



ISSN: 0975-833X

## RESEARCH ARTICLE

### A REVIEW OF STUDENTS' WAY OF THINKING TOWARDS SELF-EMPLOYMENT AND THE ROLE OF ENTREPRENEURIAL EDUCATION (*THE CASE OF MEKELLE UNIVERSITY STUDENTS*)

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#### ARTICLE INFO

##### Article History:

Received 20<sup>th</sup> August, 2014

Received in revised form

18<sup>th</sup> September, 2014

Accepted 04<sup>th</sup> October, 2014

Published online 30<sup>th</sup> November, 2014

##### Key words:

Self-employment,  
Entrepreneurship,  
Business, venture,  
Entrepreneurial education.

#### ABSTRACT

Nowadays, across the globe in general and Ethiopia in particular, public structures (Governmental vacancies) are on saturation point beyond which they can't carry new staffs. Alternatively, the government of Ethiopia is largely emphasizing on the self-employment and encouragement of citizens by establishing small and micro enterprise agencies across the country. On top of this, the government has started praising individuals or unions who come up with new business ideas, new markets, new products etc. On the other hand, individuals, specifically university graduates, are interested to be employed by the public sectors. Therefore, this study was targeting at assessing the willingness of students to start own business by emphasizing the students' attitudinal characteristics towards self-employment and the entrepreneurial education. To collect relevant data, 200 third year (graduating class) students were selected from five departments under the college of business and economics. A mixture of probabilistic and non-probabilistic sampling technique was employed. Two data collection instrument, structured questionnaire and focus group discussion, were used. The major findings of the paper were; students whose parents are self employed and have higher education level shows more tendencies towards self employment than others. Plus to this, it was found that the university learning process contributes very little to the self-employment notion. The society's attitude towards self-employment is still at its lowest level. High risk and shortage of start-up capital were also mentioned as the perceived barriers to establish own business. But, government commitment and facilitation for the advancement of small and micro enterprises was mentioned among the top opportunities to set a venture.

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#### INTRODUCTION

Under this section, the background, the justification (statement of the problem), the research objectives, the scope and significance of the study have been displayed.

##### 1.1. Background and Theoretical Frameworks of the Study

It is quite clear that a career in entrepreneurship contributes considerable prospects for individuals to achieve financial sovereignty and benefit the economy by contributing to job creation, innovation, and economic growth. Today's pace is expected to be tomorrow's entrepreneurial destination. That is why the number of universities and entrepreneurial centers tremendously increasing from day-to-day, across the globe. In view of this, this study has aimed at exploring the role of students' entrepreneurial intention and entrepreneurial education on the willingness of students to engage on own business (to be self employed)<sup>1</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> In this paper, entrepreneurship, self-employment, own business and own venture are used interchangeably.

As has been stated by Kirzner (1979), in almost all definition of entrepreneurship, everybody is talking about a kind of behavior that include (1) initiative taking, (2) the organizing and reorganizing of social and economic mechanisms to turn resources and situations to practical account (3) the acceptance of risk or failure. To an economist, as further described by Kirzner (1979), an entrepreneur is one who brings resources, labor, materials, and other assets into combinations that make their value greater than before, and also one who introduces changes, innovations, and a new order. On similar fashion Giffort (1992) has tried to see an entrepreneur on two additional aspects. According to him, to a psychologist, such a person is typically driven by certain forces the needs to obtain or attain something, to experiment, to accomplish, or perhaps to escape the authority of others. To a businessman, an entrepreneur appears as threat, an aggressive competitor, whereas to another businessman, the same entrepreneur may be an ally, a source of supply, a customer, or someone who creates wealth for others, as well as finds better ways to utilize resources, reduce waste, and produce jobs others are glad to get.

In recognition of the crucial importance of entrepreneurship (small business), as addressed by Davidson (1995), since the last four decades, various western countries have shared similar

experience that large established firms can no longer create any net increase in employment. This has resulted, as described by Davidson, in high level of unemployment and the small and new firms are important as creator of new jobs. This, in turn, led to a widespread expectation that small and new firms will help solve problem of unemployment and generate economic development. Therefore, the emphasis of this study is on the ventures which start small. Large scale enterprises are not within the scope of this paper.

*Then what does entrepreneurship mean?* To this, many scholars have described it differently. Ajzen (1991) and Shapero *et al.* (1982), for example, have pin pointed that, entrepreneurship is an attitude that reveals an individual's inducement and capability to identify an opportunity and to chase it, so as to come with value adding things or achieve economic successes. Such attitude is central for bringing competitiveness and innovation, according to the authors. As a result of this and other definitions, many studies have been done on the entrepreneurial ambitions of individuals and the transformation of the ambitions into the establishment of an undertaking. Evidences extracted from these studies showed that students having inclination towards self employment have different demographic characteristics such as age, gender, self-employment experience, family background, education background, strength of financial resources, dissatisfaction with hours of work and pay etc. This further, as underlined by Katz (1992), can also be associated with the psychographic factors such as attitude toward risk, achievement motive, tolerance for ambiguity, locus of control etc. However, Souitaris *et al.* (2007) have pointed out that there is still little clear understanding of the factors that affect students 'intentions of becoming entrepreneurs and the relationship between entrepreneurship education and students' entrepreneurial attitudes and intentions.

Entrepreneurial education is among the influential factors that affect students intentions to words self employment. Nowadays, education of entrepreneurship is a cross-cutting and growing field in both public and private universities and Colleges. Entrepreneurship education, as revealed in many literatures, is something which differs from business education. Because, business enterprises centers on operating a business (commonly based on established rules and guidelines) whereas entrepreneurship education is about the talents needed to conceive of and start up a new business. Opportunity identification; the assembling and dedication of resources; and the creation of an operating business organization are some of the necessary components of entrepreneurship education.

Furthermore, it was clearly stated by Sexton *et al.* (1998) that entrepreneurship education plays an integral role on the broadening of students' desire and eagerness for self-employment and he further said that the success of entrepreneurship training programs is driven by the learners' belief in the relevance of the program for his or her survival. Similarly, as has been evidenced from the works of Holmgren *et al.* (2005), entrepreneurship education has become main concern both at national and global responsibilities. As a result of this, according to Holmgren *et al.* (2005), it has turn out to be the force for broad expansion into all levels of education

from primary and secondary and particularly into university levels. Henry (2003) also argued that entrepreneurship education should provide the entrepreneurial opportunities for all students.

## 1.2. Problem Statements/Justification of the Study

It was underlined by Hak (2009) that entrepreneurship is a combination of personality, talent, and technique. Searching and investigating of new things as further sated by Minniti *et al.* (2005), is also one of the expressive nature of entrepreneurship; because many young adults are often interested in business ownership by identifying an opportunity which is less crowded, and those with post-secondary academic experience are more likely to become involved in such activities.

Understanding the stirring feature that force people to enter into entrepreneurial activity, according to Naktiyok *et al.* (2010) is valuable. Because, it can provide timely and relevant information for governments, universities and other concerned bodies to prepare the necessary facilities and supports. Particularly, it helps universities to shape contents of the teaching material and teaching learning methodology in a way that it goes in line with the students' backgrounds and interests. This, substantially, has sound meaning in examining the degree to which previous entrepreneurial intention affects the students' current stand to have their own business. By knowing the drivers of intentions, the learning atmosphere can be better redirected to give students confidence of what is required for them to enter the field of entrepreneurship. As concluded by Naktiyok *et al.* (2010), commitment in this direction may result in a higher number of students following an entrepreneurial career when finishing their studies as they represent the potential entrepreneurs. Entrepreneurial education has not only the possibility to increase understanding and skills for endeavor but also, it amplifies the readiness and need of human beings to rely on entrepreneurship as a best option of career development (Lucas *et al.*, 2004).

Kolvereid and Moen (1997) suggested that the term "self-employment" is that the individual is faced with two alternatives when selecting a career either as self-employed or employed in an organization. As evidenced from many scholars on this area, attitudes towards self-employment is the key factor whether someone decides to start own business or to be employed in an organization. This attitude can be implanted in the mind of individuals through different things among them is entrepreneurial education. An attitude towards self-employment is an individual's perception on working as an owner of a business. Badulescu *et al.* (2010) argued that an attitude towards entrepreneurship is an important aspect which predict potential entrepreneur in future; because, many graduates are unable to get a public- job upon graduation, specifically in Ethiopia. Students, as described by Salmah *et al.* (2009) are now apparently searching for a business education that can equip them with the necessary entrepreneurial knowledge and skills to succeed in running businesses or to create a job from seizing existing entrepreneurial opportunities. On top of this, Ajzen, (1991) in his work confirms that entrepreneurship is one of the top relevant devices to promote

economic growth and ensure sustainable development. According to the author, the opportunity identification process is clearly an intentional process. As a result, entrepreneurial intentions clearly merit our attention, further pushes or pull someone to realize his/her intention in the form of self-employment; because attitudes and intentions are precursors of entrepreneurial action. An understanding of the attitudes, and those factors which may impact them, including educational background, is a critical step in promoting greater entrepreneurial initiatives among the promising entrepreneurs in Ethiopia.

Therefore, it is critical that all types of colleges and universities offer relevant entrepreneurship education programs. Nowadays, across the globe in general and Ethiopia in particular, government structures are going to be saturated beyond which they can't carry new staffs. Alternatively, the government of Ethiopia is largely emphasizing on the self-employment and encouraging citizens by establishing small and micro enterprise agencies across the country. On top of this, the government has started praising individuals or unions who come up with new business ideas, new markets, new products etc. This shows, the government is committed enough to promote self-employment. On the other hand, individuals, mostly university graduates, are interested to be employed by the public sectors. As stated by Arenius-Antio *et al.* (2004), most people have very positive attitude towards entrepreneurship but only few people have actual plans of setting up a firm. Particularly, according to the authors, it is university graduates that are not interested of the entrepreneurial career.

Therefore, this study was targeting at assessing the willingness of students to start own business by emphasizing on the students' attitudinal characteristics towards self-employment and the entrepreneurial education.

### 1.3. Objectives of the Study

The general objective of the study is to find out the role of entrepreneurial attitude and education on students' readiness to start own business. Specifically, the general objective has been broken down into the following four specific objectives.

#### 1.3.1. Specific Objectives

- To assess the level of students perception towards starting own-business.
- To explore students past entrepreneurial exposure and the role of entrepreneurial education
- To assess certain personality features and traits that could be associated with the entrepreneurial activity.
- To identify the perceived supports and barriers towards engaging in own business.

#### 1.4. Scope of the Study

The study was delimited geographically, conceptually and methodologically. *Geographically*, the research was done in Mekelle University in general and in Adihaki<sup>2</sup> campus, college

of business and economics in particular. *Conceptually*, the research has targeted only on the readiness level of students to start own business. Actual works of entrepreneurship were not assessed by the paper. *Methodologically*, the study was a survey study by taking sampled students. And the data collection techniques were questionnaire and Focus Group discussion. All batches of students were not taken into account. Only the third year students were regarded. Hence, the research findings and conclusions drawn will be meaningful if they are viewed within this framework.

#### 1.5. Limitation of the study

Since the collected data was based on perceptions of the students, a first limitation might appear in the difference between "perception" and "reality." Obviously, there is always a risk that the perceptions of students might differ from reality. Second, when considering the variety of entrepreneurship characteristics around the world, it might be more reasonable to analyze the general nature of entrepreneurship characteristics, rather than focus on a specific context. A third limitation is that my study relied on university student samples in one college not on actual entrepreneurs. I based my research on random samples of students drawn from one university. Thus, the results may reflect a bias since students from other universities were not included.

#### 1.6. Significance of the study

The findings of this paper are believed to have many benefits to different individuals, groups or organizations. This research can also serve other researchers as a stepping stone. Actual or potential researchers are expected to refer any part of this material while pursuing their own paper. The conclusions and recommendations drawn here in this paper is believed to serve the government being as an input for policy formulation and evaluation. Especially, the paper has tried to mention societal view point on self employment, financial institutions, and the like. Hence, these specific findings can be used to map out a correct direction. The output of this paper can transfer some lessons and directions, to the university, on how the curriculum and teaching-learning process should be revised.

## CHAPTER TWO: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

In this chapter, the site selection, research design, the survey instrument, data collection and sampling procedure, and data analysis have been discussed.

### 2.1. Survey Instrument

It is fundamentally recommended to clearly state that this study was aimed simply at describing the students' intention, previous exposure and role of entrepreneurship education at college level on self employment. It was not concerned with the connection between intention and action (practice).

To collect relevant data for this study, two data collection instruments were utilized.

<sup>2</sup>One of the five campuses of Mekelle University where business and

Economics College is found

- i. Questionnaire:** a structured questionnaire was utilized as a data collection instrument. The questionnaire was designed to survey the effect of individual, societal and environmental factors on entrepreneurial intention. From an individual perspective, the most vital aspects of the entrepreneur including their attitudes, beliefs, motivations and opinions were captured. The role of social groups including the role and relationships of family and personal network was also revealed. The questionnaire, by and large, was a Likert scale type having a five points of attitudinal measures. By probing through questionnaire interviews and having these decision articulated, the research was able to construct the items and processes in which entrepreneurs actually engaged. Those items identified were representing a fairly comprehensive collection of decisions which entrepreneurs actually implemented.
- ii. Focus Group Discussion (FGD):** One focus group discussion was conducted. It composed of ten participants selected judgmentally. This was basically done so as to know students inclination towards self employment by opening a free discussion.

### **2.3. Target Population, Sample Size, Sampling Procedure and Data Collection**

#### **2.3.1. Target Population and sample size**

The target population was composed of Regular undergraduate (third year, first degree) students from the college of business and economics. During the study time, the number of third year students was 800. From these totals, 200 students were selected. With regard to the five departments, the total 200 students were dispersed equally to each department. Those took part in the survey were near the end of their studies and were expected to have the time and energy available in the near future to plan a business project. To avoid bias in the responses, the students were assured that participation in the study would not be disclosed. Perception variables were measured on a 1 to 5 scale ranged from strongly disagrees to strongly agree.

#### **2.3.2. Sampling Method**

The sampling methods used here were basically a mixture of the two approaches i.e. probabilistic and non-probabilistic sampling techniques. To select the college and the third year batch, random sampling tool was not used. Rather, the researcher purposively selected them through the non-probabilistic sampling techniques. But, to pick the 200 students from the total 800, the investigator did use the simple random sampling method.

#### **2.3.3. Data sources and Collection procedures**

The two major sources of data i.e. primary and secondary (tertiary) were used. The sampled students were the sources for the primary data. It was collected through structured questionnaire and focus-group-discussion. In fact, the

researcher did not use the data of others for this paper rather the findings and conclusions of other researchers which is commonly called tertiary data. The findings of many published and unpublished tertiary materials have been used to articulate the justification and background of the study. Data was collected over a period of 2 weeks especially after they complete their final examination of the first semester (during the break time). The data collection method employed for this research was an intercept survey sampling whereby students were intercepted at the dining area, tutorial classes, and computer laboratories. This seems to be the most viable data collection technique that could be employed for the study given that most of the students were not so interested to fill up the survey forms once leave the class or being left alone to do so. On top of that, time and cost of survey were also one of the reasons to employ the above intercept technique.

## **CHAPTER THREE: DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION**

### **3.1. Introduction**

One of the intended objectives of this study was to identify the perceived indicators of students' inclination towards self employment and the role of entrepreneurial education on students readiness towards own business establishment. The sampled students were asked "what their inclination towards self employment is" and "what pushing or pulling factors towards self employment are there." The role contributed by entrepreneurial education towards self-employment was also assessed, especially in the focus group discussion. Here in this chapter, the researcher has tried to display the responses of the respondents in both percentage and mean. But, the major emphasis in the discussion part was given to the percentage value. Because, mean value might mislead readers or interpreters because it is computed from a weighted arithmetic mean.

### **3.2. Demographic Distribution of the Sampled Respondents**

In this part, the sex, age and area of residence were included. 120 or 60% of the total respondents were males and 160 or 80% of the respondents were within the age interval of 20-25 years. Only 10(5%) were below the age of 20 years. With regard to respondents' residence, 80% of the 200 samples were rural residents.

### **3.3. Pushing or Pulling Factors towards Self Employment**

#### **4.3.1. Respondents Past Experience**

Many studies conclude that individuals having a previous exposure to entrepreneurial activities are likely to possess much of the qualities similar to the traits possessed by a successful entrepreneur. Hereunder, Students were asked the following six parameters (Table 3.1 below) which are closest to entrepreneurial atmosphere.

As Table 3.1 below shows (100%) of respondents underlined that they have got access of Education, skills and Training of

entrepreneurship at university level that can stimulate them towards Entrepreneurial intention. Contrary to this, all of the respondents (100%) did not have an experience of working in large sized business enterprises. The data set also clearly shows that only few students had the exposure of working in small and medium enterprises and having small chance to participate as sales person and as member of small and micro enterprise associations.

**Table 3.1. Previous Practices and Experiences**

Previous activities	Respondents' reflection				Total
	Yes		No		
	Count	%	Count	%	
Attend class or workshop on entrepreneurship	200	100	-	-	200
Working for business owner of small size	20	10	180	90	200
Working for business owner of medium size	10	5	190	95	200
Working for business owner of large size	-	-	200	100	200
Sales experience	10	5	190	95	200
Membership on SME <sup>1</sup> association	15	7.5	185	92.5	200

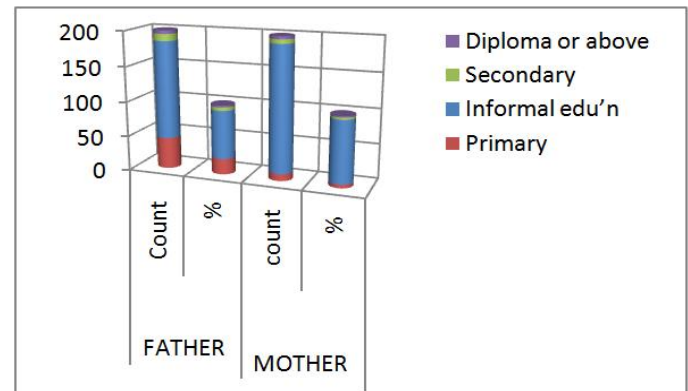
Source: survey of 2014

Therefore, it can be concluded that majority students were not enriched with variety of experience of entrepreneurial atmosphere rather than the entrepreneurship education given at universities. Although majority of the respondents exhibit similar exposure on the abovementioned parameters, those who had some exposure and experience on entrepreneurial practices were found to be more courageous to start own business. This was basically explored during the focus group discussion (FGD) with certain students chosen purposively. As all we know, entrepreneurship is conceived in the mind of individuals. Hence, the FGD was employed to navigate what is in the students' mind. During the discussion, the moderator (the investigator) had observed that those who had an exposure to entrepreneurial atmosphere were confident enough during their speech. They had the knowledge of the area and they know what the parameters of entrepreneurship are. Ironically, those who did not have the exposure were somehow inclined towards business rather than entrepreneurship i.e. they prefer to join businesses which are identical with the already existing ones. And so, previous experience and exposure have had its own effect on whether to be an entrepreneur or not. To jot down the role played by the course entrepreneurship on self-employment orientation, a discussion was taking place during the focus group discussion. Unlike the government commitments and facilitation for the spreading out of self-employment, the entrepreneurial education adds a very minimal drop to the student's inclination towards self employment. This was because the curriculum and delivery system are enriched with theoretical orientation with little emphasis on the practical and contextual ground. Having this in mind, the students did not deny the role of entrepreneurship education in furnishing their mind with the theoretical frameworks of the area in focus.

### 3.4 Family Educational Background

To assess whether parents' educational level precipitates onto the entrepreneurial intentions of their children, the investigator had tried to disclose the educational status of each parent. As described by many research outputs, parental education is one

among the factors that greatly affect the willingness of individuals to start own business. To see this implication, in the focus group discussion, the researcher had mentioned a question saying "Do you believe that your parents' educational level affects your readiness to be self-employed?" This, basically, was done to draw some inferences on whether parental education level spills over the student's entrepreneurial intention or not.



Source: survey of 2014

**Chart 3.1: Parents' educational level**

As depicted on Chart 3.1 above, level of education of about 70% of fathers and 90% mothers was not exceeding the informal<sup>3</sup> level. The same data set make clear that; it is only 7% of the fathers and 5% of the mothers whose education level is secondary school and above. Generally, the data set is telling us; majority of the respondents have come from a family whose education status is limited within the informal one. To know whether this parental education status affects students' willingness towards self-employment, the investigator had brought the issue in the focus group discussion session. During the discussion, it was clearly observed that those whose parents are secondary school or above had better eagerness to start own business than the others. Especially those students whose parents have completed diploma or above were found to be with strong desire to have own venture. Contrary to this, though they have desire towards self-employment, students whose parents' educational status is within the read and write level (informal), had somehow loose willingness. Therefore, parental education level affects the decision of somebody on self-employment.

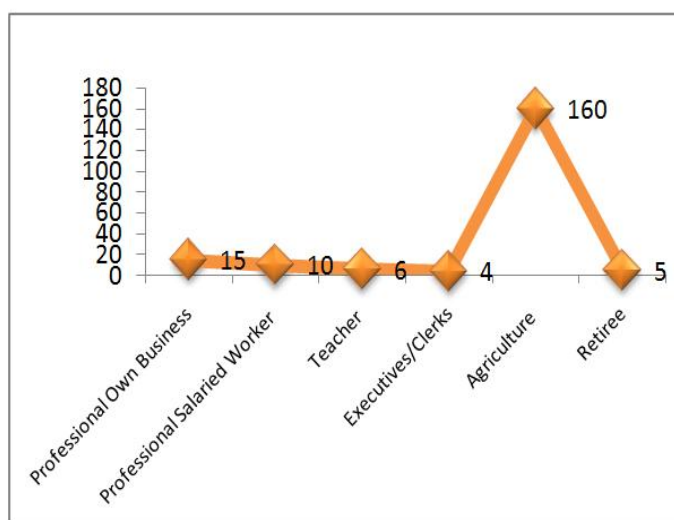
### 3.5 Parents' Occupation

There is an Ethiopian proverb stated as, "To tell you who you are, tell me with whom you go." May this proverb work on the entrepreneurial path line? Does parental occupation matters to judge the entrepreneurial intensions of their sons or daughters? The same to the educational status, parental occupation will also influence an individual's decision. As one entrepreneur stated, "My father was so consumed by the venture he started and provided such a strong example, it never occurred to me to go to work for anyone else". This feeling of independence is

<sup>3</sup> An informal education level in the Ethiopian context is an education system given to every person, especially to elderly people, to enable them read and writes.

often further enforced by an entrepreneur's mother. The following chart is about the parents' occupation. So as to further understand whether students are influenced by the parents' occupation or not, the discussion had been substantiated by the finding of the focus group discussion.

Figure 3.2 below illustrates that; 80% (160 out of 200) of the respondents have confirmed that; their parents were living on agriculture. It was only 7.5% of the total respondents whose parents had been engaged on own business. The remaining were salaried (employees' of other organization). Though much of the respondents were from agrarian families, the researcher has tried to distinguish the willingness for self-employment between the majority rural students and the remaining portions. As a result of this, the following mixed inclinations have been observed. Respondents whose parents are farmers show an inclination as they will be employed by the government after they complete their degree. They justified the reason why; because the community's, they are living in, expectation is not yet changed. What the society perceives is being government employment is the best one. Then, this, by and large, spills over onto the students, too. In fact, there is some attitudinal change on this regard; but still a major part of the rural society gives very small room to the notion of self-employment.



Source: survey of 2014

Chart 3.2: parent's occupation

On the other hand, those students whose parents are running own business have reflected different view. They replied that they prefer to follow the path where their parents are walking on. The remaining respondents, whose parents are salaried, have shown a moderate inclination. They are, by far, more inclined towards self-employment than the agrarian ones but less than the own business runners.

**3.6. Attitude of Respondents towards Self Employment**

The researcher had approached respondents to know their standpoint towards the establishment of own business. To dig out the attitude of the sampled students, the researcher has

prepared the following eight questions having a five point scale options, commonly known as Likert scale. The scale is ranged from strongly disagree (denoted by 1) to strongly agree (denoted by 5). The sample respondents of the eight parameters were 200.

Students were found to have a relatively high attitude profile towards entrepreneurship in all of the following perceptual components, except with the concept saying that entrepreneurial capability is a gift of few individuals. They, all in all, vow that entrepreneurial skill is not determined by inborn characteristics. According to them, success in entrepreneurship is a matter of commitment and facilitation. At the right column of the table is, the mean value computed out of five. The more the mean approaches to five, the more the respondents agreed with the given attitudinal measure and vice-versa. Therefore, the mean value also shows that, except for the above mentioned concept, the attitude of the largest number of the respondents was in light of the given concept. The variation of the mean values from five or from one indicates that the perceptual or attitudinal difference of human beings in general and the respondents in particular. Hence, Participants' perception towards entrepreneurship was found to be highly related to the given concepts, except the mean values of 3.3 and 3.4 which are moderately related. In this context, preferences to be self-employed rather than being salaried and Freedom to express one-self in own business were found to have the highest relationship.

Table 3.2: Attitude towards own business

Attitude Measuring Questions	LIKERT SCALE (%)					Mean
	5	4	3	2	1	
1 ready to sacrifice personal comfort so as to take advantage of business opportunities	21	29	30	10	10	3.4
2 I would have authority in business due to my expertise	60.5	39.5	...	...	...	4.6
3 concrete results are necessary to judge business success	20	30	20	16	14	3.3
4 I prefer to be self-employed rather than being salaried	81.5	18.5	...	...	...	4.8
5 Freedom to express myself in my own business	88.5	11.5	...	...	...	4.9
6 I prefer to be own boss than having a secured job	40.5	31	18.5	10		4.0
7 entrepreneurial capability is a gift of few individuals	...	...	...	70	30	1.7
8 Ready to discard a business idea that I love more once I found it being valueless	61.5	17.5	5	11	5	4.2

Source: survey of 2014

**3.7. Perceived Support (Accessibilities) & Barriers of starting own Business**

Under this sub-title, the expected or perceived supports or accessibilities to certain facilities and the perceived potential or actual barriers were asked.

The total sample size for each category of Table 3.3. and 3.4 was 200.

**Table 3.3: Perceived Supports**

Perceived Supports(Accessibilities)	Likert scale (%)					Mean
	5	4	3	2	1	
1 Self-employment has positive image within the society	16	9	31.5	23.5	20	2.9
2 creative university atmosphere	5	10	10	35.5	...	2.1
3 relatives persuasion to start business	15	21	9	29.5	25.5	2.7
4 Availability of Consultation and service support arranged government	33	32	15	7.5	12.5	3.7
5 experience & knowledge gain in the university stimulates to start business	10	10.5	7.5	22	50	1.8
6 I will get start-up capital easily	7.5	15	12.5	15	50	2.2
7 My good social networks will help me to start business	21	32	20	25	2	3.5
8 I will get supporting information to begin business	12.5	14.5	22.5	25.5	25	2.6
9 People think that I should pursue a career as a self-employed.	17.5	21	11.5	28	22	2.8

Source: survey of 2014

Identifying how respondents perceive the supports and facilities they could probably get from different segments was one of the objectives of this paper. Results of the survey indicate that; respondents did not agree with self employment in the eye of the society, creative atmosphere of the university, availability of supporting information, access to start-up capital.

**Table 3.4. Perceived Barriers to Start Own Business**

Perceived barriers	Likert scale (%)					Mean
	5	4	3	2	1	
1. Financial institutions will not be ready to give credit	5	12	8	37	38	2.1
2. The law is not in favour of running own business	...	...	...	22	78	1.2
3. It is hard to a find new business idea	10	15	5	15	55	2.1
4. I don't have the necessary skill to start own business	15.5	12.5	3	19.5	49.5	2.3
5. Starting own business needs a big start-up capital	40.5	16	3.5	32.5	7.5	3.5
6. I lack the confidence to start my own business	15.5	26	8.5	31	19	1.9
7. Too high risk associated with starting up business	24.5	40	...	20.5	15	3.4

Source: survey of 2014

To go deep into these, the investigator had brought these issues during the focus-group-discussion session. The discussants had replied that; the society they are living with has not positive outlook for self employment. Further, the participants agreed that the teaching-learning methodology of the university at large and the college in particular is not encouraging on how to start own-business. Because, what we learn, as the discussants replied, in class-room is the theoretical framework, with no practical exercise or field visiting. As a result of this, the students concluded that the contribution of experience and knowledge obtained from university, for self-employment, is almost insignificant. The respondents also pointed out that; shortage of capital, information asymmetry and poor support and motivation from relatives will exacerbate to the less elucidated students' willingness. Apart from this, respondents confidently assured that; the supports and facilities arranged by the government and their good social networks are considered to be good opportunities.

To wind up, the societal lens through which self employment is interpreted still needs larger investment (in terms of effort, time, money and expertise) so as to bring positive awareness. Similarly, the university curriculum and the teaching-learning methodology are contributing very little for the self-employment orientation. Hence, the university in general and the college of business and economics in particular has to do a lot to rectify its curriculum and the teaching-learning methodology. The curriculum and teaching learning atmosphere should be supplemented by concepts, models and experiences in a way that it assists the "start own business" direction of the Ethiopian government. This not only sharpens their class participation but also it can equip them with the necessary knowledge and skill that impliedly or overtly backing up them to the commencement their own business. The mean value also shows that respondents reflect their disagreement with most of the provided attitude measuring concepts.

With regard to the probability of facing problems while starting own business, the pre-dominant barriers as perceived by the respondents were; high risk and shortage of start-up capital (especially, from family, relatives and from larger Banks as they seek collateral). In Figure, 64.5% and 56.5% of the total respondents perceived that high risk and shortage of capital respectively will their main challenges. But, perception on the existing policy or law, searching business idea, own skill was found to be positive.

They had also positive image on the financial<sup>4</sup> institutions though they criticize the group lending system.

## Conclusion

The following conclusive points have been drawn from the main findings of the paper.

- Having no previous exposure on business or entrepreneurial practices make students less to have intention towards self-employment. Except a general need or common sense, in fact, but they lack concrete information as how business will be established, what are the requirements, what they should sacrifices and so on. In contradict to this, those who had some exposure shows an

<sup>4</sup> Financial institution is institution that facilitates loan and saving similar to banks but with no collateral.

explicit inclination and they have deeper knowledge about business ventures. Similarly, parental occupation has its own effect on students' tendency with regard to self-employment. Those students who came from rural area whose parents are farmers are merely explaining their general need with no clear justification. Even some of them put the government's direction as their inclination. In contrast, students whose parents are running own-business reflected a very strong and consistent stand towards self-employment. Hence, the finding shows that past experience on entrepreneurship and parental occupation largely influences student' desire about business venture establishment.

- To get freedom and full authority were found to be among the top motivators for students to enter into the establishment of their own business. This impliedly shows that running own venture is not only to enjoy the financial stipends but also it awards business owners with the intrinsic rewards. This will again make them to express what they feel, have sense of belongingness and sense of purpose. All these are going to be done as per the jurisdiction of the business runner.
- The other inference obtained from results was as whether entrepreneurial skill is gift to certain individuals or not. The result revealed that every person is equal before the entrepreneurial environment. All respondents unanimously believe that everybody can be successful if she or he works committed and is equipped with the necessary armaments. Success and failure has nothing to do with inborn traits, as underlined by the respondents.

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