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Factors Behind the Lower Contribution of Graduates to Entrepreneurship in North Kivu, DRC

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Abstract

In this study on the factors of the lower contribution of graduates to entrepreneurship in North-Kivu in the DRC, our objectives were to identify the obstacles that make most graduates not ready to engage in entrepreneurship, to check whether the obstacles are the same for secondary and tertiary education finalists and to find strategies to develop entrepreneurship skills at school. So, we questioned finalists, 74 from secondary school and 48 from tertiary education. The results obtained with chi-square at 1 and 5% threshold show that they are all poorly prepared to entrepreneurship. The results of the survey have led us to note that most graduates are not ready to be entrepreneurs because they are not motivated to entrepreneurship. They want to continue their studies, apply for a job. There is lack of entrepreneurship course in all fields of study, lack of creativity and risk-taking, lack of information about business creation support system. Secondary and tertiary education finalists face the same obstacles of theoretical learning, lack of experience with entrepreneurs, lack of skills including creativity, a spirit of initiative, the risk-taking. Strategies to develop entrepreneurship skills are as follows: the integration of entrepreneurship courses into the learning curriculum in all fields of study, focusing learning on the practices about skills of business creation at school, work sessions with tutors, the partnership with entrepreneurial referents, the learning with various approaches including the workplace learning, solving problem and the project-based learning approaches.

Keywords*: Contribution, Entrepreneurship, Factor, Graduate.*

Introduction

A country's economic development depends on many factors, including "increases in the two principal factors of production (labor and capital), and the third, technological progress, which generates productivity gains." [1]. The main vector for these factors is education, which guarantees the development of human capital. In fact, as UNESCO/OECD [2] points out, "there is now evidence that human capital is a key factor in economic growth, and new evidence indicates that it is also associated with a range of non-economic benefits such as improved health and well-being. Investment in human capital and involvement in education has thus taken center stage in strategies to promote economic prosperity, higher employment and social cohesion". It should be noted that access to employment, production and processing largely dependent on entrepreneurship. It is through education that schools develop in learners the appropriate skills for employment and entrepreneurial attitudes, among which are "autonomy, creativity, curiosity, a spirit of initiative, a certain appetite for risk. and also team spirit and a desire for commitment. This is the basis of the entrepreneurial spirit, which can be defined as the ability to move from an idea to a concrete project. It is therefore fundamental to know oneself, to have learned to take a step back from one's own functioning, one's limits and one's strengths" [3]. In fact, it's up to the school to help learners achieve this. "Education is

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commonly believed to be important for the success of entrepreneurial activity"[4] . Indeed, speaking of the DRC the mission of secondary and tertiary education "is to develop students' critical thinking, creativity and intellectual curiosity, and to prepare them either for a trade or profession, or for higher education and/or university studies if they have the interest and aptitude. [5]. Given the mission of education in the DRC, we understand that the school is the best tool for producing employees and entrepreneurs. Paradoxically, according to the World Bank [6], "the DRC is one of the five poorest nations in the world. In 2023, some 74.6% of Congolese lived on less than $2.15 a day. Around one in six people living in extreme poverty in sub-Saharan Africa live in the DRC". In addition, it has a high unemployment rate, as we can see from the Agence Nationale pour la Promotion des Investissements [7]: "the incidence of poverty averages 80% and the unemployment rate 84%". And finally, it has far fewer entrepreneurs with both secondary and tertiary education qualifications than the rest of the country. Looking at the article by Paul Omandji Lokonde [8], we see that "among young entrepreneurs in Kinshasa, secondary school graduates, together with those from tertiary education, are less numerous than young entrepreneurs with no qualifications or who have not studied". In the towns of Butembo and Beni, the situation of entrepreneurs is not different from that in Kinshasa. The majority of entrepreneurs in this area have no school qualification and they are not registered. Among the 260 or so businesses affiliated to INPP in Butembo [9], 17% were set up by university graduates, 18% by secondary school graduates and 65% by non-graduates or those who had not studied. This observation drew our curiosity, and we wanted to know why secondary school and tertiary graduates, who are supposed to know more or better and be better prepared than others for entrepreneurship, are less numerous among entrepreneurs. According to studies by Théophile Dzaka-Kikouta and colleagues at the Observatoire de la Francophonie Economique [10], the main obstacles to youth entrepreneurship are: "socio-cultural attitudes, weak entrepreneurial skills, regulatory barriers, difficulties in accessing credit, macroeconomic instability and the absence of support and coaching services". Yet, "the Government of the DRC has positioned entrepreneurship as one of the priority levers for economic development. However, this sector suffers from a number of constraints, such as the virtual absence of large companies, the non-use of formal accounting, the opacity of the tax framework, the high rate of informal businesses, and so on. In addition to these dysfunctions, women, with a remarkable presence in the sector, experience specific constraints". Without focusing specifically on women, it should be noted that according to the World Bank [11], women entrepreneurs face the following main obstacles: "difficulties in accessing financing, lack of support services, inappropriate regulations, social prejudice, heavy family responsibilities and low levels of education are the main obstacles to female entrepreneurship". So it's clear that all entrepreneurs, whether graduates or not, face many obstacles. However, considering *the low level of education* and *the weakness of entrepreneurial skills* among the main obstacles as presented above, we think that the entrepreneurship sector would have more graduates than non-graduates, as they presumably don't have these difficulties given their certificates and the purpose of secondary and tertiary education in the DRC. However, we have seen the opposite. We think that the problem for graduates lies at the very level of taking the initiative when they leave school. That's why we put the following questions on which this study will answer:

- Why most secondary and tertiary education graduates are not ready for entrepreneurship?

- Are the obstacles faced by secondary and tertiary finalists different?
- What strategies schools can use to ensure that most graduates be ready for entrepreneurship?

Hypothesis

- Most finalists in both the secondary and tertiary education are not ready to be entrepreneurs for a number of reasons, the most salient of which would be linked to:
  - *lack of motivation for entrepreneurship*. They are motivated to continue studies, applying for a job;
  - *poor learning skills for entrepreneurship*: lack of entrepreneurship course in all fields of study, lack of creativity and experience, difficulty of risk-taking and market knowledge, lack of information about business creation support system, etc.
- Both secondary and tertiary education finalists face the same obstacles of theoretical learning and the lack of tutoring and student carrier day activities with entrepreneurs and with experimented entrepreneur referents;
- There are several strategies that schools should use to develop entrepreneurship skills. They include: integration of entrepreneurship courses into the learning curriculum in all fields of study, focusing learning on the practices about skills of business creation at school including creativity, autonomy and spirit of initiative, work sessions with tutors, the partnership with entrepreneurial referents, the learning with various approaches including the workplace learning, solving problem and the project-based learning approaches, the diversification of professional fields of study.

Objectives

- Identify the obstacles that prevent most graduates from becoming entrepreneurs;
- Verify whether the obstacles are the same for secondary school finalists as for those in tertiary education;
- To find strategies to develop entrepreneurship skills at school.

Methodology

Using comparative approach, our research was carried out on a population made up of people with the following characteristics: being a secondary school or tertiary finalist in the towns of Butembo and Beni. We selected 14 secondary schools and 6 tertiary education institutions in which we worked with a sample of 70 secondary school finalists and 120 tertiary education finalists who wished to participate in our survey by answering our questionnaire.

The survey method, which is used to "collect the personal views of individuals concerning their knowledge, attitudes or behavior" [12], was used in our study. It is proved useful because it enables "primary data to be collected from a questionnaire administered to a sample drawn from a target population. It is a scientific research method designed to collect information systematically in order to describe, explain and compare individual and social objectives and phenomena." [13]. In using this method, we resorted to the questionnaire technique, which is "a self-reporting instrument used to gather information about variables of interest to the researcher" [12]. The questionnaire is "a technique for collecting quantifiable data in the form of a series of questions asked in a precise order. It can be used to gather a large number of testimonies or opinions" [14]. The data we obtained were presented in tables to facilitate analysis on the basis of frequencies and percentages. We used the Chi-square comparison test [15] according to this formula,

$$Q^2 = \sum \frac{N_{ij} - \frac{(L_i \times C_2)^2}{n}}{\frac{L_i \times C_2}{n}}$$

and fractile values for the distribution of Chi-square test [16] to determine whether secondary school finalists differ from tertiary

finalists about: motivation, learning content, entrepreneurial skills and learning approaches with the null hypothesis (Ho) which states that there is no significant difference between secondary school finalists and tertiary education finalists and the alternative hypothesis (Ha) which states that there is significant difference between secondary school finalists and tertiary education finalists.

Our sample is presented as follows: Ladies are 115 or 60.52% and gentlemen are 75 or 39.47%. Among them 70 or 36.84% are finalists at secondary school and 120 or 63.16% are finalists at tertiary education. The fields of study for secondary school finalists in our sample are: Nutrition, Pedagogy, Veterinary, Medical Techniques, Accounting, Social Techniques, Agriculture, Agricultural Industry, Building, Sciences. And the fields of study for the tertiary education finalists in our samples are: Physiotherapy, Law, Communication, Political Science, Sciences and Civil Engineering, Economical, Agronomic, Management, Education, Psychology, Nutrition, Pharmaceutical Sciences, Public Health, Laboratory Technology, Veterinary, Biomedical, Accounting, Nursing, Computer Science.

Results

We have presented the results we obtained in tables for a good analysis

Preparation for Entrepreneurship

Ambitions after Studies

Table 1. Responses to the Question of What the Finalists Plan to do After their Studies

Response	**Secondary school finalists**		**Tertiary education finalists**		**Total line Li**	**Activity**	**Secondary school finalists**		**Tertiary education finalists**		**F**	**%**
	of	**tf**	**of**	**Tf**			**f**	**%**	**f**	**%**		
Yes	52	74,288	68	56,66	12	Continue studies	43	64,28	53	45	99	52,1
						Apply for a job	18	25,71	51	42,5	69	36,31
						Rest for a while	3	4,28	4	3.32	7	3.67
						Play politics	2	2,85	3	2,5	5	2,63
						Start a business	2	2,85	8	6,66	10	5,26
No	18	25,712	52	43,33	70	***Sous-total***	***70***	***100***	***120***	***100***	***190***	***100***
Total column line Cj	**70**	**100**	**120**	**100**	**n= 190**							
$Q^2\ obs = 5{,}87$						**TOTAL**						

Source: Our Survey

Q^2 critical at the 1% significance level and the degree of freedom of 1 is 6.63.

Decision: as critical Q^2 , $6.63 > Q^2$ obs, 5.87, we keep the null hypothesis. It means that secondary school and tertiary education finalists have got the same motivation after graduation.

Comment: From this table 1 we see that when leaving school, the finalists plan to do many things and especially to continue their studies in 52.1%, to apply for a job in 36.31% and to start a business in 5.26%.

The Existence of Concepts on Entrepreneurship

Table 2. Responses to the Question of Whether Learners have been Informed how to Start a Business and the Courses that gave them this Information

Reponse	**Secondary schoolFinalists**				**Tertiary education Finalists**				**Total line Li**
	frequency		***Course***		**frequency**		***Course***		
	of	**tf**	**Entrepreneurship**	***Other Course***	**of**	**tf**	**Entrepreneurship**	***Other Course***	
Yes	**51** or *72.85%*	44.94	46 or *90.19%*	5 or *9.81%*	**71** or *59.16%*	77.05	36 or *51.70%*	35 or *49.30%*	**122**
No	**19** or *27.15%*	24.31	-	-	**49** or *40.84%*	41.68	-	-	**68**
Total column line Cj	**70**	**100**			**120**	**100**			**n= 190**
$Q^2\ obs = 3.13$									

Source: *Our Survey*

Q^2 critical at the 5% significance level and the degree of freedom of 1 is 3.84

Decision: as critical Q^2 , $3.84 > Q^2$ obs, 3.13, we keep the null hypothesis.

Comment: In Table 2, we see that 72.85% of secondary school finalists and 59.16% of tertiary education finalists know about business creation. The 64.42% of finalists who are informed about entrepreneurship learned through different courses including entrepreneurship course in 90.19% at secondary school and in 51.70% at university.

Obstacles to Business Creation

Table 3. Responses to the Question of what are the Obstacles to Starting One's Own Business

Response	**Secondary school finalists**		**Tertiary education finalists**		**Total line Li**	**Obstacles**	**Secondary school finalists**		**Tertiary education finalists**		**F**	**%**
	fo	**ft**	**fo**	**Ft**			**F**	**%**	**f**			
Yes	69	98.57	115	95.53	184	Starting capital	19	25,33	78	43,57	97	38,18
						Creativity and experience	30	39.99	41	22.88	71	27.93
						Risk-taking and Market knowledge	13	17,33	23	12.84	36	14.16
						The context of the current economic crisis	2	2,66	7	3,91	9	3,54
						Financial risks and workload	9	11.99	14	7.81	23	9.04
						The administrative constraints of creating a business	2	2,66	16	8,92	18	7.08
No	1	1.42	5	4.16	6	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

Total column line Cj	**70**	**100**	**120**	**100**	**190**							
$Q^2\ obs = 0{,}44$						**TOTAL**	***75***	***100***	***179***	***100***	***254***	***100***

Source: *our survey*

Q^2 critical at the 5% significance level and the degree of freedom of 1 is 3.84

Decision: as critical Q^2 , 3.84 $> Q^2$ obs, 1.05, we keep the null hypothesis.

Comment: This table shows that the finalists have many difficulties in creating their own businesses. The most frequent are: lack of start-up capital in 38.18%; lack of creativity and experience in 27.93% and lack of Risk-taking and market knowledge in 14.16%.

Business Creation Support System

Table 4. Responses to the Question to Verify Knowledge of the Business Creation Support System

Response	**Secondal school finalists**		**Tertiary education finalists**		**Total line Li**
	Of	**tf**	**of**	**tf**	
Yes	0	0	0	0	0
No	70		120		190
Total column line Cj	**70**	**70**	**120**	**120**	**n= 190**
$Q^2\ obs = 0$					

Source: Our Survey

Q^2 critical at the 5% significance level and the degree of freedom of 1 is 3.84

Decision: as critical Q^2, 3, 84> $Q^2 obs$, 0, we keep the null hypothesis.

Comment: Here we see that 100% of secondary and tertiary education finalists have not knowledge of business creation support system.

Tutoring activities

Table 5. Response to the Question of Whether there was Entrepreneurial Tutoring activity During the Training

Réponse	**High school finalists**		**Tertiary education finalists**		**Total line Li**	**F**	**%**
	Fo	**ft**	**fo**	**ft**			
Yes	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
No	70	70	120	120	190	190	100
Total column line Cj	**70**			**120**	**n= 190**	**190**	**100**
$Q^2\ obs = 0$							

Source: Our Survey

Q^2 critical at the 5% significance level and the degree of freedom of 1 is 3.84

Decision: as critical Q^2 , 3.84 $> Q^2$ obs, 0, we keep the null hypothesis.

Comment: This table shows that 100% of the finalists did not do any tutoring activity during the training.

Student Career Days

Table 6. Responses to the Question of Whether there were Student Career Days during the Training

Réponse	High school finalists		Tertiary education finalists		Total line Li	F	%
	Of	ft	f	ft			
Yes	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
No	70	70	120	120	190	190	100
Total column line Cj	**70**			**120**	**n= 190**	**190**	**100**
$Q^2\ obs = 0$							

Source: Our Survey

Q^2 critical at the 5% significance level and the degree of freedom of 1 is 3.84

Decision: as critical Q^2 , $3.84 > Q^2$ obs, 0, we keep the null hypothesis.

Comment: This table shows that the 100% of finalists did not attend student career days.

Entrepreneur Referent for the School

Table 7. Responses to the Question of Whether Schools have Entrepreneur Referents

Response	High school Finalists		Tertiary education finalists		Total line Li	F	%
	Of	tf	of	tf			
Yes	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
No	70	0	120	0	190	190	100
Total column line Cj	**70**		**120**		**n= 190**		**100**
$Q^2\ obs = 0$							

Source: Our Survey

Q^2 critical at the 5% significance level and the degree of freedom of 1 is 3.84

Decision: as critical Q^2 , $3.84 > Q^2$ obs, 0, we keep the null hypothesis.

Comment: This table shows that the 100% of finalists' schools did not have entrepreneur referents.

Entrepreneurship at School

Table 8. Responses to the Question about Solutions which can ensure that Schools Produce Entrepreneurs

Response	High school finalists		Tertiary education finalists		Total line Li	Learning approach	Solution path	High school finalists		Tertiary education finalists		F	%
	of	tf	of	tf				f	%	f	%		
Yes	70	70	120	120	190	Workplace learning approach	Training entrepreneurship in all the fields of study.	34	46.56	74	38.73	108	40.9

						Project-based learning approach	Train in creativity, autonomy spirit of initiative and risk-taking	13	17,8	43	22,51	56	21,21
						Solving problem approach	More practical learning with right approaches	20	27,39	48	25,13	68	25,75
						Workplace learning approach	Do tutoring activities and student career days with entrepreneurial referents	6	8.19	26	17	32	12.11
No	70	0	0	0	0		***Sub-total***	***73***	***100***	***191***	***100***	***264***	***100***
Total column Cj	**70**		**120**		**n= 190**								
$Q^2\ obs = 0$							**TOTAL**						

Source: Our Survey

Q^2 critical at the 5% significance level and the degree of freedom of 1 is 3.84

Decision: as critical Q^2 , $3.84 > Q^2$ obs, 0, we keep the null hypothesis

Comment: Through this table we find various solutions to the difficulties of creating finalists to create their own businesses. According to their statements, teachers should apply more the workplace learning, solving problem and the project-based learning approaches. And in 40.9% they propose the entrepreneurship course in all the fields of study; in 25.75% that make training more practical with appropriate approaches; in 21.21% to train learns in creativity, autonomy spirit of initiative and risk-taking while they are still at school; in 12.11% to do tutoring activities and student career days with entrepreneurial referents.

Discussion

The results of the Chi-square statistical test at the 1% and 5% threshold support that there is no significant difference between secondary and tertiary education finalists regarding entrepreneurship. They are all poorly prepared and have difficulty of creating their own businesses. Indeed, the results in Table 1 show that the finalists hardly think about creating their own businesses because they have not been prepared to start business despite the results in Table 2 which show that most of finalists have information on business creation. And most of them had this information in secondary school, but without practical experiences. This can be seen from the results in Table 3, which show how difficult it is for finalists, whether from secondary or tertiary education, to create their own businesses, mainly due to a lack of start-up capital, creativity, experience, risk-taking and knowledge of the market. This confirms our second hypothesis according to which secondary school as well as tertiary education finalists have the same obstacles of theoretical

learning and the lack of tutoring and student carrier day activities with entrepreneurs and with experimented entrepreneur referents. In these conditions, schools hinder entrepreneurial integration and professional opportunities for learners. Because “the challenges of tutoring are multiple, both in the present moment and in a long-term perspective. Today, it meets a crucial need for personalized support, whether in school, university or professional settings. It plays a central role in the integration of learners or new employees, while providing regular support to promote educational success.”[17] Also, “no matter where you are in your career and what your objective is, participating in a career day will put all the chances on your side to facilitate your professional project”[18]. And even if finalists were given money to start their businesses, they would not be able to, because they have no entrepreneurial experience with entrepreneurs as the results in tables 4, 5, 6 and 7 show us. In addition to theoretical teaching, it turns out that the finalists have no motivation to entrepreneurship as we have seen with the results in table 1. This confirms our first hypothesis according to which most young finalists in second school as well as those in tertiary education are not ready to start their own businesses for several reasons, the most salient of which are lack of motivation for entrepreneurship, poor learning skills for entrepreneurship including lack of entrepreneurship course in all fields of study, lack of creativity and experience, difficulty of risk-taking and market knowledge, lack of information about business creation support system, There is a need for school to bring learners improving entrepreneurial skills. According to Jennifer Herrity, [19] the following steps can help: “take a course, attend events and workshops, seek out experienced mentors, build your leadership skills, learn how to manage finances”. The results in Table 8 support that the school will have to apply workplace learning, solving problem and the project-based learning approaches more in teaching than the theoretical collective approach by training in a practical way and introducing learners to entrepreneurship through the training in creativity, autonomy, spirit of initiative and risk-taking while they are still at school. This confirms our third hypothesis according to which there are various strategies that schools should develop to better prepare young finalists to do entrepreneurship. Among these we have the integration of entrepreneurship courses into the learning curriculum in all fields of study, focusing learning on the practices about skills of business creation at school including creativity, autonomy, spirit of initiative, risk-taking, work sessions with tutors, the partnership with entrepreneurial referents, the learning with various approaches including the workplace learning, solving problem and the project-based learning approaches, the diversification of professional fields of study. This leads us to recall the concept of competency. Actually, according to OECD [20], “the concept of competency implies more than just the acquisition of knowledge and skills; it involves the mobilization of knowledge, skills, attitudes and values to meet complex demands. Future-ready students will need both broad and specialized knowledge” with right approaches as mentioned above among which the problem-solving method, a “learner-centered approach that encourages students to apply critical thinking, reasoning, and creativity to solve challenges. It focuses on developing students’ ability to identify problems, explore potential solutions, and apply their knowledge in a range of scenarios. This method aims to encourage independent thinking and deepen understanding of topics to make it more achievable to apply them to a real-world situation” [21] and the workplace learning that **“**is the process of acquiring knowledge, skills, and attitudes through experience in the workplace. Workplace learning is an ongoing process that brings together people to learn and grow. Workplace learning means more than just

attending workshops or webinars; it's about sharing ideas, collaborating on projects, and working through challenges together" [22].

Conclusion

In this study on the reasons for the lower contribution of graduates to entrepreneurship in North-Kivu, our problem is structured around these questions:

- Why most secondary and tertiary education graduates are not ready for entrepreneurship?
- Are the obstacles faced by secondary and tertiary finalists different?
- What strategies schools can use to ensure that most graduates be ready for entrepreneurship?
- Identify the obstacles that prevent most graduates from becoming entrepreneurs;
- Verify whether the obstacles are the same for secondary school and tertiary education finalists;
- To find strategies to develop entrepreneurship skills at school.

To achieve this, we collected data using a survey method and questionnaire technique. We processed the data using frequency scoring with statistical analysis based on percentages and chi-square.

We found the following:

- Most graduates are not ready to be entrepreneurs because they are not motivated to entrepreneurship. They want to continue their studies, apply for a job, . There is lack of entrepreneurship course in all fields of study, lack of creativity and experience, difficulty of risk-taking and market knowledge, lack of information about business creation support system, …
- Secondary and tertiary education finalists face the same obstacles of theoretical learning and the lack of tutoring and student carrier day activities with entrepreneurs and with experimented entrepreneur referents;
- Strategies to develop entrepreneurship skills are as follows: the integration of entrepreneurship courses into the learning curriculum in all fields of study, focusing learning on the practices about skills of business creation at school including creativity, autonomy, spirit of initiative, risk-taking, work sessions with tutors, the partnership with entrepreneurial referents, the learning with various approaches including the workplace learning, solving problem and the project-based learning approaches, the diversification of professional fields of study.

The results obtained during this study therefore confirmed all our hypotheses.

This article presents the educational factors or challenges behind the lower contribution of graduates to entrepreneurship and the educational solution in terms of entrepreneurship skills and learning approach for graduates to be ready to start up their business.

Conflict of Interest

There is no conflict of interest.

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None.

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