INSTITUTIONAL DETERMINANTS AND ENTREPRENEURIAL MINDSETS OF UNIVERSITY EDUCATED YOUTHS IN SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA

Ogunsade A.I; Murithi W. K., and Mafimisebi O. P.

ABSTRACT

The development of entrepreneurial mindsets and engagement, through training and education has been recognised as one viable way of integrating the youth population into the labour market for economic development. Studies also indicate that institutional contexts provide structural reality and meaning for individual entrepreneurial actions. This chapter draws on institutional theory to explore the formal and informal institutional context in sub-Saharan Africa, and its influence on entrepreneurial mindsets and actions among university educated youth. The chapter argues that the challenges to entrepreneurial activities among the youth in Sub-Saharan Africa is multidimensional. We advocate that integrating the right institutional and supporting ecosystems for entrepreneurial development will provide the catalytic foundation for jumpstarting development of entrepreneurial mindsets and capacity for entrepreneurial engagement among African youths. The chapter also offers important practical insights where governments can focus investment and effective policy to improve entrepreneurial capacities and engagement of the youths.

Introduction

This chapter explores the institutional context in sub-Saharan Africa and its influence on entrepreneurial mindsets and actions among university educated youth. The chapter argues that institutional determinants which provide structural reality and meaning to entrepreneurial actions have a profound influence on entrepreneurial mindsets and actions within a society (Günzel-Jensen et al., 2017; Pfeifer et al., 2016, Farashah, 2015). To date, entrepreneurship research has not thoroughly examined the process whereby the institutional determinants impact the entrepreneurial mindsets and actions of university educated youths. This chapter proposes and explores the extent to which institutional determinants influence entrepreneurial mindsets and actions of university educated youth in sub-Saharan Africa. Entrepreneurs create wealth by launching new business ventures, provide goods and services as well as alleviate poverty within the local communities and the nation in general (OECD, 2019; Falco and Haywood 2016; Ahn, 2015). The significant contribution of entrepreneurial activities to economic development in both developed and developing nations have led to several studies on how to promote
entrepreneurship among youths (Doran et al., 2018). In particular, entrepreneurial education targeting the youth has been acknowledged as one of the best ways to equip them with entrepreneurial mindsets and skills that are needed for employability, individual capability for creativity and decision making towards venture creation (Lackeus, 2015; European Union, 2012).

Entrepreneurship education at schools and higher education institutions involves the teaching of an enterprising culture, starting new businesses, and promoting entrepreneurial thinking as a way of raising young people’s awareness towards opportunity recognition and exploitation. At large, entrepreneurship education has been promoted as a way of addressing youth unemployment in most African countries (DeJaeghere and Baxter, 2014). Despite the increasing interest of entrepreneurship education in African countries, most of them have lagged in addressing the high unemployment rates among its youthful population. For example, it is estimated that the youth population (15 to 35 years) accounts for 60% of Nigeria’s population, and within this group 38% are job seekers (World Bank, 2015). A strong case can be made for youth development by different international and government agencies because the young people of today are crucial resources that can contribute to the development of the future society (ILO, 2015).

The development of entrepreneurial mindsets and engagement, through training and education has been recognised as one viable way of integrating the youth population into the labour market for economic development (Jabeen et al., 2017; Matlay, 2008; Nabi et al., 2010; Rae, 2010). Furthermore, various measures by governments, intergovernmental and nongovernmental institutions have also been geared towards youth entrepreneurship in Africa. However, the issue of what deters venture creation and opportunity driven start-ups among educated young people, in terms of institutional context remains to be explored in the African context. Several studies on institutional environment have emphasised that institutional environment influences entrepreneurial actions and economic activities by generating and reproducing certain cognitive assumptions taken for granted by the members of the society (Zhao and Li, 2019; Autio and Fu, 2015; Kalantaridis, 2014; Welter, 2011). While this claim somewhat
improves our understanding of how institutions shape entrepreneurial actions, the study extends its direction to capture the complexity and heterogeneity of the institutional order (Zilber, 2013; Greenwood et al., 2011; Boxenbaum & Jonsson, 2008) under context-sensitive and pluralistic conditions such as those found in Sub-Saharan Africa. This perspective implies that institutional environment differs in dimensions and provide different conditions that lead to different aspirations and entrepreneurial or economic activities.

The chapter offers a dynamic view of institutional determinants by acknowledging that the barriers to entrepreneurial activities among the youth in Sub-Saharan Africa is multidimensional (Autio and Fu, 2015). This is closely intertwined between various endogenous and exogeneous factors that either have a direct or indirect influence on the ability of African youth to act entrepreneurially. For instance, social capital is one of the fundamental factors that influence youth participation in entrepreneurial activities. Accordingly, several studies have identified social capital as a major challenge to the development of entrepreneurship (Lajqi, and Krasniqi, 2017; Williams and Shahid, 2014). However, despite the claim of a notable progress in the study of social capital and its impact on entrepreneurship, the findings do not provide a wider insight that can be generalised in in most of the institutional environment in Sub-Saharan Africa and countries around the world (Lajqi and Krasniqi, 2017).

This chapter contributes to the literature by suggesting that formal and informal dimensions of institutional environment play a significant role in influencing the entrepreneurial processes, activities and mindsets for venture creation and productivity among Nigerian youths, and in general within Sub-Saharan African youths. This multi-dynamic approach has been advocated because it takes into consideration a comprehensive set of institutional and contextual factors as well as seeking to explain that entrepreneurial activities do not occur in isolation. In practical context, our claim is that certain conditions within the social, political and economic environments contribute to positively impact on the entrepreneurial activities of a society. Likewise, certain weaknesses within the institutional environment could prevent the right conditions for entrepreneurial mindsets and business start-ups to flourish, hence stalling entrepreneurial activities among the African youth.
Equally, the study advocates that integrating the right institutional and supporting ecosystems for entrepreneurial development will provide the catalytic foundation for jumpstarting development of entrepreneurial mindsets and capacity for entrepreneurial engagement among African youths. The study, therefore, explored how the institutional environment in which entrepreneurial activities occur impact on entrepreneurial mindsets and venture creation with reference to Nigeria. Therefore, we contribute to a nuanced understanding of the entrepreneurial ecosystems in Sub-Saharan Africa by highlighting the role of critical resources such as credit, electricity, contract enforcement and political governance in creating an effective and dynamic entrepreneurship ecosystem in Africa.

Specifically, in order to advance our knowledge, the study draws on the institutional theory and entrepreneurship literature to discuss how institutional environment influences entrepreneurial mindsets and venture creation among educated youths in Nigeria. Therefore, the study begins by examining the institutional determinants of entrepreneurial mindsets and actions among university educated youths. Furthermore, this chapter will offer important practical insights to develop effective enterprise education programs that are built on developing the capability and aptitude for entrepreneurial mindsets, culture and education among young people. Finally, the chapter will offer policy implications, where governments can focus investments, to improve entrepreneurial capacity and engagement of African youth to produce more entrepreneurial events in order to bring about the much-needed wealth creation and development.

The next section presents an overview of the literature on entrepreneurial mindset and dimensions of institutional environment as well as discusses how the institutional environment can impact on entrepreneurial behaviours of educated youth.

**Entrepreneurial Mindsets and Entrepreneurial Behaviors**

Fostering entrepreneurial behaviors and its development requires the understanding of what it is and how or what factors lead to its prevalence. Also, understanding the development of individual entrepreneurial mindsets and capacity (Eze and Nwali, 2012; Pollard et al., 2014) and how it contributes to the economic and socio-political development is key to ensuring that the
right mechanisms are put in place to foster entrepreneurial activities. Indeed, it is widely acknowledged that entrepreneurship is one of the key drivers for development in any society (Acs and Szerb, 2007). The level of awareness of individual members of their capacity to contribute to the economic, social and political development of the society is a key factor in development. A process of creating this self-awareness and the development of individual capacity for creative and innovative thinking, decision making, and policy implementation should be an integral constituent of what people learn in schools, colleges and universities.

The term 'entrepreneur' or 'entrepreneurship' has been used in three different dimensions. First, as an entrepreneurial individual, secondly as an entrepreneurial phenomenon, and lastly as an entrepreneurial organisation. The definition of entrepreneurship as "the creation of a new enterprise" (Low & MacMillan, 1988, p. 141) reflects a growing awareness that entrepreneurship is a "process of becoming rather than a state of being" (Bygrave, 1989, p. 21). Over the past decades, entrepreneurial mindset has become a recurrent construct within the entrepreneurship literature. Entrepreneurial mindset has been used to describe the process of or level of individual or self-awareness and development of the capacity for creative, innovative thinking and decision making for venture creation and entrepreneurial action (Ogunsade et al., 2018). Entrepreneurial mindset as a behavioural or self-awareness construct has also been described as “entrepreneurial orientation” (Pearce et al., 2010), individual “entrepreneurial perspective” (Kuratko, 2005:578), “entrepreneurial mindset” (McGrath and MacMillian, 2000) entrepreneurial “traits and individual characteristics” (Ronstadt, 1987, p. 43). Pearce et al., (2010) refer to entrepreneurial mindset or orientation as a construct that describe a set of unique and interrelated behaviours characterised as innovativeness, risk-taking, pro-activeness, autonomy and competitive aggressiveness. Thus, at the individual level, entrepreneurial mindset or orientation is conceptualised as the individual’s disposition, individual’s attitudes, capacity, values, and behaviours towards engaging in entrepreneurial activities, be it within an existing firm or creating a new venture.

At the individual level, individual entrepreneurial mindset provides understanding into the entrepreneurial behaviours and thoughts of individual entrepreneurs within a specific
environment or context (Haynie et al., 2010; Ajzen, 2002). In this chapter, individual entrepreneurial mindset is conceptualized as a predisposition, a set of distinct but related behaviors, orientation and propensity to be creative, innovative and willingness to take action, mobilize resources for a new venture even under uncertainty (Pearce et al., 2010; Bolton, 2012). Thus, entrepreneurial mindset involves, the ability to identify opportunities, the ability and capacity to adapt thinking in a decision making process (Haynie & Shepherd, 2007).

A review of entrepreneurship theories and literature reveal that traditional theories of entrepreneurship identified individual personal traits and behavioural characteristics as entrepreneurial mindset (Deuning, 2010). However, this personality and individualistic consideration of the entrepreneurial mindset have now shifted to a more inclusive concept of cognition and environmental context. Behavioural approach thus views the phenomenon of entrepreneurship as a contextual event: the primary outcome of many factors. Gartner and Carter (2003) contend that entrepreneurial mindset and behaviour as a process, is an individual level phenomenon that occurs over a given time and space. The study argues that an entrepreneurial mindset is part of a process that triggers new venture creation and encompasses a combination of actions and decision-making processes, which include opportunity identification, capital, technology, infrastructure, legal among other factors and conditions within the entrepreneurial ecosystems and resilience (Mafimisebi, 2017; Mafimisebi & Nkwunonwo, 2015). Therefore, it is important to understand how the environment in which individual entrepreneurs operate facilitates and influences the development of entrepreneurial mindsets. So, in the next section the chapter examines the role of institutions in the development of entrepreneurial mindsets and behaviours.

**Institutions and Entrepreneurial Mindsets**

Recently, the role of institutional environment or contexts in developing entrepreneurial mindsets have attracted attention among entrepreneurship scholars. A significant number of studies have emphasised that institutional environments impact entrepreneurial and economic activities (Valdez and Richardson, 2013; Lim et al, 2010; Baumol, 1993). Baumol (1993) argued
that entrepreneurial activity is inherent of human nature, and that what differs across different context is essentially not the entrepreneurial mindset or spirit but how the spirit is used. Similarly, the seminal study by DiMaggio and Powell (1983) integrated the concepts of bounded rationality and how environmental pressures limit individual entrepreneurial actions and decision making. An overview of the institutional perspectives suggests that institutional environment, the formal and informal social structures influence individual socio-economic activities, venture creation and other oriented behaviours (Kalantaridis, 2014; Bowen & DeClercq, 2008; Aidis, 2006). In addition, institutional theorists have been at the forefront in advocating the role of institutional environment impact on individuals, groups, teams, organisations and governmental institutions ability to either develop or influence entrepreneurial behaviours.

Scott (2001) defined institutions as a collection of structures and activities that provide stability and meaning for social behaviour. Institutions are like the “rules of the game” that defines and limit the opportunity and choices available to individuals within a particular social context, and so influence individual’s behaviour or orientation (North, 1990). These rules can be formal and explicit such as laws, property rights, constitutions, etc. Whilst, North (1990, pp.3-4) made a distinction between institutional environment and institutional arrangement, DiMaggio and Powell (1983), argued that the concepts of bounded rationality and environmental pressures can limit the individual entrepreneurial action and decision making. In his analysis of institutional environment, Scott (2001) presented an embellishment of DiMaggio and Powell (1983; 1991) and North (1990) institutional theories by proposing three dimensions of institutions that includes regulative, normative, and cultural-cognitive. Scott (2001) argued that there are varying levels of analysis and application of institutional theory depending greatly on the focus of the investigation, and the unit of analysis whether micro or macro phenomena.

In understanding the phenomenon of entrepreneurship and factors that influence venture creation, the micro perspectives models assume that individual personality, the individual mental or psychological state play important role in determining entrepreneurial venture and decisions for venture creation (Mitchell et al., 2012). The cognitive structure of the need for achievement, locus of control, risk taken independence, tolerance also play important role for the occurrence of
entrepreneurial venture. In another vein, a macro view of entrepreneurial venture process majorly focuses on the roles that the economic, political, socio-cultural environment and other contextual factors play in influencing venture creation and other economic behaviours. For example, the macro perspective suggests that the socio-cultural context, norms, and values within the social institutional structures can either positively or negatively impact entrepreneurial decisions as well as the diffusion or initiations of new venture creation and entrepreneurial success (Thornton et al. 2011; Welter and Smallbone, 2011).

It is important to note that both micro and macro approaches inferred that the emergence of entrepreneurs and venture creation activities involves the interactions of individuals and other factors within the external environment that exist within the socio-economic environment, the cultural, legal, technological and political institutions. The positive or negative nature of these factors may either constrain or enable the emergence of entrepreneurial mindsets and new venture creation (Chasserio et al., 2014). As the study opine that the context has a significant impact on developing entrepreneurial mindsets and behaviours, it would be essential to review the three institutions to develop our understanding of the African context.

**Regulative Environment and Entrepreneurial Mindsets**

Institutional environment are critical determinants of entrepreneurial activities and behaviours (Autio and Fu, 2015; Kalantaridis, 2014). The regulatory dimension of institutional environment influences among other things, the quality of governance, ease of doing business, access to financing, infrastructure and importantly the individual entrepreneurial perceptions and mindsets. The entrepreneurial ecosystem and the prevalence of or type of entrepreneurial activity found in any society can be impacted by the regulatory environment directly or indirectly. This study perceives the regulatory dimension as the institutional environment that include key policy measures that acknowledge the difference in policy direction for SMEs and entrepreneurship, which provides policy measures, remove administrative and regulatory burdens and constraints for creation of new ventures. The institutional structure that provides access to capital, pre-seed and other financing, that improve knowledge information, training, infrastructures, provides
technical assistance and incubation centres that stand as an anchor for the development of entrepreneurial mindsets and creation of new businesses among the youths.

The implications of positive conditions of the regulatory environment to the development of entrepreneurial mindsets among youths is that, the regulatory environment can leverage certain oriented values and prevent other vices within the society. Specifically, when government policies and other formal supporting mechanism provides support and an enabling ecosystem for new business start-up individual entrepreneurial mindset, predisposition for risk taking, and opportunity recognition is enhanced. For example, institutionally the business environment constitutes many challenges to business creation and survival (Umoren, 2010). The World Bank (2018) study of ease of doing business and starting a new venture, compared across 189 economies, and covering 47 economies in Sub-Saharan Africa, indicated that regulatory environment in most of these countries still rank below the general average that is desirable. Factors such as dealing with construction permits, getting electricity, registering property, getting credit, protecting investors, paying taxes, trading across borders, enforcing contracts, resolving insolvency and employing workers that contribute to the ease of starting a business still require significant improvement in most Sub-Saharan African countries. These factors impose restrictive conditions which inhibit entrepreneurial mindsets and new venture creation among young people. In this context, entrepreneurial efforts to acquire pre-seed financing and venture capital as well as infrastructural amenities are not favorable to stimulate predisposition for entrepreneurial engagement among youths. Therefore, the regulatory institutions affect the motivation, energy and incentives for entrepreneurial engagement and government policy to stimulate and encourage productivity and innovation should be put in place for the development of the right entrepreneurial ecosystem.

The entrepreneurial efforts to acquire pre-seed financing and venture capital as well as infrastructural amenities are not favorable to stimulate predisposition for entrepreneurial engagements among youths. In addition to the challenges of the regulatory environment, the normative and cultural-cognitive environments all come together to impact individual entrepreneurial mind-set and decision for self-employment among educated young people in
Africa (Lim et al., 2010). It is for this reason that we examine the institutional determinants of entrepreneurial mindsets and actions among university educated youths in Nigeria, which also has implications for other African youths in general. Indeed, this study seeks to offer important practical insights to develop effective enterprise education programs that are built on the capability and aptitude for entrepreneurial orientation, culture and education among the young people. Finally, the study will suggest policy implications, where governments can focus investments, to improve entrepreneurial capacity and engagement of the African youths in activities and programs that will produce more entrepreneurial events that will bring about the needed wealth creation and development.

**Cultural-Cognitive Environment and Entrepreneurial Mindsets**

Culture is defined as values, beliefs and norms that are the normal, expected and acceptable behaviours that people hold strongly in a particular cultural and social environment. These values and belief systems are expected and maintained by the groups within social environments. There is a wide range of data associating the national culture within a country to entrepreneurship behaviors of its people, organisations and governments (Eroglu and Picak, 2011; George and Zahra, 2002; Hayton et al., 2002). The extant literature also highlighted the importance of cultural norms, values, beliefs in facilitating entrepreneurial venture and business start-ups. For instance, Aramand (2012) recognised the role of culture in motivating and facilitating entrepreneurial activities among women in Mongolia. Similarly, other researchers such as Murithi et al. (2018), Liñán (2015), and Hofstede’s (1980) argued how culture, values and norms that are prevalent within a given society influence the propensity for entrepreneurship engagement and entrepreneurial performance. For example, using Hofstede’s (1980) cultural dimensions, Shane (1993) posited that high individualism and low power distance positively impacts creativity. On a wider scale, cultural values have also been found to impact on the growth of national income, gross domestic product and competitiveness (Ahlstrom and Bruton, 2002).
Sub-Saharan Africa is diverse and has the largest number of dispersed communities with different cultural beliefs, norms and values. However, most of the countries and regions are oriented towards similar cultural values and social relations. Vershinina et al. (2018) observed that country specific national cultures such as Ubuntu in South Africa, Humanism in Zambia, Harambee in Kenya have the potential to enable or constraints entrepreneurial mindsets and venture creation. Similarly, Murithi et al. (2019) argued that in contexts that are characterised by institutional voids within the formal institutions (such as sub-Saharan Africa) socio-cultural institutions presents unique opportunities and complex challenges for venture creation and economic activities. Therefore, the presence of strong cultural and social orientations, which characterise sub-Saharan African institutional environment, has distinct influences on the cognitions, behaviors and practices of African youths compared to their counterparts in Western countries. Thus, socio-cultural beliefs, norms and values have implications on the motivations, orientations and entrepreneurial mindsets and behaviors.

One of the important implications suggests that cultural values and social expectations within a social structure can uniquely impact individual behaviors, entrepreneurial mindsets and disposition for entrepreneurial engagement. This also supports the arguments that entrepreneurial activities and propensity for venture creation can be determined by the culture, values, beliefs and norms that are applicable within a society or socio-cultural environments (Vershinina et al., 2018; Liñán, 2015). Furthermore, Kalantaridis (2014) and Scott (2001) argued that institutions shape entrepreneurial behaviours, that is, through societal norms individuals within the society tries to act in conformity with what is socially acceptable. The study extends and explores the assumptions, that culture, norms and the immediate social environments affects individual entrepreneurial mindset, orientation and the choice of career path among young people. For instance, within the institutional environments, the perception of risk, independence and the capacity of individuals within the social structure to tolerate uncertainty may go a long way in determining the values, perceptions and orientation to entrepreneurial venture as a career path. Thomas and Mueller (2000) corroborated this view by suggesting that cultural belief for independence, and risk taking positively influence individual
entrepreneurial intention and business creation. The research also maintains that culture stands in the gap as a predominant motivator for intending entrepreneurs.

In addition, the study extends and explores the assumptions, that culture, norms and the immediate social environments affects individual entrepreneurial mindset, orientation and the choice of self-employment as a career path among university educated Nigerian youth. However, the study established that normative institutions negatively affect the entrepreneurial mindsets and behaviors of many universities educated youths. The possible explanation of this finding can be two-fold: First, most societies in the African context have believed in the communal and familial ownership of resources as opposed to the individualistic perspectives of resources found in western countries, which can constrain venture creation (Muirithi et al., 2019). Secondly, most African societies believe that successful career opportunities are found in permanent employment either in the government or private sectors as opposed to setting up own ventures. Therefore, young African graduates are oriented to search for jobs instead of creating their own ventures after completing their university education. Hence, societal expectations bear its unmerited pressure on young educated Africans in Nigeria and beyond to seek employment instead of self-employment limiting the chances of developing their entrepreneurial behaviors and mindsets. Therefore, the youth who become self-employed tend to be failures who cannot successfully secure a job thus will remain in the lower end of socio-economic scale.

Social Expectations and Entrepreneurial Mindsets

The issue of social expectation is another factor influencing against the entrepreneurial mindset and youth unemployment. Social expectations are the normal, expected and acceptable behaviour that people hold strongly in certain cultures and this value is expected and maintained by the groups within this culture. It is therefore not surprising that young people seemed to depend and rely extensively on this construction in the choice of their career and occupation. In Nigeria, a lot of parents believe that studying certain courses in the university and pursuing careers in the elitist professions such as law, medicine or engineering is the sure route to success
without putting the child’s’ interests, abilities, aptitude or resources into consideration. Unfortunately, this believe is fueled by the loss of the old value system that believes in dignity in labour to wealth. Artisans and craftsmen are still viewed as socio-economic outcasts who should remain at the bottom of the social-economic ladder permanently. Presently, the society adores wealth not questioning the source. The communities and churches reward wealth some of whom are questionable with chieftaincy or kingship titles. The get rich quick syndrome is obvious in places of apprenticeship for example, a typical auto-mobile garage in Nigeria where the practice is that a master has between 3-7 apprentices under his tutelage for a couple of years before starting own business, but you will be surprised that after 3-6 months the apprentices will opt out to start making money through riding motorcycle or start driving cabs in order to make money. Most apprentices now, do not learn or stay long enough to acquire the required skills to be proficient in the trade. Unfortunately, this behavior is encouraged by some Nigerian legislators who donate motorcycles to youth in their constituencies under the umbrella of youth empowerment. This practice has the potential to negatively disrupt the existing apprenticeship programs and impact the entrepreneurial mindsets and actions of Nigerian youths.

To emphasize this point, African societies place a high expectation in acquiring a university education. In the current system it would be rather an uphill task for a school dropout to get a civilised job in the private sector or even government office. There is the observation that most African youths have fallen into the societal expectation that success can only be acquired when one is able to get a university degree. Despite the rise in unemployment among educated youth, it is surprising to witness the increasing rate of youth joining institutions that offer a degree as opposed to vocational training or apprentice. Therefore, societal expectations driven by community and family perceptions on the career aspiration of the youth contributes to lower entrepreneurial activities within African youths.

In addition, such societal expectations have been institutionalised by proliferation of similar behaviours through structured mechanisms or the implementations of policies. While Western governments have focused not only on university education but also technical colleges and apprenticeship programs, African governments have continued to focus on traditional
universities alienating other tertiary institutions. For instance, the Kenyan government increased the number of universities by granting charters to technical and vocational institutions meant to impart technical skills and vocations. Such actions by the government institutionalised the notion that acquiring a university degree is more prestigious compared to gaining vocational training or apprenticeship. Therefore, it is quite clear that social expectations within African societies can have a negative influence on the cognitive, behaviours, mindsets and orientation of its youthful generations. In the next section we focus on the implications of entrepreneurial education and learning among African institutions.

**Entrepreneurship Education and Learning within African Institutions**

One important rationale and value of building entrepreneurial learning in module development is that entrepreneurship education has the potential of equipping young people with entrepreneurial mindsets and skills that are needed for business start-ups, employability and for the overall economic development (Jensen and Krogh, 2017). It is acknowledged that entrepreneurial education for the youth serves as one the best ways to equip young people with entrepreneurial mindsets and skills that are needed for successful entrepreneurial engagement. For instance, Sergeant and Crawford (2001) in their survey on youth entrepreneurship in Australia found training and communication as essential factors that influences positive entrepreneurial dispositions. Other studies also underlined the importance of entrepreneurship learning and teaching (Dilli and Westerhuis, 2018; Sánchez, 2013). Dilli and Westerhuis (2018) emphasised the role of entrepreneurial education in cultivating entrepreneurial attitudes and mind-sets. Similar studies established that entrepreneurship education provides students with entrepreneurial attitudes and the necessary foundation, capacity and knowledge to understand the process of business start-up very early in their development (Sánchez, 2013; Wang and Wong, 2004).

According to Wang and Wong (2004), in their studies among Singapore University students found that lack of entrepreneurial education, insufficient business knowledge on how to start a business and the capacity to manage it constitute some of the challenges that the
undergraduate students face in Singapore. The authors concluded that despite the desire to be independent and have their own businesses, the desires were unrealizable because the students lack the knowledge and capacity to manage risk and other processes that is involved in business set-up. According to Fayolle (2008) entrepreneurship education, entrepreneurial training and mentoring will not only stimulate student’s interest in business creation, but will also provide the necessary background, knowledge, innovation and capability that is needed to succeed as entrepreneur. Therefore, Wang and Wong (2004) upheld that entrepreneurship education will provide and equipped students with knowledge, creativity and capacity to manage business risk. Additionally, it is suggested that more attention should be given to female students to enhance their capacity and confidence.

While we acknowledge that there has been a concerted effort to improve entrepreneurship education within institutions of higher learning, most African institutions lag the rest of the world. The traditional approach to learning and teaching has failed to inculcate entrepreneurial skills and mindsets required by university educated youth leaving them to the peril of the society. Majority of those who leave education find themselves unprepared and unable to manage the process required to set-up a business. However, the institutional gaps that emerge have been filled with the myriad initiatives that spearhead entrepreneurial education and programs among the youth. Nigeria, as well as the rest of Africa has witnessed an increased interest on incubation hubs which leverage on external venture capitalist to support youth enterprises. These incubation centers not only fill the financial gap but also are able to provide human resources and social capital oriented at business creation. Therefore, more work needs to be done to improve entrepreneurial education not only in universities but also from an early stage of their education. Generally, studies show that the earlier a child begins to understand the process, cognitions, and orientations that impact entrepreneurship and business creation the easier it is to institute their entrepreneurial mindsets and behaviours.

Conclusion
This book chapter provides important contributions to the entrepreneurship literature. First, the study contributes to the ongoing debates on the importance of contextual research to explain how contextual factors such as, values and norms affect the emergence and mode of entrepreneurship activities and venture creation (Zhao and Li, 2019; Autio, 2010). Therefore, this book chapter contribute to the existing studies on institutional context and extend its direction to capture the complexity and heterogeneity of the institutional order (Zhao and Li, 2019; Zilber, 2013; Greenwood et al., 2011; Boxenbaum & Jonsson, 2008) under context-sensitive and pluralistic conditions such as in Sub-Saharan Africa. Exploring entrepreneurial engagement among youths from the lenses of the institutional environment and individual entrepreneurial orientation provides a holistic framework to explore how the regulatory, normative and cultural cognitive dimensions of institutional theory impact on individual entrepreneurial mindset and subsequent venture creation among the Nigerian youth.

The study revealed that the institutional environment provides a unique contribution to the entrepreneurial mindsets and the propensity of entrepreneurial engagement among young people in Nigeria. The extant literature suggests that institutional environment can either positively create or constraint entrepreneurial engagements within a country (Autio and Fu, 2015; Kalantaridis, 2014; Scott, 2001). An important implication of this chapter is that the regulative, normative and cultural-cognitive environment play a significant role in understanding entrepreneurial behavior among educated youths. The regulatory institutions impact the motivation, energy and incentives for entrepreneurial engagement among young people. Secondly, it impacts on creativity, ideas and innovation that can be brought into entrepreneurial and productive activities. Furthermore, the study shows how culture, shared beliefs, schemas and ascription could affect the cognitive frame and mindset of the educated youth to entrepreneurial engagement and venture creation in a developing nation such as Nigeria. Scott (2001) asserts that institutional environments are social structures, “schemas, rules, norms, and routines” that when they have become established within a society or group of people act as influential guidelines for social behavior.
The cognitive frame through which individuals receive, store and make use of information becomes very important in fostering entrepreneurial mindset and business creation among youths. Essentially, the entrepreneurial mindset is not only cognitive in nature, but it is also influenced by the conditions within the social context. The emergence of entrepreneurial activities and venture creation among the youth will therefore depend on a conscious decision that is based on the knowledge structure (scripts), mindset, information and ability to assess opportunity within the social environment. Therefore, Africans governments need to create conducive environment and entrepreneurial ecosystems that enable entrepreneurial activities to flourish. Government policy in terms of reducing business risk and support for small and new businesses should be favorably directed to stimulate youth’s entrepreneurial mindsets, entrepreneurial behaviours and learning. Lundstrom and Stevenson (2005) corroborate the relevance of the regulatory environment enabling the formation of entrepreneurial mindsets and engagements among the youth. As a policy consideration, the issues of promotion and models for new business development and early stage growth of new business ventures is a key policy strategy to stimulating entrepreneurial activities and increasing the level of entrepreneurial productivity among young people. Thus, the regulatory components which, includes key policy measures that acknowledge the difference in policy direction for small and medium enterprises and entrepreneurial ventures is crucial for economic development. The regulatory institutions should provide policy measures, remove administrative and regulatory burdens and constraints for new ventures. In addition, the integration of institutional structures and policies that provides access to capital, pre-seed and other financing, that improves knowledge information, training, and infrastructures, provides technical assistance and incubator centres that stand as anchor for the creation of new entrepreneurship ecosystems is very important.

The understanding of the implications of the positive conditions of the entrepreneurial ecosystems and environments to developing entrepreneurial mindsets and venture creation is that, it leverages certain oriented values within the network to provide for a strong local market supporting inflow of opportunities. Therefore, the entrepreneurial mindsets that leads to venture creation is not only determined by the consciousness or perception of feasibility or desirability
cognitions but also the conducive economic, socio-political conditions occurring concurrently to form the basis of decision making for business creation. Therefore, this study views entrepreneurial learning and education that integrates building of skills through enterprise program and entrepreneurship education as part of the curriculum from primary to university level education will deliver the needed catalytic foundation to jumpstart the development of entrepreneurial mindsets and creativity among the youths, particularly in Nigeria and wider sub-Saharan Africa.

In summary, the study also offers important practical insights where government can focus investment and effective policy to improve entrepreneurial capacities and engagement of the youths. This can be achieved through policy mix of initiatives that promote the scaling of the informal sectors and strengthens small and medium enterprises, business incubation centers, agribusiness, and technology us among African youths. Furthermore, the implementation of policy mix initiatives that focus on institutional factors that impede entrepreneurial activities of university educated youths is very key to achieving these objectives. This can be achieved by institutionalising individual entrepreneurial engagement as a sustainable career path through a massive entrepreneurial skills development, education and mentoring. We are of the opinion that the enterprise culture and creativity among the university educated youths can be tapped for the gains of wealth creation and development, if necessary, interventions are adapted to the prevailing contexts across African continent.
References


