Decolonising Minds, Empowering Futures: Rethinking Entrepreneurial Education for University Students in Africa

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ABSTRACT

This paper provides a theoretical synthesis of entrepreneurial education in African universities. It argues that these models are deeply influenced by colonial legacies, which perpetuate disempowerment and dependency. The paper advocates for a transformative decolonial approach, stressing the need to reimagine and restructure entrepreneurial education in a way that aligns it with African realities, values, and aspirations. The paper underscores the importance of integrating indigenous knowledge systems, local contexts, and African philosophies into the educational curriculum. This integration ensures that the learning experience is relevant, contextual, and empowering for African university students. By presenting a range of arguments, the paper establishes a framework for a decolonial approach to entrepreneurial education. It demonstrates the potential of such models to foster innovation, self-reliance, and critical thinking. In conclusion, the paper asserts that decolonising entrepreneurial education in African universities is essential for nurturing a generation of entrepreneurs who possess economic acumen, cultural grounding, and social responsibility. This paper contributes to the existing knowledge by offering a theoretical framework for decolonial entrepreneurial education. It also provides practical insights for implementation and highlights the transformative potential of such education in shaping the future of African nations.

KEYWORDS

Decoloniality; entrepreneurial education; African Universities; Indigenous knowledge systems; empowerment; innovation.

INTRODUCTION

The landscape of entrepreneurial education in Africa is intricate, shaped by historical influence, cultural diversity, and contemporary challenges. The existing models of entrepreneurial education in African universities have been criticised for their alignment with colonial legacies that do not align with the unique socio-economic contexts of the continent. Scholars like George et al. (2018) argue that the transplantation of Western educational models into Africa fails to incorporate indigenous knowledge and cultural nuances crucial to Africa's development. Abdi (2013) also emphasises the need for an educational paradigm that goes beyond colonial frameworks and fosters an entrepreneurial spirit rooted in African realities. Additionally, Gutto (2006) and Higgs (2012) highlight the importance of confronting and departing from hegemonic knowledge systems, with Gutto suggesting a curriculum that includes African history and critical approaches to learning.

Recent literature increasingly emphasises the gap between the content of entrepreneurial education and the practical needs of African economies. Olutuase et al. (2023) stress the urgent need to rethink these educational models to cultivate an entrepreneurial mindset that is both innovative and adaptable to local market demands. Bawuah et al. (2006) also advocate for a curriculum that is responsive to the African context and empowers students to drive change within their communities. This further confirms that the current state of entrepreneurial education in Africa does not effectively address the practical needs of local economies (Olutuase, 2020). The call for a decolonial approach to entrepreneurial education is not solely academic; it is a response to the experiences of African entrepreneurs who often struggle with an education system that does not reflect their cultural identity or economic environment.

The push for decolonising entrepreneurial education is gaining momentum. This can be seen through the increasing amount of research focused on incorporating African philosophies and values into the curriculum. Scholars like Joseph-Mbembe (2016) have played a crucial role in articulating the vision of a decolonised education system that embraces African epistemologies. This approach challenges the current state of education and creates opportunities for a more inclusive and empowering form of education that aligns with the aspirations of African students and the needs of their communities. Decolonisation is not just about changing the curriculum; it is about redefining the very essence of entrepreneurship education in an African context. By synthesising these perspectives, it becomes evident that the future of entrepreneurial education in Africa relies on critically examining current practices and boldly reimagining what is possible. The work of these scholars sets the foundation for a transformative shift in educational paradigms that aims to decolonise minds and empower future generations.

The problem addressed in this paper is centred around the prevailing models of entrepreneurial education in African universities, which appear to be deeply rooted in colonial legacies that have outlasted their colonial masters. These models, primarily influenced by

Western pedagogies, have faced criticism for their lack of contextual relevance to the unique socio-economic challenges and cultural landscapes of the African continent. Scholars such as Kothari (2006) argue that the transplantation of Western educational frameworks into Africa often leads to economic and intellectual neo-colonialism, where external definitions of success and relevance limit entrepreneurial spirit. This misalignment hampers innovation and perpetuates a dependency on Western paradigms, hindering the potential for homegrown solutions and indigenous entrepreneurship (Kothari, 2006).

The rationale for addressing the colonial foundations of entrepreneurial education in Africa is multifaceted. Firstly, there is an increasing recognition that education should be a tool for empowerment rather than subjugation. As Mamdani (2007) persuasively argues, decolonised education is essential for true independence, enabling African nations to forge their own paths in the global economy. This involves reimagining curricula to reflect African realities, values, and aspirations, fostering a locally grounded and globally aware entrepreneurial mindset. Secondly, there is an economic imperative for adopting a decolonised approach to entrepreneurial education. With Africa's rapidly growing youth population, there is an urgent need to unleash the continent's entrepreneurial potential in order to drive economic growth and development (Mamdani, 2007).

Hence, the problem of colonial legacies in entrepreneurial education is not just an academic concern, but it also has real-world implications for the empowerment and economic development of African nations. By reimagining entrepreneurial education through a decolonial lens, African universities can cultivate a new generation of entrepreneurs who are well-prepared to address local challenges, contribute to their economies, and compete on a global stage. Therefore, the decolonisation of entrepreneurial education is not simply an educational reform; it is a strategic imperative for the socio-economic transformation of the African continent.

1.   Objective

This paper aims to conduct theoretical analysis of the existing entrepreneurial education in African universities, with a focus on their colonial legacies and the resulting perpetuation of disempowerment and dependency. The objective is to advocate for a decolonial approach that aligns entrepreneurial education with the realities, values, and aspirations of Africa. By integrating indigenous knowledge systems, local contexts, and African philosophies into the educational framework, the paper seeks to illustrate how a transformative decolonial approach can empower African university students, cultivating innovation, self-reliance, and critical thinking. Ultimately, the paper contributes to the ongoing discourse on educational reform in Africa, offering a theoretical and practical blueprint for the decolonisation of entrepreneurial education.

1.1   Methodological Structure

The methodological structure of this study is grounded in the theory synthesis design, as defined by Jaakkola (2020). This design involves integrating diverse theories and strands of literature to

create a unified conceptual framework. This design is particularly suitable for examining the multifaceted nature of entrepreneurial education in Africa and the contemporary push towards decolonisation. Following MacInnis's (2011) description of theory synthesis, this paper constructs an enriched perspective on entrepreneurial education by bridging distinct and, at times, divergent theoretical elements. This innovative merging not only highlights the complex interplay between colonial legacies and educational paradigms in Africa but also facilitates the formulation of a decolonial approach to entrepreneurial education.

The structure of the paper is designed to guide the reader towards a comprehensive understanding of the issues at hand. It begins with an overview of the existing literature on entrepreneurial education in Africa, delving into the colonial legacies embedded in current educational models and discussing their impacts. The paper identifies gaps in the literature that fail to address the unique African context. It then introduces and explains the decoloniality framework, discussing its application to entrepreneurial education and arguing for its necessity and importance. Various frameworks and examples of how to implement decolonial initiatives are presented and analysed, providing a real-world context to the theoretical discussion. The paper also presents potential challenges and opportunities arising from implementing the decolonial framework. It concludes by synthesising the major contributions to knowledge and presenting the transformative potential of decolonised entrepreneurial education in Africa.

2.   Brief Overview of existing literature on entrepreneurial education in Africa

The literature on entrepreneurial education in Africa underscores the pivotal role of entrepreneurship in driving economic growth and development across the continent (Edoho, 2015; Adusei, 2016). However, it also highlights the need for a more comprehensive approach to entrepreneurship studies, including a focus on the African entrepreneur, the entrepreneurial firm, and socio-economic conditions (Devine & Kiggundu, 2016). The impact of entrepreneurship on economic growth in Africa is a subject of debate, with some studies suggesting a positive relationship (Adusei, 2016), while others emphasise the need for institutional support and policy frameworks (Edoho, 2015). The role of government in shaping the entrepreneurial landscape is also a key theme, with a call for effective entrepreneurship education and the integration of entrepreneurs in curricula design (Bwisa, 2012; Bawuah et al., 2006). Despite the challenges, there is a growing recognition of the potential of entrepreneurship to drive inclusive growth in Africa (Ahmed & Nwankwo, 2013). However, while there is a consensus on the potential of entrepreneurial education to contribute to development and innovation, there is also a recognition of its challenges, including resource constraints and the quality of education (Kiggundu, 2002).

A significant portion of the literature is dedicated to discussing the colonial legacies evident in the educational systems of many African countries. Authors like Adegoju (2008) have argued that the colonial roots of education systems in Africa have led to a continued emphasis on Western paradigms and pedagogies, which are often misaligned with the local entrepreneurial context and needs. The colonial legacy in African education has been a recurring

theme in scholarly literature, with authors like Adegoju (2008) and Nyamnjoh (2012) highlighting the dominance of Western paradigms and pedagogies. This seems to have led to a disconnect between the skills taught and those needed in the local entrepreneurial context and a subsequent call for a shift towards indigenous perspectives and cultural restitution in education (Asuga et al., 2016; Assié-Lumumba, 2012). The impact of colonial rule on economic development and institutional settings is explored by Austin (2010), while Cloete (2012) and Enwo-Irem (2013) discuss the challenges of higher education in post-independence Africa and the need for a curriculum that considers sustainable development. The impact of these colonial legacies is seen in the curricular focus, teaching methods, and even the languages of instruction, which can alienate students from their cultural and entrepreneurial contexts.

Despite the rich discourse, there are identifiable gaps in the current literature, particularly concerning the integration of indigenous knowledge systems and the practical application of entrepreneurial education in local African contexts. There is a need for more empirical research on the effectiveness of existing entrepreneurial education models in Africa and how they impact the students' ability to innovate and create sustainable businesses within their local economies (Kwiek, 2001). Furthermore, critical analysis is scarce on how educational institutions can systematically decolonise their curricula and the potential resistance to such changes from various stakeholders within the higher education ecosystem. Addressing these gaps is crucial for developing a more nuanced understanding of how entrepreneurial education can evolve to meet the unique challenges and leverage the opportunities within the African context.

2.1   Discussion on colonial legacies in education and their impacts

The colonial legacies in African education systems have had a profound impact on the structure and substance of learning, including entrepreneurial education. During the colonial period, the educational frameworks imposed by colonial powers were primarily designed to serve the interests of the colonisers, rather than promoting economic independence or cultural affirmation for the colonised. Unfortunately, this legacy has continued even after independence, with many African educational institutions still using curricula and teaching methods rooted in Western ideologies and methodologies. As a result, there is often a disconnect between the educational content and the realities of the African context. This misalignment is particularly evident in entrepreneurial education, where Western business principles may not always apply seamlessly to African markets with their unique dynamics and challenges (Brock-Utne, 2000).

The impact of these colonial legacies is multifaceted. On a practical level, it often means that African students are educated in systems that prioritise Western knowledge over local realities, leading to intellectual dependency that can stifle local innovation and entrepreneurship (Shizha, 2013). This can result in a lack of critical thinking and problem-solving skills that are tailored to the African context, which are essential for successful entrepreneurship. Additionally, the use of colonial languages as the medium of instruction in

many African universities can alienate students from their cultural roots and make the learning process less accessible and relevant to their lived experiences. This linguistic barrier can also limit students' ability to engage with and apply their knowledge to their local business environments, further entrenching economic dependency on external markets and ideas (Wa Thiong'o, 1986).

There is a growing call for the decolonisation of education in Africa to address these impacts. This involves critically examining and overhauling the curricula to ensure that they are grounded in African realities and designed to empower students as agents of change within their communities. It also involves embracing and integrating indigenous knowledge systems and languages into the learning process, thereby validating and preserving Africa's cultural heritage while enhancing the relevance and applicability of education. The ultimate goal is to produce graduates who are not only equipped with the knowledge and skills to succeed in business but also culturally grounded and motivated to contribute to the sustainable development of their societies (Joseph-Mbembe, 2016).

2.2   Identification of gaps in the current literature

While the current literature on entrepreneurial education in Africa is extensive, it reveals several gaps that need to be addressed in order to fully understand and improve the educational landscape. One significant gap is the limited empirical research on the long-term outcomes of entrepreneurial education in African contexts. Although there are studies that describe and analyse the curricula, there is a dearth of longitudinal research that tracks the success and impact of entrepreneurial graduates within local African economies. This gap hinders the ability to assess the effectiveness of existing educational models and understand how well they prepare students for the challenges of starting and sustaining businesses in diverse African markets (Nabi et al., 2017).

Another notable gap is the insufficient exploration of the intersection between entrepreneurship education and indigenous knowledge systems. Much of the existing literature tends to evaluate entrepreneurial education through the lens of Western academic and business principles, with less attention given to how indigenous knowledge and cultural practices can inform and enhance entrepreneurial learning and practice. This oversight can lead to a homogenised view of entrepreneurship that fails to leverage the rich tapestry of African knowledge systems, which are crucial for fostering innovation that is both locally relevant and globally competitive (George et al., 2016).

Furthermore, there is a lack of critical analysis regarding the structural and systemic challenges to implementing decolonised curricula in African universities. While the need for decolonisation is recognised, there is scant literature on the practicalities of curriculum reform, the resistance from entrenched institutional structures, and the complexities of aligning academic programs with diverse local languages and cultural contexts. The literature often falls short in providing actionable strategies for educators and policymakers to navigate the socio-political intricacies of educational reform. This gap is particularly acute in the face of

globalisation, where the pressure to conform to international educational standards can conflict with the push for decolonisation and the affirmation of African epistemologies (Mbembe, 2015). Therefore, addressing these gaps is essential for creating contextually relevant entrepreneurial education programs that can drive sustainable economic development and innovation across the African continent.

3.   Theoretical Framework: Decoloniality

The decoloniality framework is a theoretical construct that aims to address and rectify the enduring effects of colonialism on knowledge, power, and existence. It is influenced by the work of scholars like Walter Mignolo and Anibal Quijano, who argue that decolonisation is not only a historical event but an ongoing struggle against colonial structures and hierarchies that continue to dominate and oppress (Mignolo, 2012; Quijano, 2000). Decoloniality challenges the Eurocentric worldviews that have been normalised by colonial rule and propagated through global power dynamics. It emphasises the recognition and revitalisation of marginalised knowledge systems, cultures, and perspectives.

Ndlovu-Gatsheni's perspective on decoloniality represents a critical examination and dismantling of Eurocentric worldviews deeply embedded in the global consciousness due to the legacies of colonialism (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2022). According to Ndlovu-Gatsheni, decoloniality is an ongoing process of deconstructing and rejecting global power dynamics that historically marginalised non-Western knowledge systems, cultures, and perspectives. It is a deliberate effort to reclaim and revitalise these suppressed voices and epistemologies, challenging the universality of Western thought and its claim to a monopoly on modernity (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2015; Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2017; Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2020). Decoloniality is seen as both a theoretical framework and a practical approach to rethinking and reshaping various fields, including education, to reflect a more pluralistic and equitable world order.

In the context of education, the decoloniality framework calls for a critical examination of the curriculum, pedagogy, and purpose of education. It questions whose knowledge is considered valuable and whose is disregarded, aiming to dismantle the dominance of Western epistemology in favour of a more inclusive approach that values the contributions of all cultures (Grosfoguel, 2007; Gcelu & Marongwe, 2023; Mutongoza et al., 2023). This involves incorporating content from non-Western sources and challenging the underlying assumptions and values that shape educational practices. The goal is to create an educational system that empowers learners from all backgrounds to engage with the world on their own terms, free from the shadow of colonial subjugation. Furthermore, the decoloniality framework also advocates for pedagogical changes that promote critical thinking, creativity, and the questioning of established norms. This could involve using case studies, problem-solving exercises, and project-based learning that draw on local contexts and address entrepreneurial challenges. It also requires educators to take on a facilitative role that enables students to construct their own understanding and develop entrepreneurial ventures responsive to their communities' needs (Sekerbayeva et al., 2023; Smith, 2016).

Therefore, applying the decoloniality framework to entrepreneurial education involves reimagining the curriculum to reflect the realities and aspirations of African entrepreneurs. This means going beyond the traditional focus on Western business models and management theories and including teachings that are rooted in African economic contexts, social structures, and cultural values. It could also involve fostering an entrepreneurial mindset that is collaborative, community-oriented, and mindful of the social and environmental responsibilities of business in African societies.

4.1 The relevance of the theory

The framework is highly relevant to growing entrepreneurial education in Africa because it provides a critical lens to view and reshape current pedagogical models. This framework exposes the need to challenge current entrepreneurial education and prioritise African contexts, values, and business practices. Instead of replicating Western business models that may not be entirely suitable for African markets, the focus should be on fostering a curriculum that is rooted in the local economic landscape and cultural ethos. This approach encourages the development of entrepreneurial skills that solve local problems, leverage local resources, and serve local communities. Ultimately, it promotes a form of entrepreneurship that is sustainable and relevant to the continent's needs (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2018).

Furthermore, the decoloniality framework advocates for the inclusion of indigenous knowledge systems and cultural narratives in entrepreneurial education. This integration provides a more holistic and nuanced understanding of entrepreneurship, encompassing economic success, social responsibility, and environmental responsibility. By valuing indigenous practices and wisdom, entrepreneurial education can produce innovators and business leaders who are deeply connected to their communities and capable of creating ventures that contribute to their societies' social and cultural wealth. This approach challenges students to become job creators, custodians of their cultural heritage, and drivers of inclusive growth (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2013).

Finally, applying decoloniality to entrepreneurial education requires a pedagogical shift towards more participatory and experiential learning methods. This shift encourages students to critically engage with the material, drawing on their backgrounds and experiences to shape their entrepreneurial visions. It also calls for educators to create learning environments where power dynamics are flattened and diverse voices are heard and respected. In this way, the decolonial framework serves not only as a critique of existing educational practices but also as a transformative tool that reimagines how African entrepreneurship can be taught, learned, and practised in a way that empowers students and benefits African society as a whole (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2016).

4.2 Decolonising Entrepreneurial Education: A Necessity

A decolonial approach is imperative for African universities, particularly in the context of entrepreneurial education. This approach addresses the deep-rooted disparities perpetuated by colonial legacies. Historically, the colonial education system was designed to serve the

interests of the colonisers, often at the expense of indigenous perspectives and knowledge (Langohr, 2005; Kerr, 2014). In our argument, this legacy continues to manifest in contemporary entrepreneurial education, where curricula often prioritise foreign business models that may not align with Africa's diverse economic, cultural, and social landscapes. To break free from this historical baggage, a decolonial approach is necessary to reframe entrepreneurial education in a way that reflects and resonates with the unique challenges and opportunities of the African context.

Moreover, a decolonial approach in entrepreneurial education is essential for fostering economic autonomy and self-reliance (Agada & Pius, 2014; Woods et al., 2022). By integrating indigenous knowledge systems, local contexts, and African philosophies into the curriculum, universities can empower students to develop businesses rooted in their own communities. This approach not only promotes a sense of ownership and responsibility but also contributes to sustainable development. The current dependence on Western-centric models can perpetuate economic reliance on external systems, hindering the emergence of innovative, homegrown solutions that address local needs. Therefore, a decolonial approach becomes a catalyst for nurturing a generation of entrepreneurs who are not only economically savvy but also deeply connected to and invested in the development of their societies.

Furthermore, the necessity for a decolonial approach in African universities lies in its potential to bridge the gap between theoretical knowledge and practical application. Traditional entrepreneurial education often emphasises abstract concepts derived from Western contexts, creating a disconnect between the curriculum and the real-world challenges faced by African entrepreneurs (Olutuase, 2020). A decolonial approach, with its focus on local realities and contextual learning, offers a more relevant and applicable education (Blenker et al., 2012; Woods et al., 2022). By grounding entrepreneurial education in the lived experiences of African communities, universities can equip students with the skills and mindset necessary to navigate the complexities of their local business environments. This approach fosters a generation of entrepreneurs who are not only academically proficient but also street-smart in the intricacies of their unique markets.

Based on these necessities, we argue that a decolonial approach is not just a theoretical consideration but a practical necessity for African universities striving to provide meaningful, transformative entrepreneurial education. Therefore, by decolonising the curriculum and embracing the richness of African knowledge systems, universities can ensure that entrepreneurial education becomes a vehicle for empowerment, innovation, and sustainable economic development tailored to the needs of the continent and its diverse societies. This is in agreement with literature that underscores the necessity of a decolonial approach in African universities for entrepreneurial education. Scholars such as Mamdani (2007) have argued that education must go beyond a mere transfer of Western knowledge to be transformative and should instead be a process of nurturing locally grounded expertise. This aligns with the essence of a decolonial approach, which advocates for recognising and revitalising indigenous

knowledge systems and cultural values within education. Furthermore, the work of Nabi et al. (2017) supports the idea that a decolonial framework in entrepreneurial education is essential for addressing the disconnect between theoretical concepts and practical application. They highlight the need for educational models that impart theoretical business knowledge and enable students to apply this knowledge effectively within their local contexts, echoing the argument for a more contextually relevant and decolonised entrepreneurial education.

Additionally, the call for a decolonial approach in entrepreneurial education is substantiated by the work of Mignolo (2000) and Quijano (2000), who have explored the coloniality of power and knowledge. Their perspectives emphasise the importance of decolonisation as an ongoing project to dismantle structures of power that perpetuate Eurocentric dominance. In the context of entrepreneurial education, this entails challenging the prevailing norms and paradigms inherited from colonial legacies. As Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2018) suggests, the imperative of decolonising education is underscored by the need for epistemic freedom in Africa, emphasising the importance of liberating knowledge production from colonial constraints. This resonates with the argument that a decolonial approach is not only about redefining the content of entrepreneurial education but also about fundamentally shifting the power dynamics and knowledge structures embedded in the educational system.

The recognition of indigenous knowledge, the emphasis on practical application, and the challenge to colonial structures within education collectively underscore the necessity of embracing a decolonial framework to transform entrepreneurial education in a culturally relevant, empowering, and conducive manner to sustainable development. Therefore, it can be further argued that integrating indigenous knowledge, local contexts, and African philosophies is of utmost importance. Hence, the following section will discuss its significance.

4.   Importance of integrating indigenous knowledge and African philosophies

The integration of indigenous knowledge, local contexts, and African philosophies into entrepreneurial education is a crucial imperative for fostering a more relevant, culturally sensitive, and impactful learning experience in African universities. This approach recognises the rich diversity of African societies, their unique historical contexts, and the wealth of traditional knowledge that often goes unrecognised in conventional educational models. By incorporating these elements into entrepreneurial education, universities can contribute to the development of entrepreneurs who are not only economically astute but also deeply connected to their communities and capable of addressing the specific challenges and opportunities presented by their local contexts. The following points outline the significance of integrating indigenous knowledge, local contexts, and African philosophies into entrepreneurial education in African universities.

- **Cultural Relevance and Sensitivity:** Incorporating indigenous knowledge and local contexts into entrepreneurial education is crucial for ensuring that the curriculum is culturally relevant and sensitive. This helps students gain a better understanding of the local business environment while also recognising and respecting diverse cultural practices. Furthermore, it

encourages entrepreneurship that aligns with the values of the communities where businesses operate (Kiggundu, 2002).

• **Holistic Understanding of Entrepreneurship:** Indigenous knowledge often includes a holistic approach to problem-solving and decision-making. By incorporating this knowledge into entrepreneurial education, universities can contribute to the development of entrepreneurs who tackle challenges with a comprehensive perspective. These entrepreneurs consider social, environmental, and economic factors in their business strategies (Mehta et al., 2011).

• **Preservation of Cultural Heritage:** The integration of African philosophies into entrepreneurial education serves the important purpose of preserving cultural heritage. It ensures that traditional wisdom, ethical considerations, and community values are given due importance and not overshadowed by the pursuit of economic success. This approach fosters a sense of responsibility among entrepreneurs to make positive contributions to their cultural and social landscapes (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2015).

• **Innovation and Adaptation:** Local contexts often present unique challenges and opportunities. By integrating indigenous knowledge and philosophies into entrepreneurial education, students are equipped with the skills needed to innovate and adapt their business models to suit the specific needs of their communities. This adaptability is crucial for the sustainability and success of businesses in diverse African markets (Kiggundu, 2002).

• **Community Engagement and Social Impact:** Entrepreneurial ventures that are rooted in indigenous knowledge and local contexts are more likely to effectively engage with communities. This can result in social impact and sustainable development, as entrepreneurs are able to comprehend and address the genuine needs of the people they serve. The incorporation of African philosophies promotes an ethical and socially responsible approach to entrepreneurship (De Avillez et al., 2020; Du Toit, 2023).

However, we argue that the actualisation and proper integration of indigenous knowledge, local contexts, and African philosophies into entrepreneurial education can create a transformative learning experience. This experience not only equips students with business skills but also fosters a deeper connection to their cultural heritage and a commitment to socially responsible entrepreneurship.

5. Framework for Successful Decolonial Entrepreneurial Education Initiatives in Africa

This framework serves as a foundational guide for designing, implementing, and continuously enhancing decolonial entrepreneurial education initiatives in Africa. It emphasises the importance of contextual understanding, cultural sensitivity, and community engagement to create an educational ecosystem that empowers students to thrive as entrepreneurs within their unique African contexts. Therefore, universities in Africa that are striving to decolonise their entrepreneurial pedagogical space should consider the following:

i. Cultural Mapping and Contextual Analysis

Objective: Understand the cultural diversity and historical contexts of the regions served by the educational initiative.

Actions:

- Conduct thorough cultural mapping exercises to identify indigenous knowledge systems, local business practices, and philosophies.
- Analyse historical contexts to discern the impact of colonial legacies on entrepreneurial practices.

ii.   Curriculum Development

Objective: Design a curriculum that integrates indigenous knowledge, local contexts, and African philosophies into entrepreneurial education.

Actions:

- Incorporate case studies that showcase successful local entrepreneurs who have applied indigenous principles.
- Embed modules focused on community engagement, ethical business practices, and social responsibility.
- Develop learning materials that are culturally sensitive and available in local languages.

iii.   Community Engagement and Collaboration

Objective: Foster collaboration between educational institutions and local communities.

Actions:

- Establish partnerships with local businesses, entrepreneurs, and community leaders.
- Involve community members in curriculum design and delivery to ensure relevance.
- Create opportunities for students to work on projects that address real community needs.

iv.   Inclusive Pedagogical Approaches

Objective: Adopt teaching methods that encourage critical thinking, creativity, and inclusivity.

Actions:

- Utilise participatory and experiential learning methods that empower students to contribute their perspectives.
- Encourage open discussions on the impact of colonial legacies on entrepreneurship.
- Incorporate alternative assessment methods that go beyond standardised testing and value diverse forms of intelligence.

v.   Mentorship and Role Modeling

Objective: Provide students with mentorship from successful entrepreneurs who understand and appreciate local contexts.

Actions:

- Establish mentorship programs connecting students with experienced entrepreneurs from similar cultural backgrounds.
- Showcase diverse role models who have thrived in various sectors, emphasising the value of cultural identity.

vi.   **Continuous Evaluation and Adaptation**

Objective: Regularly assess the effectiveness of the initiative and adapt based on feedback and changing contexts.

Actions:

- Implement feedback loops involving students, educators, and community members to assess program impact.
- Stay abreast of changes in local economies and entrepreneurial landscapes, adjusting the curriculum accordingly.
- Conduct periodic evaluations to measure graduates' success in applying decolonial principles in their entrepreneurial endeavours.

vii.   **Policy Advocacy and Institutional Support**

Objective: Advocate for policies that support and recognise the importance of decolonial entrepreneurial education.

Actions:

- Engage with policymakers to highlight the potential economic and societal benefits of decolonial initiatives.
- Seek institutional support and funding for research and development in decolonial entrepreneurial education.
- Collaborate with other educational institutions to build a collective voice for the integration of decolonial principles.

viii.   **Global Collaboration and Knowledge Exchange**

Objective: Facilitate global collaboration for knowledge exchange and the enrichment of the decolonial entrepreneurial education framework.

Actions:

- Establish partnerships with international institutions that have experience in culturally sensitive education.
- Participate in global forums and conferences to share insights and learn from successful initiatives in other regions.
- Facilitate cross-cultural exchanges for students and educators to broaden perspectives.

6.   Possible challenges in implementing this decolonial framework

Implementing a decolonial framework in entrepreneurial education within African universities is a transformative endeavour aimed at addressing historical inequities and cultivating learning environments that are locally relevant and culturally sensitive. However, this ambitious shift is not without its challenges. Overcoming resistance to change, grappling with institutional inertia, and navigating resource constraints are formidable hurdles:

- **Resistance to Change and Institutional Inertia:** A key challenge in implementing a decolonial framework is the resistance from entrenched institutional structures that may resist

departing from traditional, Eurocentric educational models. Educators and administrators who are used to existing paradigms may question the effectiveness and practicality of integrating indigenous knowledge. Overcoming this resistance requires strategic communication, awareness campaigns, and professional development initiatives to foster a shared understanding of the benefits of a decolonial approach. Building consensus among stakeholders is crucial for a successful transition.

- **Lack of Resources and Infrastructure:** The lack of sufficient resources presents a major obstacle. Numerous educational institutions in Africa face budgetary constraints, outdated infrastructure, and a shortage of learning materials. To effectively establish a decolonial framework, it is crucial to invest in faculty training, curriculum development, and community engagement. Acquiring the necessary resources necessitates strategic partnerships, advocating for increased educational funding, and finding innovative solutions to bridge the gap between ambition and execution. Overcoming these resource limitations is essential for guaranteeing the long-term viability and expandability of the decolonial entrepreneurial education initiative.

7. Opportunities inherent in implementing this decolonial framework

Simultaneously, implementing such a framework brings forth numerous opportunities. These include enriching cultural diversity, fostering entrepreneurial resilience, and promoting innovation. This dual dynamic of challenges and opportunities reflects the complex landscape of educational transformation toward a decolonised approach.

- **Cultural Enrichment and Diversity:** The adoption of a decolonial framework offers a special chance to enhance the educational experience by embracing cultural diversity. By integrating indigenous knowledge and local contexts, educational institutions can celebrate the richness of African cultures, thereby fostering a sense of cultural pride among students. This framework, which incorporates diverse perspectives, promotes inclusivity and creates an empowering learning environment where students can draw upon their cultural heritage as a source of strength in their entrepreneurial endeavours.

- **Innovation and Entrepreneurial Resilience:** The implementation of a decolonial framework offers an opportunity to nurture innovation and entrepreneurial resilience. Exposure to diverse perspectives and the incorporation of indigenous knowledge systems provide students with a holistic understanding of their local business environments. This, in turn, equips graduates with creative problem-solving skills and adaptability, fostering a generation of entrepreneurs capable of navigating the complexities of their unique markets. The framework positions entrepreneurship as a dynamic and contextually informed venture, enhancing the potential for sustainable and impactful business ventures.

8. Conclusion

This paper critically examines the prevailing entrepreneurial education models in African universities and contends that they are deeply rooted in colonial legacies. As a result, they perpetuate disempowerment and dependency. The argument emphasises the urgent need for a transformative decolonial approach, which calls for a reimagining and restructuring of

entrepreneurial education to align more closely with African realities, values, and aspirations. The significance of integrating indigenous knowledge systems, local contexts, and African philosophies into the curriculum is highlighted, with a focus on relevance, contextuality, and empowerment for African university students. The exploration of this framework underscores the potential of decolonial models to foster innovation, self-reliance, and critical thinking. In conclusion, the paper asserts that decolonising entrepreneurial education is imperative for nurturing a generation of entrepreneurs who are economically savvy, culturally grounded, and socially responsible.

The central point reiterated throughout the paper is the pivotal importance of decolonising entrepreneurial education in African universities. It is emphasised that the current models, shaped by colonial legacies, hinder the development of entrepreneurs capable of navigating the complexities of African markets. The proposition to reimagine and restructure educational frameworks to incorporate indigenous knowledge and local contexts is both theoretical and practical. The emphasis on cultural relevance, community engagement, and fostering an entrepreneurial mindset rooted in African philosophies serves as a clarion call for a paradigm shift. This reiteration is a rallying cry for educational institutions to embrace a decolonial approach, recognising it as the key to empowering future generations of African entrepreneurs.

Furthermore, the potential impact of decolonising entrepreneurial education on future generations of African entrepreneurs is profound. By embracing a curriculum that reflects the realities and aspirations of local communities, educational institutions can empower students to become drivers of sustainable development. The integration of indigenous knowledge and cultural contexts fosters a generation of entrepreneurs capable of innovating within their unique environments. This transformative education equips future entrepreneurs with practical skills and instils a sense of social responsibility. The reflection extends to envisioning a future where African entrepreneurs, shaped by decolonial education, contribute to economic prosperity and the preservation and enrichment of cultural heritage. The impact transcends individual success, envisioning a collective empowerment that ripples through communities and nations.

9.   Contributions to Knowledge

This paper makes a significant contribution to existing literature and knowledge by examining entrepreneurial education in African universities through a decolonial lens. The theoretical contribution of this study is to develop a framework that emphasises the incorporation of indigenous knowledge, local contexts, and African philosophies into the entrepreneurial curriculum. This framework provides a new perspective for educators, policymakers, and scholars engaged in the discourse on transformative education.

Moreover, the study's practical implications are evident in the actionable insights provided for restructuring entrepreneurial education models. This is demonstrated through the exploration of successful case studies. By addressing the entrenched colonial legacies in

education, the paper fills a gap in the literature and opens avenues for future research and implementation.

On a societal level, the study advocates for a paradigm shift that goes beyond economic considerations. It highlights the broader impact on cultural preservation, community engagement, and the development of socially responsible entrepreneurs. Hence, the paper's multifaceted contribution extends to theoretical refinement, practical guidance, and societal advancement within the context of entrepreneurial education in African universities.

10.   Recommendations and Future Research

The paper concludes by offering recommendations for implementing decolonial approaches in entrepreneurial education within African universities. It suggests a holistic integration of indigenous knowledge, local contexts, and African philosophies into the curriculum. Emphasising the need for faculty training, community collaboration, and continuous evaluation mechanisms. Furthermore, the paper encourages educational institutions to advocate for supportive policies and institutional backing to facilitate the successful implementation of decolonial frameworks. In terms of future research, the paper identifies key areas for exploration. This includes longitudinal studies to assess the sustained impact of decolonial education on graduates' entrepreneurial practices, comparative analyses across diverse African regions, and investigations into the scalability of successful initiatives.

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