

Entrepreneurship Education: A Global Evaluation of Entrepreneurial Attitudes and Values (a Transcultural Study)*

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EDUCAZIONE ALL'IMPRENDITORIALITÀ: UNA VALUTAZIONE
GLOBALE DI ATTEGGIAMENTI IMPRENDITORIALI
E VALORI (UNO STUDIO TRANSCULTURALE)

ABSTRACT

Entrepreneurship education is a new phenomenon in higher education, as a field of inquiry it is one of the most rapidly growing areas of research (Katz, 2008). The paper includes the analyses of the different entrepreneurial attitudes of Nigerian students in comparison with

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that of the Italian students. The related entrepreneurship education literatures make references towards exploring entrepreneurial attitudes and the values perceptions of Nigerian and Italian students. The findings suggest a considerable socio-cultural impact: one that starts with values and religion support and extends to the attitudes itself and on entrepreneurs' access to entrepreneurship education (Chen, 2005). Building from these analyses, a theoretical paradigm for the growth of entrepreneurship education is offered, using the applied research as the example. The contribution of this article suggests the necessity to design and implement a curriculum which provides a systematic teaching of the entrepreneurial attitudes and values in the institutions of learning as a whole. The article seeks to contribute to a growing need to find innovative ways of thinking and develop entrepreneurial approaches to education.

Keywords: Entrepreneurial attitudes, Entrepreneurial university, Entrepreneurship education, Mind-set, Values.

1. INTRODUCTION

The socio-economic and political consequences of prolonged youth unemployment crisis in Nigeria are high. However, so many problems breed and favor the high rate of unemployment problem in Nigeria. It is usually the case that fresh graduates entering the labor market for the first time might be lacking in some professional competences, especially in entrepreneurial skills and relative behaviors (Adebayo, 1981, p. 183). These need to undergo some entrepreneurial education in the areas that will match corresponding economy (Abdullahi & Zainol, 2016, pp. 80-94). Cultural values and the level of training in entrepreneurship obtained during their university training help to shape graduate employees' attitudes towards the labor market (Gorman, Hanlon, & King, 1997, pp. 56-79; Bechard & Toulouse, 1998, pp. 317-332). Having the right entrepreneurial mindset towards the market could have its roots in entrepreneurship education activities. Transforming the university into an entrepreneurial institution is also a process to entrench the entrepreneurial attitudes among the youths (Etzkowitz, 2003, p. 109). An exploration of such differences through an investigation on the entrepreneurial attitudes and values will assist educators to develop a more comprehensive quality entrepreneurship education framework for teaching entrepreneurship education (cfr. Ekankumo & Kemebaradikumo, 2011, pp. 196-202).

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

A good number of researches related to entrepreneurship education have been developed over the years. Though there is no agreed particular definition for entrepreneurship education, however, some definitions can be deduced from a number of references from the documents of the European Commission, United Nations, some journals and individual authors.

The documents of the European Commission represents entrepreneurship education as that education and training that plays the role of strengthening and enhancing entrepreneurial attitudes, behaviors, values, skills and provides the related knowledge starting from primary school to tertiary education (Order 121 – *Study on support to indicators on entrepreneurship education*, 2011, p. 10). The aim of such innovative courses and training is to impart on the students the ability to put together ideas in the development of entrepreneurial strategies, hence transforming theoretical knowledge into practical work, and in the identification of commercial business opportunities which could be invested on (also *Quality assurance agency: Enterprise and entrepreneurship education*, 2012, p. 2).

Several initiatives at European Union level referring to entrepreneurship education include: *The Oslo Agenda for entrepreneurship education in Europe* (2006); *Entrepreneurship in higher education, especially within non-business studies* (2008); *Best procedure project on mini-companies in secondary education* (2005) and *Best procedure project on education and training for entrepreneurship* (2002). These initiatives explore key issues regarding the teaching of entrepreneurship and identifying best practices and solutions for Italy as well as Nigeria. Thus, education and learning are key elements that could be used to improve entrepreneurial mindsets among youths, which in turn contributes to economic growth, employment and personal fulfillment (*Entrepreneurship education in Europe: Fostering entrepreneurial mindsets through education and learning*, 2006, p. 14).

In the recent past, the Global Entrepreneurship Monitor (GEM) provides useful data on both the extent and nature of entrepreneurial activity in both countries, Italy and Nigeria. The GEM *Global report*, 2012 on a 3 year study of the entrepreneurial attitudes, perceptions and intentions of youths in the Sub-Saharan African countries (Nigeria in question) discovers that an attitude of entrepreneurship is generally high in the region, one of the highest in the world (Herrington & Kelly, in GEM *Global report*, 2012, p. 8). Fear of failure does not seem to inhibit the youth's entrepreneurial aspirations. However, it points to the fact that entrepreneurial engagements in this region is necessity-driven compared to that of developed countries like Italy (GEM *Global report*, 2012, p. 8). Most young entrepreneurs are forced into entrepreneurship by grim alternative of unemployment (Aderinto, Obamuyi, Popoola, & Obileye, in GEM *Global report*, 2013, p. 2). A comparison between Sub-Saharan Africa

(SSA) and the European Union (EU) on their societal attitudes towards entrepreneurship indicates that: while SSA scores 76% on entrepreneurship as a good career choice, the EU records 58%; on high status to successful entrepreneurs – SSA (80%), EU (69%); on media attention for entrepreneurship – SSA (77%), EU (50%) (see GEM *Global report*, 2012, p. 21). A survey carried out by GEM in 2013 also reports that 82% of Nigerian youths perceive a good opportunity to start a business while 86% believe that they have the relevant skills to become entrepreneurs (GEM *Nigeria report*, 2013, p. 49). In this case, we need to understand that not all that start a business is an entrepreneur. Our understanding of the entrepreneur goes beyond a mere starting and running a business. Most Nigerian youths go into trading as business than having a structured and registered small and medium scale enterprise. Distinguishing between a «new business» and «entrepreneurship» is very important.

As regards to entrepreneurship education, the same report, analyzes how Nigerians don't see the attainment of higher education as contributing to employability. Such factors and the lack of finance / soft loan facilities, hinder proper entrepreneurship education (Akanhi, 2013, pp. 2357-2371). Hence, the result of young, under-educated, unemployed workforce that considers starting a business as a means of survival (GEM *Nigeria report*, 2013, p. 4). Entrepreneurship education becomes the tool for enhancing an entrepreneurial process that is more innovative and sustainable, not just out of necessity (Akanhi & Onyema, 2011, pp. 189-196).

Some scholars have also exposed the concept of entrepreneurship education which could act as innovative tool to reshaping the youths' perception and feelings towards entrepreneurship. For example, Casson (2010, p. 40) conceives entrepreneurship education as a fundamental concept linking different academic disciplines – notably economics, sociology, psychology and history. Kirzner (1997) emphasized the role of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) skills as a relevant elective for entrepreneurship education for a quality academic curriculum. Chen (2005) gives a social perspective about entrepreneurship education as the most powerful instrument for social reform (Akudolu, 2010, p. 36).

The institutions of learning are the strategic instruments for diffusing knowledge into the minds of the younger generation of a developing nation and entrepreneurship education can be structured as one of the major didactic areas of the learning curriculum. Linan, Moriano and Zarnowska (2008) view education as an instrument that can stimulate the development of entrepreneurial behavior in different ways. According to them, the whole set of education in entrepreneurship would include the development of knowledge, capacities, attitudes and personal qualities identified with entrepreneurship (Linan, 2008). The approaches to entrepreneurship education developed by scholars

such as Kyrö, Hytti and Gibb have given the concept of entrepreneurship education an improved understanding in the academic world. For instance, while Kyrö (1997) defines entrepreneurship education based on the individual's level in academics and the different contexts in which the latter evolves, Hytti (2002) understands entrepreneurship education according to its aims, for example, learning to be entrepreneurial, learning to be an entrepreneur, and learning to understand entrepreneurship. Gibb's (2005) entrepreneurship education model is based on both the content of entrepreneurship education and its delivery method. In line with the later scholars, Seikkula-Leino (2011) has identified several pedagogical methods for entrepreneurship education and its implementation, especially in Finnish educational system. Akudolu (2010) listed attitudes and values as dimensions of a curriculum framework that should characterize the teaching of entrepreneurship education in Nigeria. Consequently, one can conclude that students could be prepared educationally to enhance personal characteristics and attitudes associated with entrepreneurs, such as motivation to achieve, internal locus of control or self-efficacy, and risk taking (Boyd *et al.*, 1994; Bandura, 1997; Frese, 2001). As understood by Shepherd (1999), the entrepreneur's personal characteristics show the most important factors for his success in businesses, even more important than business ideas. These evaluative abstractions vary in strength, which in turn has implications for persistence, resistance, and attitude-behavior consistency (Crano & Prislin, 2008, p. 347). Attitudes are important because they help to shape people's perception of the social physical world by influencing overt behavior towards entrepreneurial engagement (Czuchry & Yasin, 2008, p. 7). An attitude towards entrepreneurial engagement can be developed by acquiring certain beliefs about entrepreneurship and these cognitions can determine how one later evaluates entrepreneurship (Olson & Kendrick, 2008, p. 113). Values, however, influence the ways in which one defines situations, considers alternatives, and ultimately chooses a course of action (Holland & Shepherd, 2013). Linan and Chen (2009) state that when the individual takes complex decisions involving the need to develop plans, values play a vital role. In order to understand the variables used in this investigation, it will be necessary to further explain the different variables.

3. ENTREPRENEURIAL ATTITUDES

Since the 1960's, many researchers have tried to identify those personality traits that characterized the entrepreneur, as well as trace a profile. Through the use of different psychological tests (TAT, EPPS, IPI, MBTI) have

emerged a large number of distinctive traits considered, the most common include: the need for self-fulfillment, independence and change, risk appetite, the creativity, internal locus of control, innovation (Zhao, 2005). Obviously, these main steps of the process can be divided into still further, small segments (Mitchell *et al.*, 2007). Shane (2003) identifies those who, according to him, are the main stages of the entrepreneurial process, namely: the emergence of opportunities, the recognition of the same, evaluation, finding the resources, the development of a strategy, finally followed by the actual use of the opportunity, simply represented by the implementation of the idea / initial project. Among the variables recognized as the most important and used in this research include: Self-efficacy, Personal initiatives, Locus of control, Entrepreneurial attitude and propensity, Attitude towards behaviour and personal attitudes, Entrepreneurial intentions, Entrepreneurial competence and university (Caggiano, 2012).

Self-efficacy. With self-efficacy we refer to the set of beliefs and convictions held by the person that he/she possesses the ability required in order to achieve objectives and results (Caprara *et al.*, 2008, pp. 227-237). In this sense, it is easy to argue that individuals may be inclined to develop an entrepreneurial career to the extent that they are considered to have the necessary skills to operate in such environment (Koop & Frese, 2000; Chen, Greene, & Crick, 2005). To be more explicative, Caprara (2001) upholds that perceived self-efficacy is the belief that the individual should be able to control specific activities, situations, or aspects of his social and psychological functioning.

Personal initiative. Personal initiative can be defined as a behavioral syndrome, considering the syndrome as a set of behaviors that taken together constitute the personal initiative (Frese & Fay, 2001, pp. 133-187). This could be seen as being engaged to your work, which is a «psychological condition associated with work, positive and satisfactory, characterized by vigor, dedication and involvement» (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2006, pp. 701-706). Personal initiative is a working behavior characterized by taking the initiative, a proactive approach and perseverance in overcoming the difficulties that arise when trying to achieve a goal (Mills *et al.*, 2012). Various studies show that personal initiative is positively related to entrepreneurial success (Koop, De Reu, & Mills, 2000, pp. 55-76) and, more specifically, hyperactivity has been regarded as an important predictor of entrepreneurial success (Lindsay, 2005), and in fact, entrepreneurship can be considered as an extreme case of the initiative, becoming your own boss and starting an organization.

Locus of control. Locus of control is defined as the modality of interpretation of the events that happen in a person's life with respect to internal/external polarity indicating the perception of the person on the possibility of controlling those events. It has to do with external forces or opposite behavior the

person holds, that the past, present and the future do not depend on his own capabilities, but on luck and facts (Caggiano, 2012). The individual believes that in life one has to play an important role, choose their own actions and tasks (Caggiano, 2012). Zhao (2005) also found that young adults participating in an entrepreneurship program developed a more internal locus of control.

Entrepreneurial attitude and propensity. In entrepreneurship research, entrepreneurial intention is viewed as an individual's propensity or tendency to conduct entrepreneurial actions by creating new products through business opportunities and risk propensity (Ramayah & Harun, 2005). Entrepreneurial behavior is an individual action shown with entrepreneurial propensity (Ajzen and Gilbert Cote, in Crano & Prislin, 2008, pp. 289-311). Entrepreneurial inclination is a direct antecedent of entrepreneurial behavior. The behavior related to entrepreneurial actions depends on the evaluation (positive and negative) that a person gives to the entrepreneurial career (Ajzen, 2001, pp. 75-96). It is measured both with statements that require assessments (e.g. entrepreneurial activity provides more advantages than disadvantages) and with claims about the appreciation of such career (such as I like, is attractive) (Linan & Chen, 2009). In other words, whether or not one decides to become an entrepreneur is determined by the size of influence of entrepreneurial self-efficacy toward entrepreneurial intention (Barbosa, Gerhard, & Kickul, 2007). Research conducted in entrepreneurship indicates that certain factors influence the developing of the propensity in students to engage in an entrepreneurial activity.

Social valuation. Studies on social valuation, as it concerns entrepreneurship education, focus on examining the potential and contribution of culture, gender, education, family background and self-perception as factors of success in entrepreneurial ventures. Studies by Peterman and Kennedy (2003) have verified empirically that certain factors of self-perception act as mediators between the personal and the entrepreneurial propensity. Recently, across-national researches in Spain and Taiwan by Linan and Chen (2009) have theorized and examined how the approach of self-perception can be influenced by the «cultural contingency». They found out that the cultural orientations of people explain the variation of the strength of predictive factors of self-perception on entrepreneurial propensity. Lindsay (2005, p. 7) argued that culture must feature as a contextual variable in indigenous entrepreneurial attitude theory. Stephen *et al.* (2010) reported findings of a cross cultural study of multiple cultures whereby cultures were divided into two categories: performance based and socially supportive.

Entrepreneurial competence and university. Competencies are defined as a set of related knowledge, traits, attitudes and skills that affect an important part of their work. In the definition of skills, there are different approaches that

privilege, the cognitive and learning, knowledge linked to the exercise of the role and the profession or financial aspects of skills coming from the reference context characteristics. Zhao, Seibert and Hills (2005), analyzing 265 students from five different universities, argue that the relationship between entrepreneurial propensity and elements such as learning from courses on entrepreneurship, entrepreneurial experience and propensity to risk is tangible, but mediated by self-efficacy. A research conducted by Rasmussen, Mosey and Wright (2011, pp. 1314-1345) on university students from four different universities also shows that university spin-offs are usually based on ideas with high knowledge content and technologies that are radical in nature.

Values. Values can be conceptualized as mental representations of what is truly important in the lives of individuals and are able to motivate and to foster the necessary skills needed to achieve the objectives that people have set for themselves (Caprara, 2011; Caprara, Alessandri, & Eisenberg, 2012, pp. 1289-1303). In the same sense, by motivating the individual, it creates the opportunity to try his/her personal capabilities that have not yet been expressed in order to fully exploit such capabilities and the manifestation of individual potentials (Caprara & Cardinali, 2008). Schwartz sees value as a concept that an individual has a tran-situational purpose (terminal vs. instrumental) expressing interest (individualistic vs. collectivist) related to the motivational domains, and evaluated on a continuum of importance as a guiding principle in its life (Schwartz, 1992, p. 53). The present research, therefore, aims to investigate the influence of personal values and entrepreneurial skills on students in specific organizational dimensions, fundamental to their personal success and that of their company.

4. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The major approaches for this research were based on theoretical, empirical and normative approaches. The theoretical part relates to the concept of entrepreneurship education from different literatures reviewed to make references towards exploring entrepreneurial attitudes and the personal values of students. Particular reference is made to the Nigerian and Italian students. The practical part deals with the discovering of entrepreneurial behaviours in order to evaluate their competence in engaging in an entrepreneurial and intrapreneurial activity.

The result of the assessment is based on a battery of validated variables, which measures the entrepreneurial intentions (mindset entrepreneurial, competence questionnaire) administered to students from Nigeria and Italy,

aged 18 and above through the Survey Monkey, which is an instrument which permits the gathering of information on-line. The questionnaire contains different groups of questions regarding their entrepreneurial attitudes and values. The questions evaluate the Self-efficacy; Personal initiative; Locus of control; Entrepreneurial attitudes and propensity; Attitude towards behaviour and personal attitudes; Entrepreneurial intentions; Social valuation; Entrepreneurial competence and university; Values of students. I consider these variables as very important attitudes that form an entrepreneurial mindset of a student. This questionnaire will be used in order to reduce sampling error.

5. HYPOTHESIS

Hypothesis 1: students from a developed and economically stable country have access to favourable economic and political conditions compared to students from economically underdeveloped and unstable country. Therefore, the high need for survival in such an economy would engender more drive in the latter to engage in an entrepreneurial activity due to necessity than the former would do. *Hypothesis 2:* compared to the Italian students, Nigerian students express greater entrepreneurial attitudes towards being business owners and do not need long period of training to be an entrepreneur despite their limited knowledge-based economy. *Hypothesis 3:* compared to students from developed stable country (Italy) Nigerians show stronger adherence to their values as constructed by Schwartz's human values. Therefore, it is likely that cultural values will strongly influence the latter to be more value oriented in their decisions to engage in an entrepreneurial activity than the former. *Hypothesis 4:* from the theory of human values by Schwartz, there are statistically significant relationships between human values and entrepreneurial attitudes. It is, therefore, hypothesized that the entrepreneurial attitudes are influenced by human values.

6. PARTICIPANTS

The result of the evaluation is based on an instrument (mindset entrepreneurial attitudes and values) administered to 200 students and student-workers from Nigeria and Italy. Participants from both groups (Italians and Nigerians) responded in different countries where they reside. However, greater number of them resides in their country of origin. The expected number of participants desired for this research was 300 and the least was

200. That is from both Italian and Nigerians. Therefore, it was expected that 150 or 100 participants would respond from each of the countries in question, respectively. Due to the time given for the conclusion and submission of this research we were able to collect 100 participants from the Italian and 100 participants from the Nigerian students (full-time students) / student workers (part-time students), respectively.

6.1. *Demographic data of the participants*

The data were collected according to the following demography: sex, age, marital status, and occupation or type of activity. The age bracket was between 18 and 60 years old of both men and women. This was because, in both Italy and Nigeria, we discovered that some people enter the university as early as 18 years of old. And most people are still studying while working at the age above 60 years old. Students here refer to full-time students while student-workers refer to part-time students who are employed. The fields of study of the participants are centered on Communication, Economics, Education, Law, Medicine, Science, Humanities, Technology, and Psychology. The valid numbers of men and women collected from the Italian sample were 32 and 70, respectively with the cumulative percentage of 31.4% (100) while the valid numbers of men and women collected from the Nigerian sample were 56 and 53, respectively with the cumulative percentage of 51.4% (100).

7. INSTRUMENT: THE «MINDSET ENTREPRENEURIAL COMPETENCE QUESTIONNAIRE»

The instrument that was used for the research was the *Mindset Entrepreneurial Competence Questionnaire* which contains different groups of questions that investigate on entrepreneurial attitudes and values of students. This shows that the instrument contains two different sub-instruments, one is on a series of questions on entrepreneurial attitudes and the second is on personal values.

7.1. *Designing of the questionnaire*

The questionnaire was designed with consideration of the different culture of the students involved. The questions of the instrument were extracted from the different constructs investigated on. These constructs are represented as the variables we analyzed in this research and they include:

Part 1: Self-efficacy, Personal initiatives, Locus of control, Entrepreneurial attitude and propensity, Attitude towards behaviour and personal attitudes, Entrepreneurial intentions, Social valuation, Entrepreneurial competence and university.

Part 2: Personal Values.

Each of the variables has series of statements or questions that were synthesized in the 7 steps of Lykert scales. The scale consists of number of items that measure the degree of agreement and disagreement of participants with a series of statements, which usually refer to actions carried out by the persons with traits of each of the variables through a Likert scale ranging from 0 to 7.

In each of the variables from the part 1 of the construct, participants were asked to read each sentence or question and indicate with an X the degree of agreement or disagreement with each statement or question, from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (completely agree).

The part 2, which was on Personal values, a personality will be described and the participants will be expected to read each description and think about how much each person is or is not like him/her. The participant will then indicate with an X in the box given that shows how much the personality in the description is like him/her (participant). The options range from «Very much like me», «Like me», «Some what like me», «A little like me», «Not like me», to «Not like me at all».

7.2. Gathering of data

A survey monkey webpage was developed to gather the data online. Various possible social media were used to advertize the webpage of the survey monkey. Some of the social media used were Facebook, Google+, Twitter, LinkedIn, emailing, and instant messaging applications like Whatsapp, BBM, etc. A typical example of the survey website is shown below (<https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/HMXJWJ8>; Entrepreneurial Attitudes and Values Survey; Thank you for your willingness to participate at the research; The research is related Dr.; <https://www.surveymonkey.com>).

7.3. Inferential statistics

The inferential statistics tackles the problem of making broader generalizations or inferences from the sample data of the population. A key objective of it is to use the scores of the sample to test the hypothesis. To compare the

continuous variables in relation to just two groups, we used the *t* test of the student per independent samples, in which the alternative hypothesis assumes the formulation that the two μ are mutually different. From the comparison made in relation to the two groups of countries, Italy and Nigeria, all results are statistically significant in the scales on the various facets of the entrepreneurial attitudes surveyed (Table 1 and Figure 1). In all cases, Nigerians prevail, the Personal initiative (6.27 vs. 5.99; $t = 2.019$; $p < .04$), the Self-efficacy (4.95 vs. 3.82; $t = 11.745$; $p < .001$), the Internal locus of control (5.83 vs. 4.88; $t = 7.285$; $p < .001$), in the External locus of control (4.04 vs. 2.57; $t = 8.742$; $p < .001$), in the Attitude and entrepreneurial propensity (6.12 vs. 3.55; $t = 15.435$; $p < .001$), the Social valuation (4.44 vs. 2.99; $t = 11.466$; $p < .001$), and Competence (6.12 vs. 5.25; $t = 6.235$; $p < .001$).

Also from the comparison made in relation to the two groups of countries, Italians and Nigerians, they identified a number of statistically significant results in scale relative to values (Table 2 and Figure 2). Nigerians show a greater Conformity (3.78 vs. 3.03; $t = 4.219$; $p < .001$), are more related to Tradition (3.52 vs. 2.59; $t = 6.203$; $p < .001$), have higher Benevolence (3.58 vs. 3.32; $t = 1.853$; $p < .06$), have a higher Stimulation (3.62 vs. 3.25; $t = 2.264$; $p < .02$), are more likely to Success (3.79 vs. 3.26; $t = 2.756$; $p < .006$), the Power (3.04 vs. 2.43; $t = 3.689$; $p < .001$), and want more Security (3.91 vs. 3.26; $t = 3.910$; $p < .001$).

The second hypothesis verification regards the association between the different constructs of the research, namely whether or not there are statistically significant relationships between the variables recorded, therefore if the variation of one can vary significantly also another. Table 3 shows the matrix of correlations between all the variables related to entrepreneurship in the two groups of countries. Among Italians you can observe how the Self-efficacy correlates positively with the Personal initiative respectively ($r = .393$), the Internal locus of control ($r = .320$) and Competence ($r = .349$), while the latter is associated positively with Attitude and entrepreneurial propensity ($r = .368$). In the group of Nigerians, Personal initiative correlates positively respectively with the Self-efficacy ($r = .542$), the Internal locus of control ($r = .572$), the Attitude and entrepreneurial propensity ($r = .648$) and Competence ($r = .636$); Self-efficacy is associated positively respectively with the Internal locus of control ($r = .685$), the Attitude and entrepreneurial propensity ($r = .568$), the Social valuation ($r = .249$) and Competence ($r = .602$); Internal locus of control correlates positively with the Attitude and entrepreneurial propensity ($r = .570$), and Competence ($r = .651$); Attitude and entrepreneurial propensity also correlates positively with the competence ($r = .795$), while only the social valuation is associated positively with External locus of control ($r = .409$).

Table 1. – Comparison on the scale relative to entrepreneurial attitudes in relation to nationality.

	NATIONALITY	MEDIA	D.S.	T	P
Personal initiative	Italians	5.99	.927	2.019	.045
	Nigerians	6.27	1.089		
Self-efficacy	Italians	3.82	.709	11.745	.000
	Nigerians	4.95	.682		
Internal locus of control	Italians	4.88	.827	7.285	.000
	Nigerians	5.83	1.049		
External locus of control	Italians	2.57	.897	8.742	.000
	Nigerians	4.04	1.462		
Attitude and entrepreneurial propensity	Italians	3.55	1.371	15.435	.000
	Nigerians	6.12	1.034		
Social valuation	Italians	2.99	.828	11.466	.000
	Nigerians	4.44	1.000		
Competence	Italians	5.25	.916	6.235	.000
	Nigerians	6.12	1.098		

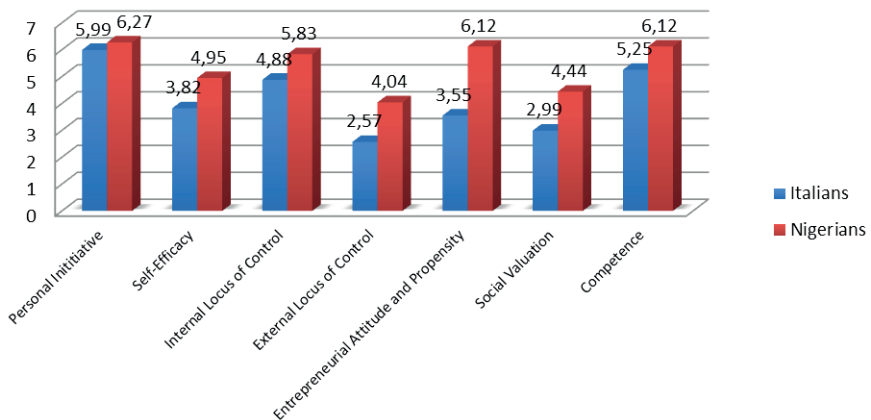


Figure 1. – Comparison on the scale of entrepreneurship.

Table 2. – Comparison on the values in relation to nationality.

VALUES	NATIONALITY	MEDIA	D.S.	T	P
Conformism	Italians	3.03	1.198	4.219	.000
	Nigerians	3.78	1.357		
Tradition	Italians	2.59	1.006	6.203	.000
	Nigerians	3.52	1.159		
Benevolence	Italians	3.32	.747	1.853	.065
	Nigerians	3.58	1.244		
Universalism	Italians	3.77	.684	0.389	.698
	Nigerians	3.83	1.430		
Self direction	Italians	3.90	.705	0.253	.801
	Nigerians	3.94	1.390		
Stimulation	Italians	3.25	.955	2.264	.025
	Nigerians	3.62	1.329		
Hedonism	Italians	3.14	1.008	0.177	.859
	Nigerians	3.11	1.201		
Success	Italians	3.26	1.377	2.756	.006
	Nigerians	3.79	1.409		
Power	Italians	2.43	1.144	3.689	.000
	Nigerians	3.04	1.244		
Security	Italians	3.26	.885	3.910	.000
	Nigerians	3.91	1.464		

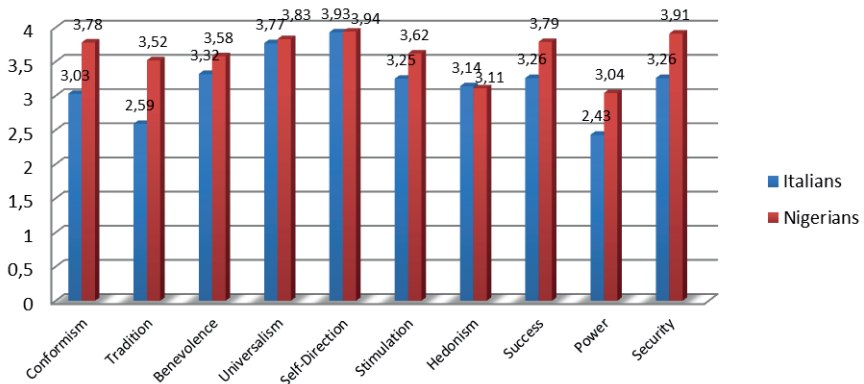


Figure 2. – Comparison on values.

*Table 3. – Matrix of correlations on the scales of entrepreneurship (** $p < .01$).*

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
<i>Italians</i>							
1. Personal initiative	1						
2. Self-efficacy	.393**	1					
3. Internal locus of control	.020	.320**	1				
4. External locus of control	.139	.112	.039	1			
5. Attitude and entrepreneurial propensity	.238	.122	-.278	.070	1		
6. Social valuation	-.031	.065	.123	-.071	.092	1	
7. Competence	.070	.349**	.151	-.055	.368**	.169	1
<i>Nigerians</i>							
1. Personal initiative	1						
2. Self-efficacy	.542**	1					
3. Internal locus of control	.572**	.685**	1				
4. External locus of control	-.151	.199	.161	1			
5. Attitude and entrepreneurial propensity	.648**	.568**	.570**	-.071	1		
6. Social valuation	.075	.249**	.159	.498**	.114	1	
7. Competence	.636**	.602**	.651**	.059	.795**	.208	1

In *Table 4* it is shown the matrix of correlations between all the values in the two groups of countries. In the Italian group, you can observe how the Conformism respectively correlates positively with Tradition ($r = .565$), the Benevolence ($r = .514$), Success ($r = .606$) and Safety ($r = .681$); Tradition with Benevolence ($r = .661$), and the latter with Universalism ($r = .572$); Stimulation with the Self-direction ($r = .503$), while the Success is associated with the Power ($r = .588$) and to the Security ($r = .620$). Among the Nigerians Conformism correlates mainly with Tradition ($r = .808$), the Benevolence ($r = .859$), Universalism ($r = .892$), the Self-direction ($r = .860$), Stimulation ($r = .729$), Success ($r = .793$) and Safety ($r = .910$); Tradition is associated with the Benevolence ($r = .883$), Universalism ($r = .832$), Self-direction ($r = .779$), Stimulation ($r = .730$), Success ($r = .702$) and Safety ($r = .772$); Benevo-

lence correlates with Universalism ($r = .895$), the Self-direction ($r = .843$), Stimulation ($r = .778$), Success ($r = .803$) and Safety ($r = .851$); Universalism correlates with the Self-direction ($r = .918$), Stimulation ($r = .854$), Success ($r = .848$) and Safety ($r = .946$); Self-direction correlates with Stimulation ($r = .827$), Success ($r = .835$) and Safety ($r = .925$); Stimulation is associated with Success ($r = .829$) and Safety ($r = .830$); Finally Success and Security correlate with each other ($r = .864$).

Table 4. – Matrix of correlation on values (** $p < .01$).

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
<i>Italians</i>										
1. Conformism	1									
2. Tradition	.565**	1								
3. Benevolence	.514**	.661**	1							
4. Universalism	.467**	.445**	.572**	1						
5. Self-direction	.258**	.030	.269**	.375**	1					
6. Stimulation	.408**	.197*	.349**	.420**	.503**	1				
7. Hedonism	.162	-.126	.105	.165	.383**	.432**	1			
8. Success	.606**	.275**	.273**	.329**	.215	.471**	.280**	1		
9. Power	.194	-.165	-.076	.013	.182	.270**	.342**	.588**	1	
10. Security	.681**	.440**	.346**	.414**	.196**	.362**	.177	.620**	.273**	1
<i>Nigerians</i>										
1. Conformism	1									
2. Tradition	.808**	1								
3. Benevolence	.859**	.883**	1							

The first hypothesis asserts that the favourable economic and political environment of students from developed and stable countries differ from the realities of students from underdeveloped unstable countries (GEM *Global reports*, 2012 and 2013). This indicates that it may not be applicable if we try to compare both Italian and Nigerian students on the same scale in terms of their values and feelings towards entrepreneurship. There are limited resources and opportunities within the reach of students from Nigeria (Ruhl, 2011). The challenges faced by Nigerian graduates in the labour market will drive them more to engage in an entrepreneurial activity as a necessity for survival rather than as a passion or for innovative sake. In the Europe, there is little actual evidence between unemployment and youth self-employment

(OECD, 2013). Student's inclination towards entrepreneurship is not necessity driven rather it is innovative and growth led. This hypothesis is confirmed where students from Nigeria demonstrated high level of concern for security, which could be understood as social and job insecurity. This is evident from the survey, since Nigerian students rate 3.92 compared to Italian students rating 3.26 (3.91 vs .3.26; $t = 3.910$; $p < .001$). Where there is high rate of unemployment there is likely to be high concern on job security. A great number of the students will automatically resort to doing a business not necessarily because they want to engage in business but because necessity calls for it in order to have a means of survival (GEM *Global report*, 2012) and the crime rate will also be high thereby causing insecurity. Linan *et al.* (2013, pp. 73-103) affirms that necessity entrepreneurs are pushed by unemployment situations or dissatisfaction with their previous jobs. Therefore, it is not surprising that our result shows that students from an economy like Nigeria will have a high drive to engage in the entrepreneurial activity due to necessity. Compared to students from a stable economy like Italy where there is great evidence of the basic infrastructures and socio-economic structures for entrepreneurial engagement, no doubt there will be a clear vision and well thought out goal to sustain an entrepreneurial activity. Helpful supports from the Italian Business Association and the European Commission can encourage more youths in that region to engage in a growth-led or innovation-driven entrepreneurship (Corno, Lal, & Colombo, 2014). Their attitude towards business is one of innovation-oriented and competence based after years of experience in their various fields. The necessity driven entrepreneurs are more of opportunity seekers compared to the growth-led entrepreneurs (GEM *Global report*, 2012). This means they are not only alert enough to spot opportunities, maintain some form of register on unexploited opportunities, but also they act on the opportunities if they perceived them to be attractive and viable. This could explain why Nigerian students prevailed in all the attitudes examined in this research particularly in Self-efficacy, Locus of control, Entrepreneurial propensity, and some of the Values.

The second hypothesis claims that compared to the Italian students, most Nigerian students want to be business owners because they show greater entrepreneurial attitudes and do not need long period of training to be entrepreneurs (OCDE/GD(96)102). Due to their high need to survive, engaging in an entrepreneurial activity will not push them to opt for any long term planning or training on entrepreneurship. Significant differences occurred in all the variables tested with greater difference in *attitude and entrepreneurial propensity* (6.12 vs. 3.55; $t = 6.235$; $p < .001$). The entrepreneurial propensity amongst the Nigerian students, for instance, seems to be high according to the result of our survey. Though in the western countries as reported by Siyanbola

et al. (2009), family entrepreneurial history can be a major factor influencing entrepreneurial propensity among undergraduates (also Barbosa, 2007), this is a different case with regards to undergraduates from the Sub-Saharan African region. Akambi and Onyema (2011) state that future unemployment and entrepreneurial intention have strong connection among the Nigerian undergraduates. Siyanbola *et al.* (2009) also listed lack of access to quality education, low grade in academic performance which will usually deny one job in the scarce and highly competitive employment market, large family where access to enough livelihoods is very low, and ethnicity as major factors influencing entrepreneurial propensity among Nigerian undergraduates.

The third hypothesis asserts that students from developing unstable countries (Nigerians) show stronger adherence to their values as constructed by Schwartz's human values more than students from developed stable countries (Italy and Europe). This could be affirmed from the significant differences that occurred in the variables tested, especially, Tradition (3.42 vs. 2.59; $t = 6.203$; $p < .001$) and Conformism (3.78 vs. 3.03; $t = 4.219$; $p < .001$). Nigerians showed greater conformity and are more related to Tradition. Due to their strong adherence to Tradition and greater Conformism, students from Nigeria could be seen as being influenced by their cultural values on the kind of businesses they engage in and the way they do it. Abdullahi and Zainol (2016) stated that religion naturally affects personal values and pattern of behaviors among Nigerians. The «Entrepreneurs' religious background affects their decision making process» (*ibid.*, p. 86). The Igbo tribe of Nigeria exhibit a great level of entrepreneurial attitudes due to strong business culture existing in the families. An average Igbo-Man is an entrepreneur and this entrepreneurial trait is traceable to their family and cultural background. Though it is expected that the technicalities or professional aspect of the business could be learned from the university as a formal study but in the case of Nigerians not much importance is attached to formal education in order to be successful in an entrepreneurial engagement. This is demonstrated in their high level of self-efficacy and internal locus of control. The Nigerian student, particularly the Igbo, believes he will succeed if he starts any business. According to *Sahara Reporters*, «The Igbos of South East Nigeria, otherwise known as Ndigbo remains one of Nigeria's major and most enterprising ethnic groups accounting for about 18% of Nigeria's estimated 150 million population» (*Sahara Reporters*, June 20, 2011)¹. An investigation carried out by Halliru (2013) on the «The effect of culture on the development of entrepreneurs among the Hausa ethnic group in Northern Nigeria» indicates that the Hausa culture do not promote freedom unlike the Igbo culture. This seriously affects

¹ <http://saharareporters.com/2011/06/20/culture-and-igbo-business-practices>.

the level and choices of entrepreneurial engagements among these ethnic groups of Nigeria. This goes further to explain how restrictive conformism is opposed to self-direction (freedom) (Schwartz, 1992, p. 4). The Hausa tribe of Nigeria are mostly Muslims and have a strong religious ideology which prohibits them from some businesses, like selling alcoholic drinks or producing them, rearing pigs and processing them, etc. This situation is not applicable to the Italian students whose culture and religion are not as closed as that of Nigerians. Since their cultural background are almost similar and that they are neither inhibited by any traditional nor cultural barriers to doing business they are prone to engaging in any entrepreneurial activity without any strict traditional law, cultural or religious sentiments. Their culture is more open and liberal and this negates strong adherence to tradition or values as witnessed among Nigerian students. Actions taken by an individual towards entrepreneurial engagement will no doubt be influenced by his values. It has been affirmed that there is significant relationship between values and entrepreneurial attitudes (Lindsay, Jordaan, & Lindsay, 2005). Self-efficacy is influenced directly by self-direction, probably because such value, as identified by Schwartz (1992, pp. 1-65) is associated with a form of independent thinking, which then can lead to development of that sense of efficacy useful to keep the autonomy desired. This consideration is connected with the latest data inserted in reference to self-efficacy, which sees the latter negatively affected by the value of tradition. This value is linked, in addition, to the needs of «commitment» and a sense of acceptance of the customs and traditions, even to ideas imposed by the group to which they feel they belong. Respect for tradition is very tied to humility, piety and moderation, so all of these features seem to hinder a smooth development of self-efficacy (but in the workplace). This is probably because the constraints that must follow the subjects with a high value of tradition, do not allow you to experience that mindset that supports the creation of a greater confidence in their ability to act. Based on these results it seems that the values, as reported by Lidaka (2013, pp. 162-167), influence the form of the orientation, attitudes and characteristics of individuals. The author proposes a model of education of values, as the values are related to the culture of each specific environment and culture that affect directly and indirectly those who belong to it (*ibidem*). Therefore, this research contributes to the field of studies that is involved in determining the composition of values with more influence on the different entrepreneurial attitudes. Specifically, it can be said to have identified and then determined what values affect some of the attitudinal variables specific to «entrepreneurship». This creates the basis for further in-depth research, which may in the future lead to concrete projects on entrepreneurship education through a conscious and targeted value proposition (Fayolle, 2005, p. 93).

9. CONCLUSION

In all the cases analyzed in this research, the Nigerian students exhibited greater level of entrepreneurial attitudes than the Italian students. The Nigerian students also showed strong adherence to some values than their Italian counterparts. The conclusion drawn from the statistic results and the analysis of this research may not be enough to affirm that Nigerian students are more entrepreneurially propelled than their Italian counterpart. The research demonstrates that Nigerian students exhibit greater feelings towards entrepreneurship and this is traceable to the amount of influence their socio-economic characteristics exert on them while making some entrepreneurial decisions. One cannot necessarily conclude that such psychological traits place the Nigerian students as having more potentials and entrepreneurial abilities to engage in entrepreneurship more than their Italian counterparts. The difference between the two categories of students – Nigerian students and Italian students – lies in how their perception of values influences their entrepreneurial attitudes. The European students appear more innovative driven and growth led in their entrepreneurial engagement probably because of the confidence they have about security in their region and their less dogmatic attitude towards traditions unlike the African students who are necessity driven and are dogmatic to their tradition with high level of concern to security. This study has exposed the gaps that need to be filled in designing a suitable and sustainable entrepreneurship education curriculum for the university students in Nigeria. With the comparison made with the Italian entrepreneurial psychological composition, the research has also exposed to the Nigerian educators, areas to improve on with regard to teaching entrepreneurship education. The curriculum should be designed with the purpose and the target of training future entrepreneurs and intrapreneurs who will be able to engage in a sustainable business with innovative and growth orientation. We suggest in this research that in addition to having these attitudes and values which are necessary for developing useful entrepreneurial attitudes, attention should be paid to developing skills. In this sense a curriculum which provides a systematic teaching of the entrepreneurial attitudes and values in the overall school curriculum should be designed and implemented. The teaching methodology should also include skills acquisition in the entrepreneurship education. It is not enough to feel the presence of entrepreneurial attitudes and values in a student's ability but these attitudes and values have to be developed strategically for effective usage.

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RIASSUNTO

L'educazione all'imprenditorialità è un fenomeno nuovo nel campo dell'istruzione superiore, come campo di indagine rappresentando una tra le aree di ricerca in più rapida crescita (Katz, 2008). Il contributo si incentra sulla comparazione dei diversi atteggiamenti imprenditoriali degli studenti nigeriani rispetto agli studenti italiani. I risultati evidenziano il ruolo importante dei valori e il supporto della religione che si estende agli atteggiamenti positivi rispetto all'accesso all'imprenditorialità (Chen, 2005). L'obiettivo di tipo esplorativo segna un campo di studio da approfondire ulteriormente con future ricerche sul campo, in grado di analizzare campioni differenti in termini di aree geografiche e di significati valoriali diversi. Il contributo consta della proposta critica di considerare l'inserimento all'interno del curriculum formativo universitario di moduli orientati all'educazione imprenditoriale volti all'esplorazione dei valori personali. Il contributo si propone di far fronte ad una crescente necessità di trovare modi innovativi di pensare e sviluppare approcci imprenditoriali all'istruzione secondaria superiore.

Parole chiave: Attitudini, Caratteristiche della mente, Educazione all'imprenditorialità, Università intra-imprenditoriale, Valori.

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