities and found out that the relationship was statistically significant.

5.0 SUMMARY CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

5.1 Summary

Further investigation was done to find out whether job availability had a significant influence on entrepreneurship education specialization which resulted in significance levels at $P < 0.05$. This indicated that the null hypothesis which stated that Availability of job opportunities has no significant effect on entrepreneurship education specialization was rejected.

5.2 Conclusion

This study set out to determine the influence of job availability on Entrepreneurship education specialization in Kenyan universities and found out that the relationship is was statistically

significant. Factors like career utility, probability of advancing in one's occupation, flexibility in terms of work-life balance; economic growth and stability; and the unemployment levels in Kenya are the major driving forces in determining an area of specialization for students. There are a number of factors that influenced students' decision to take part in entrepreneurial education. These reasons included but were not limited to a desire to start one's own enterprise; the desire to acquire knowledge that may be helpful to one's career in larger organizations; as well as an insurance against an economic downturn.

5.3 Recommendations

After graduation, opportunities such as timing and location must be present in order to make use of students' capabilities. Graduates may possess the right skills, talent and ambition but if the graduates themselves do not invest themselves in being in the right location at the right time then their aspirations for a productive career are reduced or even nil. Careers and education do not always make capabilities in sync with the opportunities. This is because experience is seen to carry more weight in certain career paths than education. Most of the time when a student finally settles in a particular path of career after so much anguish may find that it is no longer available or as lucrative as previously thought or perceived.

The study recommends that students should look at themselves as a consolidation of traits and skills and not just an occupation. This will help them acquire the major skills of the entrepreneur which are versatility, agility, innovativeness, determination, relationship and communication skills, the ability to constantly study and improve on previous drawbacks, and the ability to manage work, time, and money. This differs greatly with the traditional perception of education for a job thus embracing the dynamic and promising nature of entrepreneurship and entrepreneurship education as career options as the way to go.

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