



Entrepreneurial Narratives and Entrepreneurial Intention among Undergraduate University Students in Kenya

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Abstract

In the establishment of new businesses, individual entrepreneurial intent is a crucial component. In entrepreneurship theory and research, entrepreneurial intention has shown to be a critical and continuous phenomenon. Despite vocational training institutes teaching youths with the goal of going into self-employment, a substantial percentage of them continue to look for paid work, with many of them being unemployed with poor entrepreneurial aspirations. Yet, the entrepreneurial narratives are critical to understanding the process of entrepreneurship in relation to growth of the firms. The relationship between entrepreneurial intentions and entrepreneurial narrative of established small firms are neglected. Thus, the broad objective was to investigate the effect of entrepreneurial narratives (knowledge, inspiration and transportation) on entrepreneurial intentions. The study had a positivist perspective and used an explanatory research approach. Between January and May 2019, the population comprised of undergraduate university students in their fourth year of study who were enrolled in business-related courses. Techniques such as proportionate, stratified, and random sampling were used. A total of 400 students were chosen from universities in Nyanza and Western Kenya for the study. Structured questionnaires with likert interval measures were used to obtain primary data. The hypothesis was tested using Hayes model six. The findings of the study revealed that knowledge had a favorable impact on entrepreneurial intent ($\beta=0.47$, $p<.05$), inspiration ($\beta=0.14$, $p<.05$) and transportation ($\beta=0.14$, $p<.05$) were significantly associated with entrepreneurial intention. The findings conclude that entrepreneurial narratives encourage entrepreneurial intention among university students. Further, students which deduce knowledge, inspiration transportation from entrepreneurial narratives exhibit high entrepreneurial intention as results of human behavior. As a result, the study recommends that students' attitude toward conduct and perceived behavioral control be improved in order to boost entrepreneurial intent. For example, students may be persuaded that starting their own business is a better alternative for their career and that they can control the process of starting a new company.

Keywords: Entrepreneurial intention, Entrepreneurial Narratives, Knowledge, Inspiration, Transportation.

INTRODUCTION

“Thematic, sequential reports that carry meaning from inferred author to implied reader” are what narratives are (Barry & Elmes 1994). While the phrases "story" and "storytelling" are commonly used interchangeably, there is a difference between the two (Lunsbury & Glynn 2001; Garud *et al.* 2014; Santos & Eisenhardt 2009; Martens *et al.* 2007 In accordance with past articles in the larger research effort of which this

study is a part (Rowell & Gustafsson 2015), as well as other recent research (e.g. Martens et al. 2007; Navis & Glynn 2011), I use the term "narrative": Individual narrative acts and the entire narrative approach's theoretical perspective are both referred to as "narrative."

According to Vannini (2012), stories are narratives in which individuals describe their own experiences, events, personal and collective memories, or facets of their own histories. They may be expressed verbally, in writing, or in other ways. He continues by defining storytelling as the act of telling stories to oneself, others, or researchers. As a result, storytelling is frequently presented theoretically as a means for individuals to make meaning of their own lives. As a result, stories and storytelling are viewed as a mode of communication for describing and interpreting both communal and individual events in order to make sense of personal and shared experiences.

Theories of role recognition and social learning are two that have been proposed to explain the phenomenon of narratives (Gibson, 2004). According to study, people who share their personal stories can persuade others to pursue a particular career route (Bohlmann *et al.*, 2017). As a result, it appears that exposure to successful entrepreneurial stories has an impact on an individual's intention and perceptions of the feasibility and desirability of pursuing an entrepreneurial career. Individuals can gain the skills, information, and attitudes required to embark on a new enterprise by following role models, according to Fellnhöfer (2017). In short, storytelling can develop the attributes and talents of aspiring entrepreneurs in the context of proper formal or informal arrangements, not merely inspiring and motivating readers to choose a specific path (Bae, Qian, Miao, & Fiet, 2014;). However, it is questionable if this is true for novel instructional designs such as multimedia environments. This is especially true for those (re)designing entrepreneurial courses in response to recommendations from researchers for more innovative pedagogical techniques to address the needs of the varied, creative, and inventive world of entrepreneurship (Kuratko, 2005).

What is missing from those studies is that they ignore the external factors that are also responsible for the formation of entrepreneurial intentions, such as entrepreneurial narratives (in addition to internal factors of the individual) (Vesalainen and Timo, 2000). Another gap is that they have not explained how entrepreneurial narratives influence entrepreneurs' intentions (Adeyami, 2006; Liao, Welsch, and Stoica, 2003). As a result, this study investigated the effects of entrepreneurial narratives on entrepreneurial intention, developing and testing the following research hypotheses:

- H_{01} : knowledge has no significant effect on entrepreneurial intention
- H_{02} : Inspiration has no significant effect on entrepreneurial intention
- H_{03} : Transportation has no significant effect on entrepreneurial intention.

EMPIRICAL LITERATURE REVIEW

Knowledge and Entrepreneurial Intention

According to Carter (1993), narrative is a mode of knowing that captures the prosperity and intricacies of sense in human events in a way that no other mode of knowing does. As a result of its multiple interpretations, story is an ideal medium for expressing information received through action. Gabriel 2000; Shank 1998; Mitchell; Czarniawsk 2005; Bandura 2005; Gabriel 2000; Shank 1998; Mitchell; Czarniawsk 2005; Gabriel 2000; Shank 1998; Mitchell; Czarniawsk 2005; Gabriel 2000; Shank 1998; Mitchell; Czarniawsk 2005; Gabriel 2000; Shank 1998; Mitchell;

Czarniawsk 2005; Gabriel 2000; Shank 1998; Mitchell; Czarniawsk 2005; Gabriel 2000; Shank 1998; Mitchell; Czarniawsk 2005; Gabriel (2001). Shank (1998) defines intelligence as the effective application of experience as well as the construction and transmission of narratives. He claims our viewpoint is shaped by our experiences. According to Shank, we can grasp events by referencing to previously understood ones, therefore new conceptions rely on old. Narratives help us relate new knowledge to past occurrences in our memories. Stories are woven trades that build and transmit deep knowledge, according to Gabriel (2000). It's a delicate process that can break down and fail to produce. Gabriel thinks that stories and experiences are inextricably intertwined, and that storytelling is an eternal process.

It is believed that providing sufficient entrepreneurial information, education, and motivation to young people will increase their likelihood of choosing an entrepreneurial career (Turker and Selcuk, 2009). According to Roxas *et al.*, (2008), organized entrepreneurship courses improve entrepreneurial inclinations. Also, entrepreneurial teachers can help students start businesses by teaching specialized skills in schools and adult education programs (Engle *et al.*, 2010). Devonish *et al.* (2010) stress the value of entrepreneurs mentoring their own children to continue or start family enterprises. They can succeed, according to Yusof *et al.* (2007), with sufficient support, education, and managerial skills. Birdthistle (2008) also claims that students are taught entrepreneurship to prepare them for starting a business and working for themselves.

Inspiration and Entrepreneurial Intention

Gabriel (2000) defines storytelling as a weaving, creating art form resulting from deep knowledge. "Good stories can entertain and inspire, but they can't be mass-produced," he maintains. According to Simmons (2001), stories have the ability to inspire, motivate, and persuade, and people don't want more knowledge since they are already drowning in it. She asserts that faith, not facts, is what moves mountains. She continues by stating that what is required is an enticing narrative that pushes individuals to stand out for their convictions. Because they believe, students will pick up where they left off. It's their story now, and they'll keep telling it. It's "the injection of some thought or aim into the mind and the awakening or development of some impulse experience." Weiner-Simpsons (1989). It has evolved into a more comprehensive vision, as Souitaris *et al.* show (2007). Thrash and Elliot (2003) characterized inspiration as I transcendence, (ii) evocation, and (iii) motivation. Awakening to inspiration, transcendence opens up new options. Inspiration is triggered and occurs spontaneously; it is not personal. As a result of its positive connotation, inspiration is seen as an intriguing driving condition.

"Inspiration as a mystic influence demonstrates that our conceptualization is correct: the individual relentlessly pursues something normally beyond his or her capabilities (i.e., transcendence) and can be moved to convey or enforce something newly perceived as a result of the individual's influence (i.e., evocation)," they continue (i.e., motivation). As a result, Thrash and Elliot (2004) argue that the construct's use originates from its capacity to connect phenomena with disparate surface content (e.g., spiritual, artistic, interpersonal) via a consistent conceptual and psychological substrate (i.e., transcendence, evocation, motivation).

The definition of inspiration aligns with and expands on Oleynick *et al.* (2014) 's larger definition of inspiration as a motivating condition that drives people to pursue their dreams, which we feel is particularly relevant for entrepreneurship. The tripartite model of inspiration that underpins this term was first established by Thrash and Elliot

(2003), who described evocation, transcendence, and approach motivation as three key aspects of the mood of inspiration (Oleynick et al., 2014). Inspiration can occur for a variety of reasons, both purposeful and incidental; one is not solely responsible for getting inspired (Thrash & Elliot, 2004). Inspiration creates a sense of something greater or more significant than one's everyday concerns, a state known as transcendence Milyavskaya et al (2012). Finally, people are compelled to discuss, actualize, or convey their new concept after being inspired (Oleynick et al., 2014).

Thrash et al (2014) describe inspiration as a situation, occurrence, or trait. As a result of external stimuli, inspiration might arise in bursts (e.g., people, ideas, events, works of art, etc.). Individual differences in feeling inspired are called trait inspiration. Our logic could be extended to alternative perspectives on inspiration, despite the model's basic components reflecting the idea of inspiration as a triggered event. Studies show that inspiration is distinct from its most common correlation, good emotion. Studies show that good impact lasts throughout the week, while motivation fades on weekends, especially Fridays. Weekends are meant for fun and relaxation, whereas weekdays are meant for work and vocation (Thrash & Elliot, 2004).

Transportation and Entrepreneurial Intention

Green and Brock (2000) claim that transportation can alter views. They define transportation as "absorption into a story" with sights, feelings, and focused attention. They argue that mobility can help create a more realistic story. As a result, characters' experiences or opinions may have a bigger impact on readers' beliefs. They claim transit is convergent whereas elaboration is divergent. Rather than relying on one's own ideas, prior knowledge, or other thoughts and experiences (e.g., then narrative). Rapid travel may remove the person from the diagrams and from current and prior experiences.

The majority of research on narrative used in traditional ventures has focused on how narratives can influence audiences through cognitive mechanisms like sense making (Sonenshein, 2010), learning (Garud, Dunbar, & Bartel, 2011), legitimacy (Humphreys & Brown, 2002), and categorization (Humphreys & Brown, 2002). (Martens, Jennings, & Jennings, 2007). However, the outcomes of this study show that narratives may have a distinct function. Evidence shows that social entrepreneurs frequently use tales to elicit emotional responses from their stakeholders.

Several scholars have emphasized the persuasive power of emotions in business circumstances, with a special emphasis on the importance of passion. Baum *et al.*, (2001), Sudek (2006–2007), Baron (2008), Cardon et al., (2009), Mitteness *et al.*, (2012), Chan and Park (2013), Galbraith, *et al.*, (2013), and Mason *et al.*, (2017), to name a few, argue that expressing specific emotions by entrepreneurs leads to greater success in their businesses. Emotions have an important role in funders' decisions and entrepreneurial success, according to new research. For example, Davis *et al.*, (2017) find that an entrepreneur's enthusiasm boosts perceived product originality, which is a requirement for receiving financial assistance.

METHODOLOGY

Because of the cause-and-effect aspect of this study, an explanatory research design was adopted. According to university registries, the population of interest consisted of 6032 fourth-year undergraduate students in public universities in Nyanza and Western Kenya enrolled in the fourth year (2018/2019) academic year of study doing business-related courses. This group's interest stems from the fact that fourth-year students are

nearing the end of their studies and are expected to be seriously contemplating their employment options after graduation. Additionally, they represent a dynamic age group (mid-twenties), which lends itself to study on entrepreneurial mindsets. Finally, because students in this cohort are unlikely to have considerable past business experience, which could result in hindsight or success bias in their responses, the Yamane (1967:886) simplified formula was used to establish sample sizes of 400 respondents. To choose a sample from the population, a multistage sampling design with stratification was used. and random sampling was used. The research was conducted using a standardized 7-point Likert scale questionnaire. Crobach alpha (0.7) test was used to verify reliability.

Measurement of Variables

Entrepreneurial narratives were measured by asking students to recall an entrepreneurial story they had heard or read in the past. The participants were informed to respond to the entrepreneurial narratives who, what, why, where, when, and how questions, as outlined by Shankar et al (2001). Following their exposure to the narrative, participants were asked to complete a questionnaire to ascertain the effect of various storytelling viewpoints on an individual's motivation to work for themselves.

The respondent's perception of his ability to conduct the activity of becoming an entrepreneur is measured by his perceived behavioral control. Researchers have applied single-item measures (Krueger Jr et al., 2000) to an 18-item self-efficacy scale to assess perceived behavioral control, which is comparable to subjective norms and attitudes toward behavior Kolvereid et al (2006). According to the concept of self-efficacy, it is "people's conviction in their abilities to achieve preset levels of performance that exert control over events that affect their lives" (Bandura, 1994).

Data Analysis

To statistically describe and compare variables, the study employed an explanatory research methodology and generated descriptive statistics such as mean and standard deviation. Furthermore, correlation and multiple regression analyses were performed. The goal of correlation analysis is to determine the degree to which variables are favorably or negatively connected. Linear multiple regression analysis, on the other hand, was employed to determine the amount to which independent factors explain fluctuations in the dependent variable.

RESULTS

Descriptive Statistics

Inspiration had the highest mean of 5.766, according to the findings. This demonstrates that students were more inspired by narratives than by information (mean = 5.761) or by transportation (mean = 5.29). Pearson Product Moment correlation was used to determine the relationship between knowledge, inspiration, and transportation, as well as entrepreneurial purpose. According to the findings in Table 1, there are positive and significant correlations between knowledge and entrepreneurial ambition ($r = 0.700$, $p = 0.01$), inspiration and entrepreneurial intention ($r = 0.680$, $p = 0.01$), and transportation and innovativeness ($r = 0.608$, $p = 0.01$). Knowledge and entrepreneurial intention have a stronger association ($r = 0.700$, $p = 0.01$).

Table 1: Correlation Results

	Entrepreneurial intention	Knowledge	Inspiration	Transportation
entrepreneurial Intention	1			
Knowledge	.700**	1		
Inspiration	.680**	.759**	1	
EN Transportation	.608**	.694**	.668**	1

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Source: Field Data, 2020

Multiple Regression Analysis

The effect of knowledge, motivation, and mobility on entrepreneurial intention was investigated using linear multiple regression analysis. Because ANOVA removes some of the random variability, significant differences may be detected more quickly, and it also displays the interactions between components, the study employed it to evaluate the correlations. The model is statistically significant in predicting entrepreneurial intention, with a significance score of F (value = 144.42). According to the R², the three independent factors analyzed account for 55% of the variation in entrepreneurial intention. There was also no serial correlation because the Durbin-Watson value was within the rule of thumb (1.569).

Hypothesis Testing

Based on the standardized coefficients beta and p-value it was possible to determine whether to reject or fail to reject each hypothesis as follows:

Hypothesis 1

H₀₁: knowledge has no significant effect on entrepreneurial intention

Table 2 shows the findings of multiple regressions, which show that knowledge had no effect on entrepreneurial inclinations, as indicated by a beta value of 1 = 0.139 (p-value = 0.000, which is less than = 0.05). As a result, the null hypothesis of no influence of knowledge on entrepreneurial ambitions is supported. Thus, based on these findings the study infers those entrepreneurial narratives gives knowledge that improves entrepreneurial intention.

Hypothesis 2

H₀₂: Inspiration has no significant effect on entrepreneurial intention

Table 2 shows that both the standardized coefficient beta and the p value of inspiration were positive and significant (2= 0.14, p 0.05). As a consequence, the null hypothesis is confirmed that knowledge has a significant positive effect on entrepreneurial inclination. As a result of these findings, the study concludes that entrepreneurial narratives inspire entrepreneurial ambition.

Hypothesis 3

H₀₃: Transportation has no significant effect on entrepreneurial intention.

Table 2 shows that the p-value is significant (p 0.05), and the transportation beta value was positive (3= 0.14). As a result, the null hypothesis is supported, implying that transportation has a positive and entrepreneurial intent. Consequently, the study infers those entrepreneurial narratives give transportation that increases entrepreneurial intention

Table 2: Linear Multiple Regression Results

Model Summary						
R	R-sq	MSE	F	df1	df2	p
0.794	0.631	0.438	146.986	4	344	0.000
Model						
	coeff	se	t	P	LLCI	ULCI
Constant	1.057	0.195	5.411	0.000	0.673	1.441
EN_Knowl	0.139	0.056	2.501	0.013	0.030	0.248
EN_Inspi	0.144	0.048	2.984	0.003	0.049	0.239
EN_Trans	0.093	0.042	2.225	0.027	0.011	0.175

Source (Field data, 2020)

CONCLUSION

Knowledge was found to have a favorable impact on entrepreneurial intent in the study. Henry et al., (2004) proposed that entrepreneurship education greatly boosts the start-up rate, which is consistent with the findings. In a similar vein, Menzies & Paradi (2002) discovered that after 15 years, 48 percent of entrepreneurship group students had started their own businesses. The implication is that entrepreneurship education is significantly associated with entrepreneurial intention. The findings are also consistent with Levie and Autio (2008), who found that entrepreneurship education is an effective way to foster entrepreneurship. According to Fox and Pennington (2009), entrepreneurship education has a major impact on entrepreneurial activity, resulting in economic development through business start-ups that generate new employment and money.

According to the results of the study, inspiration had a favorable and significant impact on entrepreneurial purpose. According to the findings, Turker and Selcuk (2009) discovered that if a university gives appropriate knowledge and inspiration for entrepreneurship, the likelihood of young people selecting an entrepreneurial profession increases. The study established that transport positively impacted on entrepreneurial intention ($\beta_3 = 0.09$, $p < 0.05$). The findings imply that mobility might create a narrative experience that appears to be real. Transportation is likely to elicit significant emotions in the story characters; these characters' experiences can then have a positive impact on the readers' belief. As a result, transportation plays an important role in encouraging students to pursue business goals.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The study has an effect on university administrators, government officials, and families' opinions toward activities that foster student entrepreneurial intent. To begin, the study determined that students' attitudes toward conduct, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control all contribute to the development of entrepreneurial purpose. These findings suggest that politicians and institutions should work to strengthen these motivating factors in order to increase students' entrepreneurial intentions. While more perceived control of behavior may be good, it is unlikely to influence students' attitudes toward entrepreneurship or their subjective norms in this area (Carrier 2005; Linan *et al.*, 2011). As a result, content should be generated that aims to increase all three of these antecedents to entrepreneurial intentions. Suggestions for enhancing the appearance of attitude toward behavior and subjective standards about entrepreneurial ambition may also be addressed to the university's top administration, as well as to the students' family and friends.

In terms of policy, policymakers must acknowledge that government initiatives can only help young people start businesses if they alter their attitudes, subjective norms, and PBC, inspiring them to create a sustainable business. Capital availability, subsidies, reduced bureaucracy, fewer rules, and fewer prerequisites for starting a firm may all communicate to entrepreneurs that the government and society support them. As a result of their increased awareness of the government's and society's support for entrepreneurship, students may develop more favorable subjective norms and attitudes about entrepreneurship.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

Arising from the implications and limitations of the research, recommendations for further study are made. While this study successfully examined the effect of entrepreneurial narratives and entrepreneurial intention. It has also presented a rich prospect for other areas to be researched in future. In terms of scope, the study was only confined to fourth-year students in public universities. It would however be important to carry out similar study across different institutions of higher learning. Future research should therefore expand to technical training institutes because entrepreneurial intentions among the students vary according to the institution. Future research could re-examine the conceptual model employed in this study with a bigger sample size in order to generalize the findings to a larger population. Besides, future studies may explore whether personal traits are a significant trigger of entrepreneurial intention.

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