

Assessing Students' Perspectives Towards Entrepreneurship in South Africa

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Abstract

The devastating truth for young people in the education sector, particularly at the tertiary level, is that they will have no job after finishing their degrees. It is still challenging to find work, making starting and running your own business an attractive and necessary alternative source of income. Thus, an avenue out of poverty exists in Africa's critical need to be discovered and establishing a business may hold the key. This study sought to assess students' perspectives on entrepreneurship in the South African higher education sector. Data was collected from 332 students using a probability sampling approach. Specifically, a simple random sampling technique was adopted to identify the respondents. A quantitative and descriptive study was undertaken using a Likert Scale questionnaire to ascertain students' feelings towards entrepreneurship. Data were analyzed through the statistical package for social sciences (SPSS) version 24 using descriptive statistics. Tables, percentages and frequency distribution were used to present the findings of this study. The results reveal an overwhelming agreement among students that various factors, viz. personal attitude, perceived behavior control, self-efficacy, subjective norms, and entrepreneurial intention, are the significant determinants of entrepreneurship. Therefore, institutional managers should provide a supportive structure and atmosphere to foster the growth of entrepreneurial behaviour. This could boost individual confidence and the sense that completing tasks is simple, hence promoting perceived behaviour control. The findings of this study could assist higher education institution managers in developing initiatives that can create and entrench entrepreneurial skills and mindsets in students such that they are well prepared to face the unpredictable and ever-changing world. This study has contributed to the literature on entrepreneurship in the higher education and the developing world. Future research should focus on a qualitative research design to understand the challenges students encounter in establishing startups.

Keywords: Students, Higher Education Institution, South Africa, Entrepreneurship, Theory of Planned Behaviour.

JEL Classification: M21, A22.

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Introduction

Young people in the education sector, especially at the tertiary level, face a disastrous reality about their future after completing their degrees. The challenge of finding employment remains a problem, thereby making entrepreneurship a viable and alternative activity for survival. South Africa is one of the leading and large economies in the African continent. However, in the past five years, it has suffered economic setbacks, which have subsequently resulted in the downgrading of the economy into a non-investment grade, known as “junk status”, by top rating agencies, namely, Moody's, Fitch, and Standard and Poor's (S&P) Global Ratings (Wallace, 2019). Another challenge is that young South Africans are schooled and equipped to enter professions from preschool through to university graduation, yet this training frequently ignores the principles of entrepreneurship. This imbalance in South Africa's educational system prevents aspiring entrepreneurs from obtaining the skills required when beginning a firm. It presents an opportunity for experienced entrepreneurs and organizations to provide foundational training programs for students in their communities who seek core entrepreneurial training, mentorship, and help through their business development initiatives. Thus, young, eager entrepreneurs should enrich their knowledge and skills under the

tutelage of a seasoned business person who can provide them with information, mentorship, and advice to start successful business ventures (Mjadu, 2018). According to Shaik (2019), the business environment has evolved recently. There has been a disruption in how work is done due to increased machinery and artificial intelligence usage to drive business. It is a challenge to sections of the population looking for employment in the labour market, and students in higher education institutions are not an exception. Nickels, McHugh, and McHugh (2010) noted that entrepreneurship is an important element of economic growth, productivity, and social development. Furthermore, the authors believe that students who have the privilege to learn entrepreneurship and business education at an early stage enjoy several benefits, such as freedom in decision-making, higher self-esteem, and a greater sense of control. However, Leshilo and Lethoko (2017) believe that young entrepreneurs face immense hurdles owing to a lack of access to finance, business education and training, market possibilities, and awareness of government activities, all of which are worsened by stringent government laws and restrictions.

Similarly, Sibisi (2018) averred that Africa is in desperate need of a path out of poverty, and business could be the key. It has the potential to create millions of employment opportunities in Africa, and young entrepreneurs may be the catalyst for the positive change that is notably required. While many young people consider starting a business, the sector faces numerous hurdles, including a lack of information, funding, networking, and mentoring. These four pillars are essential for modern-day entrepreneurship and establishing a virtual presence in the digital economy. Everything around people is connected, and, to succeed in future smart cities, entrepreneurs must inhabit the virtual world. This study evaluated students' perspectives towards entrepreneurship in the South African higher education sector. Specifically, the study analysed the following:

- Students' perception of personal attitude.
- Students' perception of perceived behaviour control.
- Students' perception of self-efficacy.
- Students' perception of subjective norms.
- Students' perception of entrepreneurial intention.

Literature Review. The Theoretical Background of Entrepreneurship

The concept of entrepreneurship should not be merely understood or seen as something that happens by chance. It is a process that must be taken seriously because it requires one to be patient, have the desire, be able to take risks, be consistent, and abide by principles of proper design and originality (Al-Awlaqi, Aamer, & Habtoor, 2018). It means that everything starts from having positive intentions to working on a concept or an idea that might be implemented for the business to start. Therefore, an entrepreneur is a person who has a high ambition to succeed, is self-confident, and has the capabilities to transact and take risks using knowledge and learning prospects and to become involved in intentional preparation and participate in active business (Al-Ani, Musawi & Osman, 2020). Many scholars and policymakers have lauded entrepreneurship as a tool that offers an opportunity to create wealth and social value in society (Welter, Baker, Audretsch, & Gartner, 2017; Chandra & Shang, 2017).

This study is based on the theory of planned behaviour (TPB). The TPB has been used and tested in different sectors of the working environment. For instance, Ru, Wang, and Yan (2018) revealed that the TPB had been used regularly to predict the intentions of pro-environment and comportment. Despite the positive contribution of TPB in elucidating factors related to pro-environmental behaviour, various other studies have enriched the TPB philosophy. Therefore, it is important to highlight the factors that drive an individual's inner intention to become an entrepreneur, and these should be prioritized and encouraged. In terms of education, entrepreneurship education can stimulate students to think of putting in place a business or corporation. Thus, the likelihood of success for individuals or students who get trained in entrepreneurship is higher than for those who have not received such training and knowledge (Global Entrepreneurship Monitor, 2016). The TPB comprises subjective norms, perceived behaviour control, attitude, and intention. The TPB claims that three factors impact behavioural purposes: attitude towards the behaviour, subjective norms regarding the behaviour, and perceived behavioural control. This theory suggests that a favourable attitude and a supportive subjective norm motivate individuals to engage in the action; however, the intention is formed only when perceived control over the conduct is strong enough (Ajzen, 1991).

Entrepreneurial Intention. Extant research has shown that several factors trigger or determine the behaviour of individuals towards entrepreneurship, and emphasis on or attention to students' perception of entrepreneurship has been given in entrepreneurship intention. Thus, a person's foundation in entrepreneurship intentions has been presented by utilizing many psychological models (Gelderen, 2016). Therefore, there is a need to understand how successful businesses are established from the conception of a

novel free enterprise/business to their successful development. It means having an explicit description and understanding of people's intentions to be involved in entrepreneurial activities (Kirkley, 2016) is important.

In recent times, the role of education in the entrepreneurship sector has been well documented in the literature as a contributing factor in helping youth find some opportunities (Entrialgo & Iglesias, 2016; Fayolle & Gailly, 2015). The TPB has been used to gauge or predict students' entrepreneurship intentions (Saraih, Aris, Mutalib, Ahmad, & Amlus, 2018). Yi (2020) asserted that entrepreneurial intention (EI) is how individuals depict their intention to inaugurate a novel project or idea and serve as a tool used to create a means for survival other than regular employment. Similarly, Ladd, Hind, and Lawrence (2019) considered EI as an intention that deals with students' behaviour in tertiary institutions in formulating business ideas at the end of their studies. However, in South Africa, one of the major obstacles hindering the setting up a new business, especially among young people from a disadvantaged background, is access to startup capital. Furthermore, young people in business are also confronted with the challenge of access to expansion capital that can help them as young entrepreneurs grow their business from its current state to reach new heights (Gwija, Chuks, & Iwu, 2014).

Self-Efficacy. Recent and current research has emphasized the SE concept as a tool used to evaluate entrepreneurial activities (Palmer, Niemand, Stöckmann, Kraus, & Kailer, 2019). Thus, motivated individuals displaying high self-efficacy behaviour trust their capacities and remain confident of achieving their planned responsibilities. SE helps one who intends to start making proper choices and understand the effort needed to invest in the planned intention. It has been discovered that SE has a significant impact on the performance of entrepreneurial activities (Bouncken & Reuschl, 2018) and a positive effect on the performance of a newly implemented business (McGee & Peterson, 2019). In organizational structures with robust leadership, self-efficacy is believed to inspire creative and innovative behaviour (Maran, Furtner, Kraus, Liegl, & Jones, 2019; Brand, Tiberius, Bican, & Brem, 2019).

Self-efficacy is defined as a person's conviction in their ability to act. Furthermore, someone with strong self-efficacy is very confident in acting. As a result, self-efficacy is required to motivate employees to believe in their abilities to attain goals or expected outcomes (Rahmi, Yusuf, & Priyatama, 2014). According to Ghufron and Risnawita (2010), self-efficacy is a person's conviction in their capacity to cope with a wide variety of living conditions. SE suggests that someone's belief is connected to their power to set up a business. As such, self-efficacy is a predictor of EI. It is also important to highlight those individuals who can become entrepreneurs may not do so if they believe that entrepreneurship will not assist them in achieving or fulfilling their needs (Hsu, Wiklund, & Cotton, 2017). Thus, individuals with a high level of self-efficacy show a profound certainty in their capabilities and confidence about their capacity to complete given tasks (Palmer et al., 2019). Crespo, Belchior, and Costa (2018) asserted that SE drives individuals to have the desire to become an entrepreneur.

Personal Attitude. Many scholars in different contexts have defined an attitude. Another school of thought suggests that attitude is an evaluation of things or objects, which may constitute a positive or negative behaviour. An individual's attitude towards a particular behaviour leads to a stronger intention to perform the behaviour (Lin, Goodsite, & Sanderson, 2015). Personal development aimed at developing favourable attitudes towards entrepreneurship should be supported in higher education frameworks alongside incubators that improve individual attitudes towards entrepreneurship. Personal growth and incubators may also aid in the formation of social networks that will assist the entrepreneur in their endeavour. Therefore, the development of incubators where the entrepreneur may receive balanced support and a holistic strategy is advocated (Fenech, Baguant, & Ivanov, 2019).

Attitude behaviour is "the degree to which a person has a favourable or unfavourable evaluation or appraisal of the behaviour in question" (Ajzen, 1991). Attitude is a multidimensional concept comprising affective or experiential attitude and instrumental or cognitive attitude. Affective attitude refers to feelings or emotions such as joy, anger, and satisfaction, which are vital in driving behaviour, whereas cognitive attitude refers to arguments, beliefs, and thoughts (Ajzen, 1991; Fernandes, & Proença, 2013). Thus, higher education institutions offering entrepreneurship education programmes should offer a variety of courses and not only focus on management courses offered, in most cases, by a business school and aimed at increasing students' business skills or competence but also focus on developing self-confidence and creating positive emotions towards entrepreneurship (Vamvaka, Stoforos, Palaskas, & Botsaris, 2020). From both the points of view of rhetoric and practice, entrepreneurship requires one to acquire knowledge or educational elements that can influence success. Thus, achieving a certain level of education affects individual characteristics to plan for a significant role in the entrepreneurial sector. Some factors or features that contribute positively to an individual's entrepreneurial career and success are inventiveness, determination, concern, promise, persuasion, self-assurance, and confidence (Kaur & Bains, 2013).

Perceived Behaviour Control. People with a high perceived level of behavioural control are more likely to be motivated to engage in the action at hand and to continue doing so. People who have less perceived behavioural control, on the other hand, should be less motivated to participate in the activity, and their efforts should be brief. Because of the perceived behavioural control construct, we have better understood the fundamentals of behaviour development and modulation (Yzer, 2012). Other scholars have suggested that PBC should also be seen as an individual capacity to convey a particular behaviour. It is also used in different contexts, such as to predict wedding intent (Shahrabadi, Karimi-Shahanjarini, Dashti, Soltanian, & Garmaroudi, 2017), succession exchanging goal (Lois, Mariano, & Rondinella, 2015), and people looking for work (Tsang, Wang, & Ku, 2015). Previous research has investigated students' perceptions of PBC and EI (Benachenhou, Fethi, & Djaoued, 2017; Marire, Mafini, & Dhump, 2017; Saraih et al., 2018), and the results found have shown mixed relationships. Some studies have revealed the existence of a positive relationship between attitude towards behaviour and EI (Fantaye, 2019), whereas others have reached a conclusion showing that the relationship between PBC and EI is not significant (Kadir et al., 2012). Entrepreneurial PBC has a considerable influence on EI. Entrepreneurial PBC states that when people think they are in control of their behaviour, they are more likely to act on their desires. Given that entrepreneurial PBC has a significant influence on EI, it follows that entrepreneurship is a protracted process of accomplishing corporate goals (Lim, Kim, & Kim, 2021).

Subjective Norms. Subjective norms have been a subject of debate among academics and practitioners in understanding individuals' entrepreneurship intentions (Canestrino, Ćwiklicki, Magliocca, & Pawelek, 2020). Thus, subjective norms are widely viewed as the driver of EI (Hockerts, 2015). Many theoretical prototypes are being developed to understand SN to a large extent. An assessment of SN backgrounds has also been conducted to understand different ways of handling SN in a practical context in entrepreneurship and other areas. SN is connected to individual disposition, such as proactive personality (Chipeta & Surujlal, 2017), including characteristics of communal demography such as gender, and is a predictor of entrepreneurial intentions (Chipeta, Surujlal, & Koloba, 2016). A society with evident collectivistic tendencies indicates that the social framework is prioritized significantly. As a result, family, friends, and several other linked sub-groups influence individual decision-making (Tiwari, Bhat, & Tikoria, 2017). Subjective norms refer to perceived societal pressure to engage in or refrain from engaging in a particular behaviour; as a result, this factor becomes the primary reflection of social and cultural values. An estimation of the subjective norm is obtained by analyzing two variables: beliefs about how other significant people believe the individual should behave (normative beliefs), and motivation, which refers to the general tendency that exists in complying with the norms of a group taken as a reference (Shook & Bratianu, 2010). According to Tiwari, Bhat, and Tikoria (2017), subjective norms influence social EI. However, it has been highlighted that the findings involving subjective norms are counterintuitive to Ernst's (2011) earlier study, which found that subjective norms had no significant link with EI. Therefore, the role of subjective norms should be investigated further in collectivist nations with strong family ties. This is because pressure from key individuals and the immediate surroundings impacts decision-making.

Methodology and Research Methods

This study adopted a quantitative and descriptive research design. Descriptive research is a form of analysis that uses methodologies to describe the variables that form the subject of the research investigation. The focal point of this method is the "what" of the research rather than the "why". Descriptive research is a quantitative research method that utilizes variables to address a market problem using a quantitative research tool (Blumberg, Cooper, & Schindler, 2014). The data used in this study was collected from 332 out of the envisaged 400 respondents. It represents an 83% response rate, deemed an acceptable threshold as suggested by Fincham (2008). The researcher adopted a simple random sampling technique. Thus, a simple random sample is a randomly selected element of a population. Using this sampling approach, every member of the population has an equal chance of being selected. This approach is considered more accessible than other probability approaches. Any research conducted using this sampling approach has good validity because the samples are identified randomly (Taherdoost, 2016). A Likert scale ranging from strongly disagree = 1, agree = 2; uncertain = 3, disagree = 4, and strongly agree = 5 was used to gauge students' feeling of personal attitude, subjective norms, self-efficacy, perceived behaviour control, and entrepreneurial intention. Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics using the statistical package known as SPSS.

Results

Demographic Profile of Participants. Table 1 shows the demographic profile of students that participated in this study. The data shows that 50.9% of the respondents were female, while 49.1% were male. From the data, the ratio of males to females is approximately the same. In terms of age, more than half of the

respondents, 51.2%, were below 24 years, 38.3% were between 25 and 29 years, 9.6% were between 30 and 34 years, and three were 35 years and above. From the analysis, the majority (89.5%) of the respondents were young adults (from below 24 to 29 years). 29.2% of the respondents were in their second year, 28.9% – in their third year, 25.3% – in their first year, and 16.6% – in their fourth year. The analysis suggests that the respondents in the second year slightly dominated the sample frame.

Table 1. Demographic Profile of Participants

	Description	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	163	49.1%
	Female	169	50.9%
Total		332	100
Age group	Below 24	170	51.2%
	25–29	127	38.3%
	30–34	32	9.6%
	35 and above	3	0.9%
Total		332	100
Level of study	1st Year	84	25.3%
	2nd Year	97	29.2%
	3rd Year	96	28.9%
	4th Year	55	16.6%
Total		332	100

Source: Developed by the author

Reliability and Validity. The two most important constructs for measuring the integrity of the research process are reliability and validity. Several items on the same constructs are used to calculate reliability. In general, reliability with a coefficient alpha score of greater than 0.7 is regarded as adequate (Schrepp, 2020). Cronbach's alpha was used to examine the reliability of this study, and all the constructs had a reliability coefficient above the acceptable threshold, as indicated in Table 2. On the other hand, validity determines if the items measure the same constructs. The validity of this study was determined by the convergent and discriminant values (Zinbarg et al., 2018). An exploratory factor analysis was performed to ascertain if the items were loading into the same defined constructs. As shown in Table 2, all items loaded heavily in their various hypothesized latent constructs, implying that the constructs were valid. In summary, all the parameters to ascertain the reliability and validity of the data were met, thus warranting the researcher to analyze the data further.

Table 2. Construct Reliability and Validity

Constructs	Codes	Factor loading	Chronbach Alpha
Entrepreneurial intention	EI1	0.817	0.877
	EI2	0.772	
	EI3	0.798	
	EI4	0.781	
	EI5	0.770	
	EI6	0.780	
Personal attitude	PA1	0.767	0.767
	PA2	0.666	
	PA3	0.813	
	PA4	0.814	
Perceived behaviour Control	PBC1	0.745	0.858
	PBC2	0.764	
	PBC3	0.760	
	PBC4	0.776	
	PBC5	0.770	
	PBC6	0.774	
Self-efficacy	SE1	0.774	0.803
	SE2	0.811	
	SE3	0.811	
	SE4	0.774	
Subjective norms	SN1	0.804	0.820
	SN2	0.809	
	SN3	0.791	
	SN4	0.821	

Source: Developed by the author

Descriptive Analysis. Students' perceptions of personal attitude, behaviour control, self-efficacy, subjective norms, and entrepreneurial intention are discussed in the following sections. Positive statements (strongly agree and agree) were interpreted as agreement, while negative statements (disagree and strongly disagree) were interpreted as disagreement. The mean value was used to show the levels of agreement and disagreement. A value less than 2.5 is disagreement, while a value greater than 3.5 is considered agreement. A neutral value ranges from 2.5 to 3.49 (Wekeza & Sibanda, 2019).

Personal Attitude Towards Entrepreneurship. According to the data in Table 3, a significant number (83.8%) of the respondents agreed (agree=278) that being an entrepreneur implied more advantages than disadvantages to themselves, yielding a mean result of $M=4.19\pm 0.939$; $p<0.001$. Similarly, a significant number (75.9%) agreed (agree=252) that a career as an entrepreneur is attractive, with the result given as $M=4.00\pm 1.124$; $p<0.001$. There was significant agreement (agree=240) among respondents (72.2%) stating that if they had the opportunity and resources, they would like to start a firm, with the mean value given as $M=3.87\pm 1.185$; $p<0.001$. Equally, 74.1% of the respondents agreed (agree=246) that being an entrepreneur would entail great satisfaction, with the result given as $M=3.99\pm 1.117$; $p<0.001$. It was found that the first statement, referring to being an entrepreneur implying more advantages than disadvantages for oneself, was a core influence on entrepreneurship.

Table 3. Frequency Distribution of Perceived Attitude Towards Entrepreneurship

Code	Personal Attitude	Disagree	Uncertain	Agree	Mean	Std	P-value
PA1	Being an entrepreneur implies more advantages than disadvantages to me.	21 (6.3%)	33 (9.9%)	278 (83.8%)	4.19	0.939	0.000
PA2	A career as an entrepreneur is attractive to me.	42(12.6%)	38 (11.4%)	252 (75.9%)	4.00	1.124	0.000
PA3	If I had the opportunity and resources, I'd like to start a firm.	55 (16.5%)	37 (11.1%)	240 (72.2%)	3.87	1.185	0.000
PA4	Being an entrepreneur would entail great satisfaction for me.	43 (12.9%)	43 (13%)	246 (74.1%)	3.99	1.117	0.000

Source: Developed by the author

Perception of Self-Efficacy Towards Entrepreneurship. According to the data in Table 4, a significant number (66.9%) of the respondents agreed (agree = 222) that they thought they had the skills to detect business opportunities in the market, yielding a mean result of $M = 3.73\pm 1.142$; $p<0.001$. A significant number (73.4%) agreed (agree = 244) that professionally, they considered themselves much more persistent than others, with the result given as $M = 3.94\pm 1.074$; $p<0.001$. There was significant agreement (agree = 243) among respondents (73.2%) stating that they always find creative solutions to the problems that they encounter, with the mean value given as $M = 3.85\pm 1.086$; $p<0.001$. Equally, 70.7% of the respondents agreed (agree = 235) that they performed duties correctly, respecting the deadlines set, with the result as $M = 3.90\pm 1.098$; $p<0.001$. The analysis of the attitudes indicates that the respondents viewed themselves as having self-efficacy toward entrepreneurship. It was found that the second statement, “Professionally, I consider myself much more persistent than others”, had the most support for self-efficacy toward entrepreneurship.

Table 4. Frequency Distribution of Perceived Self-Efficacy Towards Entrepreneurship

Code	Self-Efficacy	Disagree	Uncertain	Agree	Mean	Std	P-value
SE1	I think I have the skills to detect business opportunities in the market.	56 (16.8%)	54 (16.3%)	222 (66.9%)	3.73	1.142	0.000
SE2	Professionally, I consider myself much more persistent than others.	45 (13.5%)	43 (13%)	244 (73.4%)	3.94	1.074	0.000
SE3	I always find creative solutions to the problems I encounter.	51 (15.3%)	38 (11.4%)	243 (73.2%)	3.85	1.086	0.000
SE4	I perform my duties properly, respecting the deadlines set.	45 (13.5%)	52 (15.7%)	235 (70.7%)	3.90	1.098	0.000

Source: Developed by the author

Perception of Perceived Behaviour Control Towards Entrepreneurship. According to the data in Table 5, a significant number (72.2%) of the respondents agreed (agree = 240) that starting a firm and keeping it working would be easy for them, yielding a mean result of $M = 3.92\pm 1.113$; $p<0.001$. There was significant agreement (agree = 239) among the respondents (71.9%) that they were prepared to start a viable firm, with

the result given as $M = 3.91 \pm 1.090$; $p < 0.001$. There was significant agreement (agree = 227) among the respondents (68.4%) that they could control the creation process of a new firm, with the mean value given as $M = 3.81 \pm 1.095$; $p < 0.001$. In terms of the statement “I know the necessary practical details to start a firm”, a significant majority (72.9%) of the respondents agreed (agree = 242) that they knew the necessary practical details to start a firm, with the result given as $M = 3.93 \pm 1.112$; $p < 0.001$. Nevertheless, only 67.4% believed (agree = 224) that they knew how to develop an entrepreneurial project, yielding a result of $M = 3.80 \pm 1.114$; $p < 0.001$. In addition, 70.1% agreed (agree = 233) that if they tried to start a firm, they would have a high probability of succeeding. The analysis of PBC indicates that the respondents held a positive behaviour towards entrepreneurship. It was found that the fourth statement, “I know the necessary practical details to start a firm”, had the most support for entrepreneurship.

Table 5. Frequency Distribution of Perceived Behaviour Control Towards Entrepreneurship

Code	Perceived Behaviour Control	Disagree	Uncertain	Agree	Mean	Std	P-value
PBC1	To start a firm and keep it working would be easy for me.	47 (14.1%)	45 (13.6%)	240 (72.2%)	3.92	1.113	0.000
PBC2	I am prepared to start a viable firm.	45 (13.5%)	48 (14.5%)	239 (71.9%)	3.91	1.090	0.000
PBC3	I can control the creation process of a new firm.	49 (14.7%)	56 (16.9%)	227 (68.4%)	3.81	1.095	0.000
PBC4	I know the necessary practical details to start a firm.	50 (15%)	40 (12%)	242 (72.9%)	3.93	1.112	0.000
PBC5	I know how to develop an entrepreneurial project.	46 (13.8%)	62 (18.7%)	224 (67.4%)	3.80	1.114	0.000
PBC6	If I tried to start a firm, I would have a high probability of succeeding.	52 (15.7%)	47 (14.2%)	233 (70.1%)	3.86	1.102	0.000

Source: Developed by the author

Perception of Subjective Norms Towards Entrepreneurship. According to the data in Table 6, a significant number (70.6%) of the respondents agreed (agree = 234) that they believed that their closest family thought they should be self-employed, yielding a mean result of $M = 3.89 \pm 1.158$; $p < 0.001$. There was significant agreement (agree = 247) among the respondents (74.4%) that they believed that their closest friends thought that they should be self-employed, with the result given as $M = 3.96 \pm 1.090$; $p < 0.001$. There was significant agreement (agree = 241) among the respondents (72.5%) that they believed that their closest colleagues and coursemates thought that they should be self-employed, with the mean value given as $M = 3.90 \pm 1.132$; $p < 0.001$. There was significant agreement (agree = 240) among the respondents (72.3%) that they believed that people who were important to them thought that they should be self-employed, with the mean value given as $M = 3.95 \pm 1.088$; $p < 0.001$. The analysis of the influence of subjective norms revealed that the second statement, “I believe that my closest friends think I should be self-employed”, had the most subjective norm influence.

Table 6. Frequency Distribution of Perceived Subjective Norms on Entrepreneurship

Code	Subjective Norms	Disagree	Uncertain	Agree	Mean	Std	P-value
SN1	I believe that my closest family think I should be self-employed.	53 (15.9%)	45 (13.6%)	234 (70.6%)	3.89	1.158	0.000
SN2	I believe that my closest friends think I should be self-employed.	47 (14.1%)	38 (11.4%)	247 (74.4%)	3.96	1.090	0.000
SN3	I believe that my closest colleague and coursemates think I should be self-employed.	56 (13.8%)	45 (13.6%)	241 (72.5%)	3.90	1.132	0.000
SN4	I believe people who are important to me think I should be self-employed.	43 (12.9%)	49 (14.8%)	240 (72.3%)	3.95	1.088	0.000

Source: Developed by the author

Perception of Entrepreneurship Intention. According to the data in Table 7, a significant number (73.2%) of the respondents agreed (agree = 243) that they were ready to do anything to be an entrepreneur, yielding a mean result of $M = 3.96 \pm 1.079$; $p < 0.001$. There was significant agreement (agree=237) among the respondents (71.4%) that their professional goal was to become an entrepreneur, with the result given as $M = 3.89 \pm 1.086$; $p < 0.001$. There was significant agreement (agree = 246) among the respondents (74.1%) that

they would make every effort to start and run a firm, with the mean value given as $M = 3.94 \pm 1.096$; $p < 0.001$. There was significant agreement (agree = 250) among the respondents (75.3%) that they were determined to create a firm in the future, with the mean value given as $M = 4.04 \pm 1.059$; $p < 0.001$. Furthermore, there was significant agreement (agree = 246) among the respondents (74.1%) that they had very seriously thought of starting a firm, with the mean value given as $M = 3.94 \pm 1.064$; $p < 0.001$. More so, a significant number (76.2%) of the respondents agreed (agree = 253) that they had the firm intention to start a firm someday, with the mean value given as $M = 3.97 \pm 1.061$; $p < 0.001$. The analysis of EI revealed that the respondents held a positive intention towards entrepreneurship. It was found that the fourth statement, "I am determined to create a firm in the future", was the strongest motive for the respondents' EI.

Table 7. Frequency Distribution of Entrepreneurial Intention

		Disagree	Uncertain	Agree	Mean	Std	P-value
Code	Entrepreneurial Intention						
EI1	I am ready to do anything to be an entrepreneur.	42 (12.6%)	47 (14.2%)	243 (73.2%)	3.96	1.079	0.000
EI2	My professional goal is to become an entrepreneur.	50 (15%)	45 (13.6%)	237 (71.4%)	3.89	1.086	0.000
EI3	I will make every effort to start and run my firm.	57 (17.2%)	29 (11.7%)	246 (74.1%)	3.94	1.096	0.000
EI4	I am determined to create a firm in the future.	43 (13%)	39 (11.7%)	250 (75.3%)	4.04	1.059	0.000
EI5	I have very seriously thought of starting a firm.	37 (11.1%)	49 (14.8%)	246 (74.1%)	3.94	1.064	0.000
EI6	I have the firm intention to start a firm someday.	41 (12.3%)	38 (11.4%)	253 (76.2%)	3.97	1.061	0.000

Source: Developed by the author

Discussion

This study sought to understand students' perspectives on entrepreneurship in the South African higher education sector. Five key concepts related to the theory of planned behaviour, viz. personal attitude, self-efficacy, perceived behaviour control, subjective norms, and entrepreneurial intention, were analyzed. The findings of this study showed an overwhelming agreement among students that personal attitude is one of the determinants of entrepreneurship. According to Hassan, Sade, and Rahman (2020), as one of the primary objectives of the entrepreneurship course, further practical exposure should be fostered as momentum to shape entrepreneurial mentality by pushing students to develop not only a proposal but also a prototype and to implement the concept. A knowledge-sharing session between students and successful businesses would be more effective as a motivator. Although certain schools and postsecondary institutions have adopted these programmes, they have never been made necessary for all students, particularly at the tertiary level. Overall, it is sufficient to state that the respondents had a positive attitude towards entrepreneurship. The findings of this study further show that most of the students agreed on the importance of self-efficacy towards entrepreneurship. According to Wijangga and Sanjaya (2019), there is a need to develop entrepreneurship skills programmes for university students to increase students' entrepreneurial self-efficacy, thereby enhancing their desire to start their firms. Thus, by having entrepreneurial goals, university students will have to display entrepreneurial behaviour to satisfy the country's expectations after graduating later or while still in college.

This study further sought to gauge students' perception of perceived behaviour control. The findings show that most students agree on perceived behaviour control towards entrepreneurship. According to Ndovela and Chinyamurindi (2021), past experiences will always influence one's behaviour; as a result, lecturers must delve deep to uncover students' entrepreneurship experiences or perspectives and then support them. Students will be able to focus on the future rather than the past if they develop an entrepreneurial mindset. Further analysis of students' perception of subjective norms revealed that most of the students agreed on the importance of subjective norms towards entrepreneurship. Norms influence people as they travel through and interact with others around them in social situations. People's willingness to embrace entrepreneurship is influenced by the degree to which they are presented with norms either supporting or opposing their decisions (Utami, 2017). Respect for the opinions of elders and individuals in one's immediate circle is an essential value in society. Thus, family, community, and religious leaders are thought to be a storehouse of vast knowledge and wisdom, and their advice is generally highly valued. As a result, if family members encourage the respondents to start a business, they are more likely to accept such advice (Asiedu & Donkor,

2018). Lastly, the results showed that most students agreed on entrepreneurial intention. According to Bhasin and Gupta (2017), higher education should strive to improve entrepreneurship education for all students, particularly those studying technological disciplines. The education sector can assist aspiring entrepreneurs in recognizing opportunities and searching for resources by giving adequate and appropriate education. The higher education industry must comprehend the factors that have acted as roadblocks in the path of young people, preventing them from acquiring an entrepreneurial mindset and intention.

Conclusions

This study sought to understand students' perspectives towards entrepreneurship in the South African higher education sector. The findings of this study showed an overwhelming agreement among students that personal attitude, self-efficacy, subjective norms, and perceived behaviour control are the determinants of entrepreneurship intention. Based on the findings, it is recommended that higher education institutional managers find better ways of improving the social environment. Thus, exposing students to social interactions with prominent or successful businesspeople who can share their experiences regarding what it entailed to reach where they are today. In addition, educational institutions can expose and connect students to individuals who should act as mentors. There is also a need to create a supporting structure and environment to enhance the development of entrepreneurship behaviour. It could improve individual confidence and the belief that carrying out tasks is easy and, in so doing, promote perceived behaviour control.

Furthermore, institutions are advised to provide resources and assure students of the availability of the market for their businesses to enhance PBC. Higher education institutions should also provide more information on available entrepreneurship opportunities and startup capital to influence students' decisions in embracing entrepreneurship or developing entrepreneurship intentions. In addition, universities should create incubation hubs to support entrepreneurship. The study had limitations that must be considered. The study was conducted at a public higher education institution; therefore, the findings cannot be applied indiscriminately to other institutions in South Africa and beyond the African continent. Future research should focus on a qualitative approach to establish the challenges students face in pursuing entrepreneurship. It will help institutional managers understand the extent of the challenges and develop a mechanism to support students' entrepreneurial intentions.

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