

**INFLUENCE OF ENTREPRENEURSHIP EDUCATION CURRICULUM ON EMPLOYMENT OF  
POLYTECHNIC GRADUATE STUDENTS FROM THE MIDLANDS PROVINCE, ZIMBABWE**

**By**

**WILSON MABHANDA**

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**SUPERVISOR: PROF. G.E. CHILOANE-PHETLA**

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## DECLARATION

Name: WILSON MABHANDA


Student number: 43115322

**Degree: INFLUENCE OF ENTREPRENEURSHIP EDUCATION ON EMPLOYMENT OF POLYTECHNIC GRADUATE STUDENTS FROM THE MIDLANDS PROVINCE, ZIMBABWE.**

I declare that the above thesis is my own work and that all the sources that I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.

I further declare that I submitted the thesis to originality checking software and that it falls within the accepted requirements for originality.

I further declare that I have not previously submitted this work, or part of it, for examination at UNISA for another qualification or at any other higher education institution.



SIGNATURE

JULY 2022

DATE

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## **DEDICATION**

This study is dedicated to my wife, Grace, and my children Shamiso, Samantha, Sandra and Shalom. It is also dedicated to my sister Beauty and my brother Martin.

PREVIEW

## **ABSTRACT**

Despite policy interventions by the Ministry of Higher and Tertiary Education, Innovation, Science and Technology Development in Zimbabwe, as well as the donors' support for graduates from the polytechnics in the Midlands province, the role of entrepreneurship education in the creation of meaningful jobs for graduate students has remained relatively insignificant. This study aimed to examine how entrepreneurship education curriculum in the polytechnics contributes towards employment creation for graduates. The objectives of the study were to establish entrepreneurship education curriculum's influence on personality traits of students in the polytechnic colleges in the Midlands province of Zimbabwe. Moreover, the study focussed on identifying entrepreneurship methods that were ideal for students' learning, and evaluating the education content to ascertain whether entrepreneurship education curriculum in polytechnics enhanced job creation. Data was collected through a qualitative multi-case study design, with 40 lecturers and graduate students participating in focus group discussions and interviews. Participants were sampled through purposive and snowball sampling techniques. Comparisons were drawn between entrepreneurship in Zimbabwe and other polytechnics in the region and beyond. The study revealed a disconnection between epistemology entrepreneurship and the practical skills essential for job creation. The study also established that entrepreneurship education curriculum could not entirely change students' mind-sets to embrace new business start-ups because of inadequate resources, poor curriculum implementation and incompetent educators. Empirical results confirm that if considerable support could be offered, graduate students might be motivated to venture into actual business start-ups. On this basis, government should encourage all stakeholders through adopting the framework titled Stakeholders Collective Approach Intervention (SCAI) of entrepreneurship education to aid in the graduate students' creation of actual business start-ups. The study makes a vital contribution to the body of knowledge on entrepreneurship education through customising the SCAI framework to reduce poverty through job creation. The study recommends that the Zimbabwe government give holistic support to entrepreneurship education curriculum through a budget that contributes to the achievement of feasible self-employment after graduation. Finally, the study provided a

framework to assist policy makers to reduce the number of unemployed graduates from polytechnics in Zimbabwe.

Key terms: Entrepreneurship education; self-employment; polytechnic students; entrepreneurial intention; business start-ups; framework; Zimbabwe.

PREVIEW