

Tertiary Students' Attitude towards Entrepreneurship Education in Ghana

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Abstract

This study was carried out to assess the attitude of tertiary students towards entrepreneurship education in Ghana. The study further assessed whether there is a significant difference in respondents' attitude towards entrepreneurship education from gender and marital status perspective. Purposive sampling was used to solicit data and information from 788 students from a tertiary institution in Ghana. Descriptive statistics and inferential statistics were used to analyse the data with the help of SPSS software. Results of the study revealed that respondents exhibit positive attitude towards entrepreneurship education. The gender variable does not display statistically significant difference with regards to the respondents' attitude towards entrepreneurship education. However, the result of the t-test revealed statistically significant difference between married and singly respondents with respect to their attitude towards entrepreneurship education. In conclusion, students generally exhibit positive attitude toward entrepreneurship education and the unmarried students are more likely to go into entrepreneurship compared to married students. Thus, the entrepreneurship should be developed in a way that it can support unmarried students even after school.

Keywords: Attitudes, Entrepreneurship, Education, Ghana

1.0 Introduction

Entrepreneurship education is gaining a lot of attention in Ghana because entrepreneurship education is seen as a driving force to the development of the Ghanaian economy and the creation of jobs hence solution to unemployment challenges. The president of Ghana, Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo and his government in March 2017, launched the National Entrepreneurship and Innovation Plan (NEIP). The plan is an initiative of the government to boost entrepreneurial activities in Ghana and thereby address the major unemployment issue in the country. In his speech, the president stated that, the phenomenon of so many people looking to government for jobs, dampens the entrepreneurial spirit. Krueger and Brazeal (1994), asserts that entrepreneurship education shape students' perception in relation to Feasibility and desirability of business creation. Universities in Ghana have a major role to play in inculcating the entrepreneurial mind-set in their students. This can be achieved by instilling in their students the understanding of idea generation, feasibility analysis, business establishment and management issues. Quality education in entrepreneurship will lead to the establishment of new small businesses either great or small. For Ghana to be equipped with entrepreneurs, conducive environments that creates and promotes positive and innovative entrepreneurial education must be created. According to Fillion (2009), entrepreneurship like any other discipline, requires a well-designed and focused education. Badulescu and Dodescu (2010), said quality education in entrepreneurship increases knowledge intensive entrepreneurs. This is very essential considering the vital role entrepreneurs play in innovation, economic growth and employment. As asserted by Lee et al. (2005), starting a business without the necessary knowledge involves high risk, even when one has strong entrepreneurial intentions. Entrepreneurship education should not only focus on skills in generating ideas, it must also equip the students with the ability to launch an entrepreneurial venture (Mitchell et al.2000).

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Understanding students' attitude toward entrepreneurship will help develop entrepreneurship education programs that suit the nation and are student centred. According to Hannan, Hazlett, and Leitch (2004), positive attitudes towards entrepreneurship is useful for the development of high level entrepreneurial initiative among students. Students' attitude towards entrepreneurship will influence the way they approach the entrepreneurship course and consequently their entrepreneurial intention. Students' attitude towards entrepreneurship education can therefore be viewed as an important incentive to entrepreneurial intention as the old adage goes, 'attitude determines altitude'. Thus if the attitude of students towards entrepreneurship education is positive, then the tendency of them engaging in entrepreneurial activities will be high. Positive attitude is a vital mind-set that should be possessed by every aspiring entrepreneur. Likewise, students' attitude towards entrepreneurship will determine how they approach the course and the benefit they will derive from the course. Students with positive attitude towards the course will be full of drive and enthusiasm. Research has revealed that the interest of tertiary students in entrepreneurship is low. (Bishop, 1985). Existing studies have assessed students' attitude towards entrepreneurship in other countries but not in Ghana hence this research.

2.0 Literature Review

2.1 Entrepreneur and Entrepreneurship

An entrepreneur is a person who creates new and innovative things, organizes the factors of production to set up a business venture and assumes and manages all the risks associated with starting and building a successful business. According to Raguz & Matic (2011), an entrepreneur is a person who is self-employed, who initiates, organizes, manages and takes responsibility for business. Essien (2006), defined an entrepreneur as a person who is assertive and has the capability to identify business opportunity and take advantage of such opportunities in the face of calculated risks and uncertainties, organize the needed resources and start a profitable business. Entrepreneurship is a process of creating new and innovative things and growing up a business. According to Hisrich and Shepherd (2008), entrepreneurship is the process of creating something new with value by devoting the necessary time and effort, assuming the accompanying financial, psychic, and social risks, and receiving the resulting rewards of monetary and personal satisfaction and independence. Shane (2010), on the other hand defines entrepreneurship as the act of being an entrepreneur.

2.2 Entrepreneurship Education

Entrepreneurship education is a programme which teaches students the entrepreneurial process of conceiving an idea, nurturing the idea, giving birth to the idea and taking care of baby idea to become a full blown adults, useful and beneficial to society. Therefore, entrepreneurship education equips students with the necessary attitude and skills for business creation and development. According to Gorman (1997), entrepreneurship education develop in students self-efficacy. Entrepreneurship education can also be defined as the process of imparting entrepreneurial qualities and skills by an educator to a recipient that is a student. Other authors have also defined entrepreneurship education as a formal structure of conveying entrepreneurial competencies, concepts and skills to enable recipient start and develop their ventures (Isaacs, Visser, Friedrich & Brijlal, 2007).

Entrepreneurship education are designed to train students to be self employed by building in them entrepreneurial qualities. Students do not just imbibe from entrepreneurship education how to start, manage and grow business. They also learn how to be creative and innovative, how to identify opportunities and capitalise on them to generate ideas, how to manage risk, how to be confident and how to cultivate all the entrepreneurial characteristics. According to Garavan and O'Conneide (1994), the objective of entrepreneurship education is to inculcate in students relevant knowledge in entrepreneurship and endow them with the appropriate techniques in analysing business situations so as to take suitable cause of action. Entrepreneurship education also instil in students the entrepreneurial mind set, drive, talent and skills, uprooting any risk-averse attitude in students. According to Fauziah (2012), entrepreneurship education discourages students from hunting for opportunities in the job markets, rather it creates in them a mind-set to develop entrepreneurship capabilities and self-made wealth. According to Herrington et al. (2009), entrepreneurship education develop in students Self-confidence, insight into financial and business issues, desire to start their own business, and desire to further their studies at institutions of higher learning. According to Henry, Hill and Leitch (2005), entrepreneurship education build in students positive attitudes, creativity and the confidence to be their own boss, rather than depending on the government for employment.

Agu (2006), stated that, entrepreneurship education is designed to change both the orientation and attitude of students to enable them birth and manage a successful business. Entrepreneurship education therefore focuses on building in students the essential entrepreneurial attitude, skills and competencies.

2.3 Attitude and Entrepreneurial Attitude

Attitude is the way people feel or think about something, which influences the way they behave towards that thing. Attitude therefore involves a person's emotions, beliefs and values. Attitudes can be positive, negative or neutral. According to Ajzen (1991), people form favourable attitudes toward behaviours believed to have desirable consequences and negative attitudes toward behaviours associated with undesirable consequences. Krueger, Reilly, & Carsrud (2000), stated that, attitude attracts a specific behaviour and this behaviour is influenced by the persons' positive or negative beliefs about the behaviours. Meridith, Nelson, & Neck, (1982) defined attitude as an expression of emotion that is translated into the individual's actions.

According to Robinson et al. (1991), entrepreneurial attitude has four dimensions, and they are: need for achievement, personal control over entrepreneurship behaviour, innovation, and self-esteem. These entrepreneurial attitudes are measured in three dimensions: affection that is feeling and emotion, cognition that is thought and belief, and conation that is action and behaviour. The combination of affection, cognition and conation makes up an individuals' general attitude toward entrepreneurial behaviour. According to Pulka, Aminu and Rikwentishe (2015), students' attitudes towards entrepreneurship education can be assessed from cognitive, affective and behavioural perspective. The cognitive component relates to thoughts, beliefs and knowledge students possess of entrepreneurship education, the affective relates to students' feelings and emotions about entrepreneurship education, and the behavioural relates to the actions, responses and willingness of the students to accept and respond to new things. According to Shapero and Sokol (1982), attitudes and entrepreneurial intentions are strongly related.

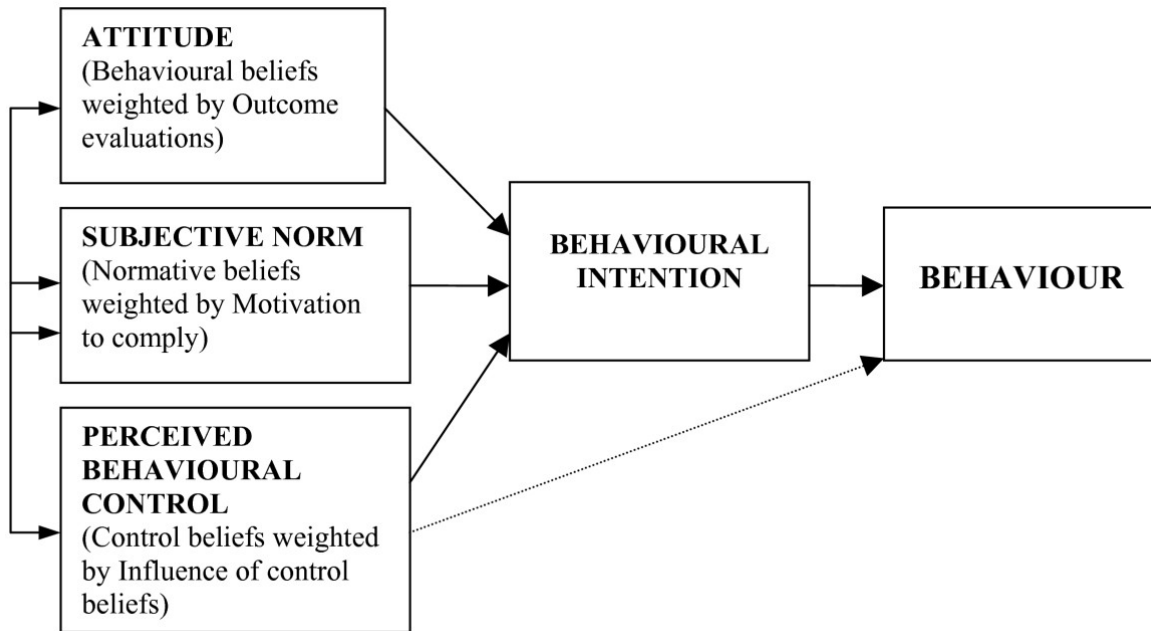
There cannot be intention without an appropriate entrepreneurial attitude. Krueger (1993) is of the view that positive entrepreneurial exposure can influence intentions. The attitude of students toward entrepreneurship education will influence their attitude towards the cause and their decision to be either entrepreneurs or employees. Hannan, Hazlett, and Leitch (2004) asserted that, you cannot increase entrepreneurial initiative among students, without increasing their positive attitudes towards entrepreneurship education. Attitudes have a strong impact on how students view entrepreneurship education. So the probability of students with positive attitude towards entrepreneurship education undertaking entrepreneurial activities at some point in time is very high. It is imperative to understand students' attitude towards entrepreneurship education so as to make the program more appealing and interactive for the objective of the entrepreneurship course to be achieved. Lim (2011) clearly stated that, Positive attitude is an important mind-set that all entrepreneurs must possess because without it, they will not be able to achieve their entrepreneurial goals especially when they encounter challenges and obstacles. Ghanaian universities have been offering entrepreneurship and small business education for some years now, it is of paramount to understand attitudes as a benchmark for a better understanding of the entrepreneurial spirit among university students in Ghana. Literature has also revealed that the males have positive attitude towards entrepreneurship than their female counterparts. (Delmar and Davidsson, 2000; Matthews and Moser, 1995; Scherer et al., 1989). It is important to know whether in Ghana, there is a difference in attitude towards entrepreneurship education across gender.

2.4 Theoretical Framework

In this study, 'attitude' as the dependent variable denotes Ghanaian tertiary students' beliefs, views and behaviour towards entrepreneurship education. The study focuses on Ghanaian tertiary students' attitude towards entrepreneurship education and how this attitude varies across gender and marital status. Students' attitude toward entrepreneurship education will influences the skill and knowledge they acquire from the cause and their entrepreneurial intention. Therefore, this research adopted the theory of planned behaviour (Ajzen, 1991), which proposes that behavioural intentions are formed by individual's attitude towards that behaviour, subjective norms and perception of behavioural control. The theory states that attitude towards behaviour, subjective norms, and perceived behavioural control, together shape an individual's behavioural intentions and behaviours. Attitude toward the behaviour is a person's overall evaluation of the behaviour. It is assumed to have two components which work together: (1) beliefs about consequences of the behaviour (2) and the corresponding positive or negative judgments about features of the behaviour.

Subjective norms are a person’s own estimate of the social pressure to perform the target behaviour. Subjective norms are assumed to involve beliefs about how other people, who may be in some way important to the person, would like them to behave. Perceived behavioural control is the extent to which a person feels that he/she is able to enact the behaviour. It has two aspects: (1) how much a person has control over the behaviour, and (2) how confident a person feels about being able to perform or not perform the behaviour. This is depicted in figure 1 below.

Figure 1: The Theory of Planned Behaviour



Source: https://blogs.ntu.edu.sg/hp331-2014-12/?page_id=253

The study hypothesises that:

- H1: Majority of Ghanaian university students are likely to have a positive attitude towards entrepreneurship education
- H2: In Ghana, male students in the tertiary institutions are more likely to have positive attitudes towards entrepreneurship education than the female students.
- H3: In Ghana, married students will have positive attitude towards entrepreneurship education than unmarried students

3.0 Methodology

The objective of the study was to assess the attitude of Ghanaian tertiary students towards entrepreneurship education and the level of significant in respondents’ attitude from gender and marital status perspective. To achieve the objective of the study and test the hypotheses, Nonprobability sampling was used to gather data from 788 students from a tertiary institution in Ghana. Data was collected from respondents using a well-structured questionnaire. The questionnaire contained 30 items where respondents were asked at what degree they agree or disagree with different statements which characterize general opinion. Respondents assessed these statements using a five-point Linkert scale ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree. The questionnaire was pre- tested, refined to suit the research context and finally administered to the target population through personal contact by the researcher. Statistical analysis was undertaken on the resulting data using SPSS.

4.0 Result and Discussion

4.1 Reliability test

Table 1: Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
0.886	0.902	30

Description for the above table.

Cronbach Alpha was used to measure the internal consistency and reliability for all items on the scale. Table 1 above gives a Cronbach's Alpha Based on 30 Standardized Items of 0.902 which is relatively high. The Inter-Item Consistency Reliability (ICR) of the measures used in this study is therefore highly acceptable in social science research.

4.2 Description of Table 2 below

Table 2 reveals that over 80% of students with mean value of 4.28 and standard deviation of 0.962 have positive attitude towards entrepreneurship education. On the issue of whether entrepreneurship education equips them with adequate knowledge and skills in Entrepreneurship, 60% of the students with mean value of 3.61 and standard deviation of 0.922 agree that entrepreneurship education equips them with the requisite skills in entrepreneurship. This supports Krueger and Brazeal (1994), Filion (2011), assertion that entrepreneurship education shapes students' perception in relation to entrepreneurial concept. From Item 13 and 18 on table 1, 67% of the students are of the opinion that entrepreneurship education has given them enough knowledge needed to start their own business and grow it. This buttresses Badulescu and Dodescu (2010), assertion that quality education in entrepreneurship increases knowledge intensive entrepreneurs. Students were of the opinion that studying entrepreneurship was not difficult and easy in relating it to real life situation. Over 70% of respondents with a mean value of 3.87 and 3.95 and standard deviation of 0.961 and 1.013 believe that entrepreneurship course is very practical and interesting and that they will do well in entrepreneurship. Over 80% with a mean value of 4.12 really value entrepreneurship. 68% with a mean value of 3.78 says entrepreneurship education builds their confidence. 56% of the students with a mean value of 3.55 are of the view that the entrepreneurship course relates to practical issues in Ghana

Table 2: Attitude of Students towards Entrepreneurship Education

SN	Statement	SD	%	D	%	N	%	A	%	SA	%	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
1	I have positive attitude towards Entrepreneurship	29	3.60	19	2.40	51	6.40	286	35.80	397	49.60	782	4.28	0.962
2	I think learning Entrepreneurship is good for me	14	1.80	16	2.00	30	3.80	266	33.30	451	56.40	780	4.46	0.828
3	I think studying Entrepreneurship is a wise decision	19	2.40	15	1.90	47	5.90	298	37.30	396	49.50	776	4.34	0.871
4	I think learning Entrepreneurship is good for me	25	3.10	42	5.30	99	12.40	331	41.40	269	33.60	766	4.01	0.997
5	I think that studying Entrepreneurship is too much time consuming	224	28.00	254	31.80	135	16.90	95	11.90	54	6.80	762	2.35	1.221
6	I think understanding basic concepts in Entrepreneurship is difficult	199	24.90	313	39.10	107	13.40	104	13.00	44	5.50	768	2.33	1.171
7	I think applying knowledge in Entrepreneurship is difficult	142	17.80	273	34.10	140	17.50	147	18.40	66	8.30	768	2.64	1.225
8	I think studying Entrepreneurship is difficult to me	184	23.00	334	41.80	122	15.30	86	10.80	37	4.60	763	2.29	1.098
9	I think it is difficult to relate Entrepreneurship to real life situations in my environment	176	22.00	240	30.00	123	15.40	160	20.00	74	9.30	773	2.63	1.295
10	Generally, I believe I have the knowledge needed to learn Entrepreneurship	20	2.50	45	5.60	104	13.00	416	52.00	192	24.00	778	3.92	0.922

11	Entrepreneurship education equips me with adequate knowledge and skills in Entrepreneurship	25	3.10	79	9.90	187	23.40	365	45.60	117	14.60	775	3.62	0.989
12	I am able to do practical assignments in Entrepreneurship	19	2.40	84	10.50	183	22.90	374	46.80	100	12.50	760	3.59	0.936
13	I think entrepreneurship education will improve the value of my academic transcript.	33	4.10	67	8.40	162	20.30	417	52.10	98	12.30	778	3.62	0.965
14	Taking a course in Entrepreneurship have given me enough knowledge needed to start my own business and grow it	28	3.50	56	7.00	158	19.80	367	45.90	170	21.30	780	3.77	0.991
15	Taking a course in Entrepreneurship will improve my academic reputation	28	3.50	56	7.00	124	15.50	393	49.10	174	21.80	775	3.81	0.982
16	The entrepreneurship course relate to practical entrepreneurial issues in Ghana.	36	4.50	93	11.60	192	24.00	307	38.40	141	17.60	769	3.55	1.067
17	Taking a course in Entrepreneurship enhances my confidence and make me feel important about myself	25	3.10	71	8.90	130	16.30	373	46.60	175	21.90	775	3.78	1.008
18	Taking a course in Entrepreneurship enhance my ability to start my business and grow it	28	3.50	64	8.00	147	18.40	361	45.10	174	21.80	774	3.76	1.008
19	Entrepreneurship is necessary to my academic and professional development	20	2.50	42	5.30	91	11.40	377	47.10	249	31.10	780	4.02	0.950
20	Taking a course in Entrepreneurship will enhance my chances of joining desired professional associations	25	3.10	69	8.60	149	18.60	360	45.00	175	21.90	778	3.76	1.002
21	Taking a course in Entrepreneurship will help me relate better socially	23	2.90	47	5.90	113	14.10	382	47.80	219	27.40	784	3.93	0.961
22	In all, taking a course In Entrepreneurship is really valuable to me	21	2.60	36	4.50	71	8.90	332	41.50	294	36.80	754	4.12	0.956
23	Overall I believe I can perform well in Entrepreneurship	13	1.60	31	3.90	107	13.40	389	48.60	208	26.00	749	4.01	0.874
24	Overall, given the opportunity I can do well in Entrepreneurial venture	16	2.00	25	3.10	115	14.40	391	48.90	196	24.50	744	3.98	0.867
25	In all, with the available resources I can learn Entrepreneurship effectively	17	2.10	37	4.60	100	12.50	390	48.80	204	25.50	748	3.97	0.900

26	Given that I have good tutorials, I think I can perform well in practical areas of Entrepreneurship	18	2.30	29	3.60	111	13.90	395	49.40	191	23.90	745	3.96	0.889
27	Overall I believe I can perform well in Entrepreneurship	12	1.50	29	3.60	102	12.80	419	52.40	182	22.80	744	3.98	0.827
28	The teaching of Entrepreneurship makes it easy to learn it	33	4.10	61	7.60	161	20.10	360	45.00	135	16.90	750	3.67	1.004
29	The teaching of Entrepreneurship is interesting to me	26	3.30	45	5.60	113	14.10	378	47.30	187	23.40	749	3.87	0.969
30	The teaching of Entrepreneurship is practical	28	3.50	41	5.10	113	14.10	329	41.10	243	30.40	755	3.95	1.013

4.3 Test of hypothesis

Hypothesis 1

Hypothesis 1 predicted that majority of Ghanaian university students will have a positive attitude towards entrepreneurship education. This hypothesis was tested using the chi square test. There is only one variable (attitude towards entrepreneurship education). The median score on the attitude to entrepreneurship education scale was used to group the attitude scale into two categories (positive and negative). This measurement on the attitude to entrepreneurship scale was clearly nominal. Therefore, the most appropriate statistical technique to test this hypothesis was the chi square test.

Table 3. Results of chi square test on students' attitudes towards entrepreneurship education

Attitude	Frequency	Percentage (%)	χ^2	df	p
Positive	481	61	38.42*	1	0.000
Negative	307	39			
Total	788	100			

Note. *p < .001

Description of table 3 above

The chi square was performed to determine whether the distribution of the scores on the attitude towards entrepreneurship will be equal for students with negative and positive attitudes.

Attitudes towards entrepreneurship education was not equally distributed ($\chi^2 = 38.42/1$; $p = .000$). Thus the hypothesis that majority of students will have a positive attitude towards entrepreneurship education was supported.

Hypothesis 2

Hypothesis 2 predicted that in Ghana, male students are more likely to have positive attitudes towards entrepreneurship than female students. This hypothesis was tested using the independent samples t-test. There were two variables: one categorical independent variable (gender) with two levels (males and females) and one continuous dependent variable (attitude towards entrepreneurial education scale). Therefore, the most appropriate statistical technique to test this hypothesis was the independent sample t-test. Table 4 shows a summary of the independent t-test results on the effect on gender on attitude towards entrepreneurial education.

Table 4. Summary of t-test results on gender differences in attitude to entrepreneurial education

Gender	N	Mean	SD	df	t	P
Male	555	106.18	11.65	786	-0.19	0.850
Female	233	106.36	11.62			

Note. SD = Standard Deviation

The results on Table 4 shows that there is no significant difference in scores for males (M = 106.18, SD = 11.65) and females [M = 106.58, SD = 11.77; t (-0.42), ns] on attitude to entrepreneurship education.

Thus hypothesis 2 was not supported. This indicates that there are no gender differences in attitudes towards entrepreneurship education in Ghana.

Hypothesis 3

Hypothesis 3 proposed that married students are more likely to have positive attitudes towards entrepreneurship education than unmarried students. The independent samples t-test was used in testing this hypothesis. There were two variables: one independent categorical variable (marital status) with two levels (married and not married) and one continuous dependent variable (attitude to entrepreneurship education score). Therefore, the most appropriate statistical technique to test this hypothesis was the independent samples t-test. Table 5 shows a summary means and standard deviation on the effect of marital status on attitude towards entrepreneurship education.

Table 5. Summary of t-test results on the effect on marital status on attitude to entrepreneurship education

Marital status	N	Mean	SD	df	t	p
Married	185	104.50	12.39	786	-2.33	0.020
Not Married	603	106.77	11.35			

Note. SD = Standard Deviation

Table 5 shows a summary of independent t-test results on the effect of marital status on attitude towards entrepreneurship education. The result shows that there is a significant difference in scores for married students ($M = 104.50$, $SD = 12.39$) and not married students [$M = 106.77$, $SD = 11.35$; $t (-2.33)$, $p = .020$] on the attitude to entrepreneurship education scale. The magnitude of the differences was small ($\eta^2 = .001$). This result indicates that students who are not married are more likely to have a positive attitude toward entrepreneurship education than those who are married. This result therefore does not support the hypothesis that was stated in the study.

Conclusion

The study explored the attitude of students towards entrepreneurship education. Analysis from the study shows that students have positive attitude towards entrepreneurship education and they attach high importance and value to the course. Students are of the view that entrepreneurship education enrich their curriculum vitae and equips them with enough knowledge to start their own business and grow it. Furthermore, attitude of students towards entrepreneurship education did not differ across gender however the unmarried students have positive attitude towards entrepreneurship education than married students.

The attitude of the students towards entrepreneurship from this study shows that if entrepreneurship education is well promoted in tertiary institutions in Ghana, the entrepreneurial intention of students will increase leading to high number of entrepreneurs in Ghana hence economic development and Job opportunities.

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