YOUNG PEOPLE WITH VALUES ENTREPRENEUR

Young entrepreneurship: literature search and review of program courses and teaching methods

Contents

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

YoPeVa Entrepreneur is a project that aims at increasing young people entrepreneurship and starting-up by developing a system to identify, promote and accompany young people in their entrepreneurship process: improving their initiatives, potentialities, knowledge and skills; ensuring the biggest success in the process. To this end it is necessary to develop methodologies of work, training materials and support systems.

This document presents the results of a literature review to inform YoPeVa partners about the available evidence regarding youth entrepreneurship programs. More specifically, our focus is placed on the objectives, contents/competencies, structure, teaching methods, support strategies and evaluation aspects of such experience and what could be learned from them.

We hereby briefly highlight some of these findings:

Objectives. Two main objectives of such programs include: (**OB1) Make participants see entrepreneurship as a feasible career option and feel competent to be self-employed and run a company,** which includes training focused on technical and transversal skills; and **(OB2) Help participants run their own company or start-up**, that encompasses other supports in addition to training: offering coaching or mentoring, providing access to finance and fostering young entrepreneurs' social networks.

Program structure. According to the most successful programs, frequent and in-person training is the best option. Furthermore, with the aim to ensure continuity it is suggested that there are two training sessions per week and that some tasks are assigned to be carried out between lessons. This will help learners keeping track of the course, reflecting on the concepts and trying to apply them. Moreover, it is suggested that soft-skills are simultaneously teached to the hard-skills.

Teaching methods. Group sessions with a participatory approach (actively involving learners: reflection on the contents, applying them in real cases situations, etc.) accompanied with an individual project (with one-to-one reviews) is the suggested choice by literature. The use of evaluation as a tool to inform and improve teaching is also essential to foster learning.

Support structures. Additionally to the training, as stated in the OB2, offering mentoring/coaching is crucial. Mentorship is adjusted to each person's situation, project and intentions and is flexible enough to evolve as their needs and priorities change. Facilitating access to finance is another key feature suggested in the literature. The majority of programs provided: small capital grants or loans to start up a business; financial prizes based on pitch/business model competitions; or access to more formal loans (support for accessing credit). Finally, fostering entrepreneur's social network is important due to the fact that young people have limited networks, and these are relevant for building a customer base and for getting support.

Evaluation and impact. Regarding the achievement of the learning goals or the competences developed by the participants, a pretest-posttest approach is desirable. This way the impact of the program (learning assessment) can be seen in each individual. The pretest-posttest methodology can also be used in other individual variables such as satisfaction or self-efficacy. Concerning a more general impact of the project, programs usually consider the outcomes related to the actions taken: number of start-ups created, number of businesses supported, number of successful businesses (after certain period of time), number of people that received the training/coaching/finance, etc.

1. INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this text is to provide an initial scheme of what the published literature suggests regarding youth entrepreneurship programs and initiatives. This information will assist both "R1: Guide 'Working with young Entrepreneur'" and "R2: Courses for Young Entrepreneurs" in the YOPEVA Entrepreneur project. More specifically, the focus of this draft is to gain valuable insight regarding i) the objectives outlined in such programs, ii) their specific program contents or syllabus, iii) their structure, iv) the teaching methods and other support strategies used and suggested, and v) the impact/effectiveness assessment or evaluation approached used. In the following pages, following a description of the methodology used in this report and a brief summary of the most relevant reviewed papers/reports, we display the result of our analysis of the literature displaying the topics mentioned above in a more detailed manner. Finally, we outline some key messages or conclusions from this review.

2. METHODOLOGY

A literature search in Google scholar was performed usint the following keywords: "entrepreneurship", "youth", "program/project", "disadvantage youth", and "evaluation. The search parameters included the English language (only papers and report published in English were accounted for), and the 2010 to present day as a time reference. Publications prior to 2010 were excluded unless their relevance (referred to by other later reports or papers) would justify their inclusion. The targeted documents were not only scientific journals or academic papers, but also international organizations' reports. On this basis, Google scholar was chosen because of its low exclusion criteria, so institutional reports (policy briefs, recommendations, experiences, etc.) would not be excluded for not being published in a scientific journal.

After the documents were reviewed, it was performed an analysis to inform the objectives of "R1: Guide 'Working with young Entrepreneur'" and "R2: Courses for Young Entrepreneurs": providing methodological guidelines for the work with the young entrepreneurs (R1) and developing training systems focused on entrepreneurial skills (R2). The analysis focused on offering updated and focussed information of the papers and experiences reported by international organizations regarding the above-mentioned objectives.

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3. RESULTS OF THE LITERATURE REVIEW

In this section, we present two main groups of results. In the first place, we account for a detailed summary of the total 29 reviewed publications resulting from the literature search. In the second place, we account for the structured analysis of such publications with the aim of providing updated information regarding the objectives of the products R1 and R2.

3.1.   RESULT 1: Summary of selected references.

As mentioned above, 29 documents were reviewed and analyzed in this literature review. In the text below we account for each of these contributions. This section is divided in two parts, the first one addressing publications from North America and Europe (11) and the second one addressing publications from other contexts (18), mainly developing countries. The aim of this categorization is to facilitate the distinction of experiences occurred in similar contexts to the one of the YOPEVA Entrepreneur. In each part, publications are displayed in chronological order.

(I) Publications coming from Europe and North America.

4-H is a U.S.-based network of more than 100 public universities across the nation that provides experiences where young people learn by doing; the organization is administered by the United States Department of Agriculture. This organization developed the entrepreneurship program Youth Entrepreneurship (YE$) which included a curriculum (**Mae et al., 1996**). The document (link below) includes the contents and material so that interested agents may use the curriculum to: (1) Teach lessons in the classroom as a visiting educator or co-teach with the classroom teacher. (2) Conduct workshops for educators who would like to have a copy of the curriculum and teach the materials themselves. (3) Train volunteer leaders to conduct entrepreneurial activities with members enrolled in 4-H projects. Even though it was published in 1996, the reach of its organization makes it a document of interest. https://trace.tennessee.edu/utk_agexfinman/2

Kapitsa (2002) published a paper focusing on youth entrepreneurship policies and programs in the UNECE member states (United Nations Economic Commission for Europe). In this paper a conceptualization of entrepreneurship is proposed as well as an identification of the obstacles that youth face towards entrepreneurship. Subsequently, the article compiles different examples of entrepreneurship programs and contrast them (in the UNECE member states). More specifically, programs addressed to marginalized and disadvantaged youth or in countries in transition are reviewed, approaching some of their features. The fact that it tackles the key features of programs addressed to disadvantaged youth, despite its publishing date, makes it suitable for this literature review.

Haftendorn and Salzano (2003) presented a Working Paper that addresses education for entrepreneurship as one of the strategies to reduce youth unemployment. It takes up one of the recommendations of the High Level Panel, set-up by the UN Secretary General (working group on Entrepreneurship), stipulating that "the education system must recognize the need for developing the skills and attitudes that make up an entrepreneurial mindset such as lateral thinking, questioning, independence and self-reliance. This education should continue through vocational training, business incubation and the start-up phase for young entrepreneurs". The review presented analyses awareness and promotion programs in formal and non-formal education from around the world. This paper constitutes the first part of a set of two documents. Part II contains an extensive directory with short descriptions of 166 completed programs for entrepreneurship education. Together, they constitute a rich source of information for use by planners and decision-makers on youth employment and education policies. For this reason, despite its publishing date, this paper has been included. https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/@ed_emp/@emp_ent/documents/publication/wcms_094018.pdf

In relation to 4-H once again, **Schlake et al. (2006)** describe a project developed by University of Nebraska-Lincoln teaming up with UNL's Extension 4-H Development Program to produce a youth entrepreneurship curricula that incorporates 4-H projects, entrepreneurship, schools and community. It was first conducted a research that provided insights into the need for youth entrepreneurship in three communities. It was finally developed a curricula with the aim to deliver high quality entrepreneurial education that is available to youth at any time and any place. The curriculum will allow youth to systematically build entrepreneurial skills as they progress through the various curricula levels.

The World Economic Forum's Global Education Initiative (GEI) published the report: "Educating the Next Wave of Entrepreneurs" (**Wilson et al., 2009**). The report provides specific recommendations for the academic, public, private and non-profit sectors to collaborate in supporting the development of entrepreneurship ecosystems, in which education is a key driver. The report highlights the importance of entrepreneurship education for developing the skills, attitudes and behaviors necessary to create jobs, generate economic growth, advance human welfare and stimulate innovation to address global challenges. The report provides a landscape of entrepreneurship education practices across the globe covering youth (with a focus on disadvantaged youth), higher education (focusing on high growth entrepreneurship) and social inclusion (with a focus on marginalized communities). This report was included despite being anterior to 2010 because it was the first time entrepreneurship education had been considered in such a comprehensive manner. https://dx.doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.1396704

The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (**OECD**) and European Commission (EC) organized a seminar on public policy support for youth entrepreneurship in Brussels on 22nd and 23rd September **2014**. The seminar was intended for senior policy-makers, particularly those involved in dealing with the European Social Fund. This paper provides a summary of the main messages of the seminar: (1) Regarding the rationale and opportunities for developing youth entrepreneurship policies, youth entrepreneurship is important in addressing high unemployment (approximately twice the adult rate). (2) In

developing training, coaching and mentoring for youth entrepreneurs it is important to develop approaches against the current context of youth in the economy and society. (3) Financial support for youth entrepreneurs also needs to be segmented. (4) Entrepreneurial networks are important in supporting entrepreneurship as sources of motivation, ideas, information, advice, business partners, employees, and customers. (5) The participants developed some consensus regarding the key features of successful youth entrepreneurship programs.

https://www.oecd.org/cfe/leed/SummaryReportSeminarYouthEntrepreneurshipRev.pdf

Soldi and Cavallini (2017) published a study labelled "Youth initiative: a framework for youth entrepreneurship". The scope of the study is to provide the European Committee of the Regions (CoR) with background information and analysis on how youth entrepreneurship is promoted and boosted by local and regional authorities (LRAs). This scope is reflected in three main research questions: 1) 'Which are the background conditions justifying the policy focus on youth entrepreneurship and influencing the participation of young people in the labour market?'; 2) 'Which are the main measures adopted by LRAs to promote and boost youth entrepreneurship at the territorial level?'; and 3) 'Which are the main challenges and needs faced by LRAs in the promotion of youth entrepreneurship?'.
http://dx.doi.org/10.2863/068300

Another interesting project is the YEP – "Young Enterprise Program" that is the short name for the project "Multi-sectoral partnership for capacity development to enhance entrepreneurship opportunities for vulnerable youth in Milan, Lisbon and Madrid", co-funded by the Erasmus+ Program of the European Union. YEP promotes new practices and approaches at European level to support entrepreneurship of young people with fewer opportunities. As a result of this collaborative effort it is presented a Trainer's Toolkit (**Bonavitacola et al., 2018**) that builds on the expertise and work that partners carried out in the project. The Toolkit is divided into two chapters. The first Chapter presents the YEP youth entrepreneurship program. Among the topics addressed: the European entrepreneurship framework; obstacles that youngsters may encounter in becoming entrepreneurs; main elements to consider when designing an entrepreneurship training course of this kind; methods and tools to deliver the training; how to monitor and evaluate the training. The second Chapter is the operational section of the toolkit as it represents the actual YEP entrepreneurship training program, made up of Technical Training Modules (i.e. related to the "technical" knowledge, skills and competencies needed to start and manage a business) and Transversal Competences Training Modules (i.e. related to the transversal competences and notably those that are key for entrepreneurship).
http://toolbox.salto-youth.net/2418

A very strong evidence report was published by **Psilos and Galloway (2018)**. This report was developed under the YouthPower Implementation IDIQ to determine the training content and format, as well as complementary services, most strongly associated with achievement of positive outcomes. The report analyzes the best available evaluations and meta-analyses of 37 such entrepreneurship programs that assessed results according to four main outcome categories: entrepreneurial status, firm performance, entrepreneurial capabilities, and entrepreneurial mindsets. The report is intended to help United States Agency for

International Development (USAID) staff and partners understand outcomes that can reasonably be expected from entrepreneurship programs and apply this understanding to designing and implementing future programming. The analysis is focused on evidence from entrepreneurship education and training programs for several reasons. First, young people are more likely to be in education or most easily reached by education and training institutions. Second, young people are typically better connected to the education and training system than to other types of business-supporting institutions (business development service providers, for example). Finally, high-quality research on youth entrepreneurship programming is limited, and the vast majority of youth-focused programs that have been rigorously evaluated are centrally focused on education and/or training. https://www.youthpower.org/resources/what-works-entrepreneurship-education-and-training-programs-youth-evidence-report

A Policy brief on recent developments in youth entrepreneurship was produced by the **Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and the European Commission (2020)**. It explores the scale and nature of entrepreneurship activities undertaken by youth, and describes the main barriers faced. The brief provides an overview of the main policy actions that can be used to support youth entrepreneurship, including awareness-raising activities (e.g. role models, business competitions), entrepreneurship education and training, coaching and mentoring, improving access to finance, and entrepreneurship network development. https://doi.org/10.1787/5f5c9b4e-en

Recently, the **Rolling Images in Business Startups-RIBS** (**2022**) project published a document with recommendations for an entrepreneurship curriculum. The overall objective of the RIBS project was to develop young people's knowledge about entrepreneurship. The young participants gained basic knowledge about entrepreneurship, and they will hopefully have a more positive attitude towards entrepreneurship in the future. The term entrepreneurship is usually used only in connection to the basic knowledge about running a business. In the project, they worked with both internal and external entrepreneurship. Moreover, financial literacy is linked to media literacy, and RIBS has tried to have a pioneering approach to working with young entrepreneurs in the cultural and creative field.
https://www.skunk.ax/uploads/7/6/3/0/76308315/curriculum.pdf

(II) Publications coming from outside Europe and North America.

Kee et al. (2007) present an action–research project with an ultimate aim of preparing instructional material for educators in developing countries to foster entrepreneurship among high school children. The project was conducted in two phases. In the first phase an extensive research was conducted to understand the link between entrepreneurship and economic growth and the role of entrepreneurship education, identification of entrepreneurial traits, examination of different pedagogy. Research was done through an exhaustive survey of existing literature and through speaking to different educators and organizations in the field of education, especially entrepreneurship education. In the second phase, the project team identified an implementing partner (Institute of Psychological and Educational Research, India) and developed an entrepreneurship education curriculum for the partner. The curriculum, therefore, is primarily designed for high school students (ages 15-18) in India. However, it can be modified to suit the peripheral age range and used for disseminating to students in any

developing country. The curriculum teaches students skills to run a business and, fosters opportunity recognition, innovation, risk-taking and critical thinking among the students. The curriculum has been designed in the form of a workshop but can be adapted to form a regular semester length course. The pedagogical tools used are essentially interactive and experiential breaking away from the traditional teaching methods that are prevalent in most developing countries. The curriculum is being delivered in the form of a toolkit and has two components: (i) a teacher guide and (ii) a student work book. www.sylff.org/pdf/fellows/JIP2006_23.pdf

Youth entrepreneurial intention is very low in South Africa. **Fatoki and Chidonga (2011)** developed and study whose objective is to investigate the obstacles to youth entrepreneurial intention. Two sets of questionnaires were self-administered to high school students and university students. The respondents were selected using simple random sampling method. Five-point Likert scale was used to measure the responses. Data analysis includes descriptive statistics, the principal component analysis and T-test. The results indicate that youths perceive lack of capital, lack of skill, lack of support, lack of market opportunities and risk as the main obstacles to entrepreneurial intention. Recommendations to reduce the obstacles to youth entrepreneurship are suggested.

In order for the people of a country or district to achieve their individual aspirations and collectively contribute toward development they need to be entrepreneurial. This requires some form of training and education in order to develop the relevant skills, knowledge and attitudes requisite for meaningful employment. Using descriptive statistics, **Enu-Kwesi (2012)** examines the links between unemployment situation and youth enterprise in the Ajumako-Enyan-Essiam District (AEED) in the Central Region, one of the four poorest administrative regions of Ghana. The author found that majority of the youth had at most secondary education, and were unemployed, under-employed or self-employed in informal micro-enterprises. Though entrepreneurial opportunities existed in the District, the youth were adequately involved in the requisite entrepreneurship training programmes that would enable them to take advantage of the existing opportunities in order to reduce youth unemployment or under-employment. The study concludes that though the youth have entrepreneurial potentials, their low educational attainment has been a challenge to training. It has therefore been suggested that the District Assembly encourages training and educational institutions that incorporate entrepreneurship in their curriculum in order to provide trainees with the needed knowledge, skills and competencies for employment.

In **2012 Youth Business International** (**YBI**) published a consultation paper that sheds light on "how to maximize the impact of youth entrepreneurship in different contexts" and is premised on the notion that although operating contexts are often thought to be "critical to impact" there exists "very little understanding or guidance about how context affects impact in practice, or how interventions should be adapted to maximize impact – especially in youth entrepreneurship and livelihoods". The goal was to produce a user-friendly youth entrepreneurship contexts framework: the framework is intended to guide policymakers, program decision makers, evaluation specialist and program implementers. The analysis underpinning this toolkit focuses on assessing how the determinants of and constraints to entrepreneurship (for which cross-country comparable data is available) vary in different

contexts, in order to propose some conclusions about which entrepreneurship-promoting interventions are likely to be most effective in these different contexts. https://www.youthbusiness.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/08/ContextsConsultation.pdf

Mensah (2013) presents a document corresponding to the second of six modules of the IPYET 2013 Online program – Introduction to Youth Entrepreneurship Development. It is argued that this topic needed to be formally discussed and it has been developed in a new structure of the online program being a stand-alone certificate course, this module is essential to the understanding of the core concepts of entrepreneurship development. The main rationale perhaps for introducing this module is the fact that there are simply too many facets of entrepreneurship that is not well researched, articulated, or understood well.

In an article published by The Guardian (**Pompa, 2013**), it I emphasized that there are plenty of initiatives to promote youth entrepreneurship as a solution to unemployment, from providing training to young people who want to start their own business, to venture capital funds to support investment in these businesses. Nevertheless, in the article it is explained that when it comes to youth entrepreneurship programs, there is little evidence about what works and what does not. This is particularly true when it comes to what works best in different contexts. Recognizing that there is no 'one size fits all' program is essential as constraints young people face differ significantly across markets, culture and resources. While the core of most youth entrepreneurship programs – training, business development support and access to finance – will to some extent remain the same, the binding indicators of a particular context will define not only the main problems to address but also determine the solutions: who you should target and how to design, implement and deliver programs effectively. It was this realization that led Youth Business International (YBI), Restless Development, and War Child to conceive a study exploring how youth entrepreneurship support initiatives need to be prioritized and adapted in different contexts in order to maximize impact. The Overseas Development Institute (ODI) was asked to conduct the study, to review a broad range of sector evidence in order to produce an accessible youth entrepreneurship contexts framework. Some of the key findings are exposed in the article. https://www.theguardian.com/global-development-professionals-network/2013/aug/16/context-measuring-youth-enterprise-entrepreneurship

TNP2K's mission is to coordinate poverty alleviation policies in Indonesia. As part of its tasks, TNP2K conducts and commissions research reports and studies with the objective of facilitating and informing evidence-based policy planning. TNP2K has undertaken several research activities and policy initiatives related to employment in Indonesia. In 2014 it was published a working paper (**Moubayed and Purnagunawan, 2014**) that specifically concentrates on the analysis of youth unemployment and possible answers for Indonesia from the perspective of local and international best practices. The paper, after setting the research context and methodology, presents a short literature review of program lessons learnt worldwide; Indonesia's main challenges in a number of youth employment–related areas; country case studies as plausible responses to such issues; and evidence-based policy and program recommendations applicable to Indonesia. http://www.tnp2k.go.id/downloads/youth-employment-in-indonesia-compendium-of-best-practices-and-recommendations-for-indonesia

Unemployment disproportionately affects youth. As a result, many young people turn to self-employment. Youth entrepreneurship can provide young people with a sustainable livelihood. Raleigh International is a UK-based sustainable development charity working to create strong, sustainable youth enterprises in rural communities around the world, as part of the UK government-funded International Citizen Service programme. The programme is led by Voluntary Service Overseas in partnership with development organisations. It uses peer mentoring to bring together young people from the UK and developing countries each year to develop and implement business ideas. In 2015, ODI reviewed two Raleigh International pilot projects in Nicaragua and Tanzania. The paper (**Pompa and Pasanen, 2015**) presents the review findings and recommendations, and draws lessons for others contributing to tackling youth unemployment in developing countries. https://odi.org/en/publications/building-paths-for-youth-entrepreneurship/

Government and development organizations are increasingly turning to entrepreneurship training programs as a means of assisting those caught in poverty to develop the skills needed to find or create employment. Drawing on case studies from East Africa, **Wiger et al. (2015)** published an article arguing that while such programs offer a potentially useful strategy for enabling youth to access and create employment opportunities, they are, in and of themselves, an insufficient strategy for sustained improvement in the livelihood of participants. The article presents a model of contextual factors that it argues have broader applicability and relevance than the models currently in wide use. Without sufficient attention to those factors, the shift toward entrepreneurship training as an approach to poverty alleviation may place undue burdens and unachievable expectations on the very youth such programs are designed to support.

Montrose (**2016**) was contracted by DFID Uganda to conduct an independent final evaluation of two programs focused on youth skills building in Northern Uganda; (i) Youth Development Programme (YDP) managed by VSO and; (ii) the Northern Uganda Youth Entrepreneurship Programme (NUYEP) implemented by Enterprise Uganda (EUg) in partnership with Youth Business International (YBI). As a result, it was published a report that provides the findings from the evaluation including the extent to which both programs contributed to increased economic opportunities, business formation and expansion, changes in income levels and positive social engagement of youth in Northern Uganda. In addition, the extent to which both programs impacted upon organizational and technical capacity of partner organizations such as Vocational Training Institutions (VITs), Gateway Centres (GWCs) and EUg was also assessed. https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/607549/Evaluation-of-Youth-Development-and-Northern-Uganda-Youth-Entrepreneurship-Programme.pdf

The overall objective of the Youth Entrepreneurship and Employment Support Services Programme (YESS) is to create opportunities for rural youth to build their economic livelihoods through rural entrepreneurship or employment. The program aims to increase their engagement in the rural sector, contribute to sustainable rural transformation, and develop a new generation of young farmers, agripreneurs and rural supply chain actors. In **2018** the

International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) published the YESS design completion report. Incentivizing youth engagement in rural transformation has the potential to increase youth employment and entrepreneurship. In order to most effectively achieve its aim of attracting young millennials to participate, YESS needed to focus on innovation, leveraging technology, modernizing agricultural employment and practices, and creating incentives for young people for rural entrepreneurship. YESS recognizes that not all young people can be successful entrepreneurs, and also that the agricultural sector does not have the absorptive capacity to provide meaningful opportunities for all young people, particularly when it is modernizing and reforming structurally. The design therefore envisages providing alternative pathways for creating both on-farm and off-farm entrepreneurship as well as employment opportunities within the broader rural economy.
https://webapps.ifad.org/members/eb/124/docs/EB-2018-124-R-26-Project-Design-Report.pdf

In **2018 Ismail** published an article addressing the issue of indicators and methods for assessing entrepreneurship training programs. It is argued that entrepreneurship training programs are an important component of demand-side job creation strategies in developing countries. Assessments of such programs are constrained by variations in the program content, as entrepreneurship training is often combined with grants, life-skills training, internships and mentorship. The targets of these programs also vary and include vulnerable groups, subsistence entrepreneurs as well as firms which have greater potential for growth. The indicators of success should be adapted to suit the objectives and target group of the program. Given the varied nature of entrepreneurship training programs, it is unsurprising that a range of indicators are used to assess them. The indicators can be grouped into three broad categories: indicators of business practices, indicators of business performance and psychological indicators. Income and profits are the most commonly used indicator. Randomized control trials which compare treatment and control groups are the gold standard method for assessing entrepreneurship training programs. However, the quality of these studies can be improved by having larger sample sizes, baseline assessments before the intervention and three to four follow-up assessments to assess the long-term success of the program.

In an article identifying barriers to effective youth entrepreneurship (**Olaniran and Mncube, 2018**) state that Entrepreneurship and Vocational Education (EVE) has been considered as a vital key that opens the door of youth employment and employability in this 21st century. While several studies have been conducted to echo the importance and values of youth entrepreneurship and vocational education in Africa, there is dearth of research on challenges facing youths which constitute threats to their enrolment and completion rate in EVE. The article specifically examined the barriers to youth entrepreneurship and vocational education in Nigeria with a view to pointing the attention of governments, institutions and other stakeholders to these challenges. Descriptive research design of a survey type was used to carry out the study. One hundred and two (102) youths in various entrepreneurship and vocational skills acquisition programs responded to the questionnaire designed to gather information which provided answers to the three (3) research questions raised in the study. Findings from the study revealed poor perception of EVE by the public, mismatch between

training and labor market skill demand, and uncertainty of funding for self-establishment as the major barriers to EVE in Nigeria. The article recommends, among others, the training of Entrepreneurship and Vocational Education based guidance and counsellors by the universities who are not only skilled in different areas of EVE but also able to guide young people rightly towards choosing the right and relevant skill training that match the current labor market skill demand.

Voluntary Service Overseas (VSO) published a report in **2018** capturing the findings from a series of studies conducted in the Gulu Municipality in Uganda and the Machokos and Nakuru Counties in Kenya. The report forms part of the pilot Youth Entrepreneurship and Empowerment Project [YEEP] funded by the Citi Foundation, and delivered in partnership with Balloon Ventures and VSO. This program's objective is to achieve inclusive and sustainable economic growth [SDG #8] through providing support to micro-entrepreneurs through business mentoring and to job seekers through skills training and development. The studies were conducted via unique Participatory Action Research [PAR] methodology, in which young people from the communities were recruited and trained to design and implement the research. These youth researchers were challenged to better understand the barriers to young people being employed or starting their own micro-enterprises, both from the perspectives of the businesses and the young people. The youth researchers designed the research tools and conducted the surveys and once completed, they analyzed the findings of the studies and engaged stakeholders within the community to collate a range of suggestions and actionable next steps to address the problems identified. Findings from the youth led research include, barriers to employment, challenges of starting micro-enterprises, skills required to gain employment and start businesses, as well as perceptions of 'decent work' and entrepreneurship. Recommendations are made to address these findings and actions mapped according to organizations able to deliver them, with their action status to date. https://www.vsointernational.org/sites/default/files/citireport2018.pdf

A report published by UNICEF (**Alam, 2019**) argues that fostering entrepreneurship has become a key pillar of the policy agenda in developing and emerging countries to expand employment opportunities for youth. Moreover, it is stated that the policy discourse has coalesced around two distinct pathways whereby entrepreneurship can address youth employment. The first one, the Growth approach: entrepreneurship as an engine of economic growth and job creation; these are entrepreneurs of all ages that create and grow businesses that will generate jobs for youth. The second one, the Livelihoods approach: entrepreneurship by youth as a means to acquire productive employment and livelihoods for themselves. This issue brief unpacks the following questions and topics: How is entrepreneurship relevant to the issue of youth employment? How is entrepreneurship defined? Becoming an entrepreneur - entrepreneurship as a dynamic process. What are the different types of entrepreneurs? What are the characteristics of successful entrepreneurs? Are individual intentions and skills enough to activate entrepreneurial activity? Do youth entrepreneurship programs work in developing countries? What are some key areas to consider when engaging in entrepreneurship support for youth? https://www.unicef.org/media/72406/file/Youth-entrepreneurship-concepts-andevidence-issue-brief-2019.pdf

Youth Business International (YBI) partnered with the **Inter-American Development Banks innovation laboratory (IDB Lab)** to design and deliver a regional Youth Entrepreneurship Programme (YEP). Together they published the YEP impact report in **2020**. The programme worked over six years (2013-2019) to address the challenge of high youth unemployment in Latin America and the Caribbean by expanding and strengthening entrepreneurship support services for vulnerable youth. Through YEP, 64,000 youth were trained with entrepreneurship skills in partnership with YBI member organizations in ten countries. Close to 20,000 businesses were started or strengthened, over 13,000 new jobs were created, and 86% of the businesses supported under the project had increased sales one year after receiving support. All ten local entrepreneurship support organizations report increased capacity to provide quality entrepreneurship services that respond to the changing needs of youth in todays digital economy. This report shares the impact of the program. http://dx.doi.org/10.18235/0002821

In a report titled "The Effect of Youth Entrepreneurship Education Programs: Two Large-Scale Experimental Studies", **Kim et al. (2020)** expose that recent years have witnessed the worldwide growth of entrepreneurship education (EE) as entrepreneurship is regarded as the key driver of innovation and economic growth. Most extant studies on EE have focused on its impact on entrepreneurial intentions. However, the application of the same EE measurements for both adults and adolescents has long been criticized; the indices developed for potential adult entrepreneurs may not be suitable for young entrepreneurs, considering the large time gap before they enter the workforce. This study aims to develop appropriate indicators for the assessment of youth EE in Korea and to examine the effectiveness of youth EE. Two large-scale quasi-experimental studies were conducted with pre- and posttest matched-comparison groups for verification. This study suggests six common variables for measuring the impact of youth EE: opportunity discovery, opportunity exploitation, entrepreneurship, creativity capacity, social problem solving, and entrepreneurial intention. The analyses showed that all these indicators positively influenced youth EE. We also proposed practical suggestions for the development of EE programs.

Manaf et al. (2020) published a study arguing that the personality of a youth is an important factor in determining business continuity. Nevertheless, the authors mention that facing the business competition in the era of industrial revolution 4.0 (IR4.0) required environmental support factors beyond personality of youth entrepreneurs. Based on that framework, the study claims that training, skills and support network from the government-sponsored entrepreneurship program is critical factor in ensuring business sustainability among Malaysian youth entrepreneurs. The quantitative research design was conducted involved 150 youth entrepreneurs. The study shows that government initiatives comprise of training, skills and support of business networks have influenced business continuity among youth entrepreneurs to stay relevant.

3.2.   RESULT 2: Analysis of selected references.

In this part we aim at matching the results and recommendations from the published literature to fit the YOPEVA objectives in "R1: Guide 'Working with young Entrepreneur'" and "R2:

Courses for Young Entrepreneurs": providing methodological guidelines for the work with the young entrepreneurs (R1) and developing training systems focused on entrepreneurial skills (R2). To achieve this, we approach the analysis of the literature by means of gathering findings from the abovementioned literature to inform the following aspects of youth entrepreneurship programs:

a) OBJECTIVES
b) CONTENTS/COMPETENCIES
c) PROGRAM STRUCTURE
d) TEACHING METHODS AND SUPPORT STRUCTURES
e) PROGRAM ASESSMENT AND EVALUATION: EFFECTIVENESS AND IMPACT

For each of these sections, the main characteristics identified in the literature will be highlighted and, a subsection justifying and explaining more in depth each point has been included.

a) <u>OBJECTIVES</u>

- **OB1: Make participants in training programs see entrepreneurship as a feasible career option and feel competent to be self-employed and run a company.**

1. Raise self-confidence and present entrepreneurship as a career option.
2. Strengthen transversal key competencies and an entrepreneurial mindset: initiative taking, teamwork, creativity, responsibility, risk taking…
3. Teach technical competencies and knowledge related to entrepreneurship: about starting, running and owning a company (planning a business idea, marketing, financial literacy…).

Justification and description

In the literature, training entrepreneurship programs are usually accompanied by other services or support mechanisms, especially the most effective ones, largely mentoring and finance, as well as networking (Kapitsa, 2002; Haftendorn & Salzano, 2003; OECD, 2014; Psilos & Galloway, 2018). For this reason, the first objective **OB1** relates to the training/education itself, and the second objective **OB2** to the additional supports that could be given or offered.

In relation to points **OB1.2. and OB1.3.**, in the literature on entrepreneurship a distinction is made between mental abilities or soft/transversal skills (also called internal entrepreneurship or entrepreneurial mind-set) and business knowledge or hard/technical skills, also called external entrepreneurship (Ribs Project, 2022; Alam, 2019). Although this distinction exists, both should be related to each other when being taught (Bonavitacola et al., 2018), as they intrinsically are in real life, giving consistency to the training. In this respect, almost all of the

entrepreneurship programs identified in the literature incorporate both, hard skills and soft skills, as it is tough to separate them in a practical approach.

Some papers also mention that entrepreneurship is not always seen as a possible option by youth **[OB1.1.]**, and that one of the main reasons that explains this perception is that youth don't feel confident enough (OECD/European Commission, 2020; European Commission, 2008; Bonavitacola et al., 2018). For this reason, programs usually include a section promoting self-confidence (empowering youth) and introducing the self-employment as a feasible option (Kapitsa, 2002).

To sum up, the three subcomponents in the first objective (**OB1**) fit into the three categories Wilson et al. (2009) identify that comprise entrepreneurial education:
- Personal development **[OB1.1.]**. Entrepreneurship education should build confidence, motivate progress, strengthen the entrepreneurial mindset, foster a desire to achieve and inspire action.
- Entrepreneurial skill development **[OB1.2.]**. Entrepreneurship education should provide training in social skills, networking, creative problem solving, opportunity seeking, selling, interviewing, presentations, group leadership, community co-operation, dealing with bureaucracy, local cultural norms and how they affect business, etc." (p. 88)
- Business development **[OB1.3.]**. Technical, financial literacy and skills to engage in self-employment, employment and in entrepreneurship that can lead to self-improvement. This would include the expected business and functional curricula.

- **OB2: Help participants run their own company or start-up.**

1. Offer coaching and mentoring.
2. Provide access to finance.
3. Foster entrepreneurs' network.

Justification and description

In relation to the second objective **[OB2]**, the best youth entrepreneurship programs include all of the following components**:** promotion of self-employment option; training in the skills needed for self-employment; support services, including mentoring; access to finance, workspace and networks; and business expansion support (Kapitsa, 2002). Almost all articles that summarize the existing experiences (western context) conclude that most effective programs incorporate mentoring and access to finance (Kapitsa, 2002; Haftendorn & Salzano, 2003; OECD, 2014; Psilos & Galloway, 2018). Further, some articles highlight also other aspects such as networking (Kapitsa, 2002; OECD, 2014; OECD/European Commission, 2020; Bonavitacola et al., 2018).

Regarding mentorship **[OB2.1]**, program evaluations tend to be positive for coaching and mentoring programs: the intensive individual support typically improves the sustainability of the business (Jones, Brinkley and Crowley, 2015; cited in OECD/European Commission, 2020). Strong support after business creation is particularly important for improving the survival rates of businesses created by youth. Eesley and Wang (2017) highlighted that students in higher education who are exposed to entrepreneurial mentors have an increased likelihood of becoming entrepreneurs, particularly those with parents who are not entrepreneurs. Moreover, mentees firms performed better (or not worse) than those who were not mentees (Eesley and Wang, 2017). In Gimmon (2014) high education students who participated in a mentorship program for at least one semester reported "substantial" improvement in their personal entrepreneurial abilities and higher self-efficacy. Mentorship is adapted to each participant and is flexible enough to evolve as their needs and priorities change. The individual support offered by coaches and mentors aims to improve the chances of success for young people in business creation or business development. This can help compensate for a lack of experience in the labor market, as well as provide encouragement and inspiration (OECD/European Commission, 2020).

According to Eurofound **[OB2.2.]**, 82% of young Europeans indicated that a lack of finance and financial support is the main barrier to making entrepreneurship feasible (Eurofound, 2015; cited in OECD/European Commission, 2020). Youth may have more difficulty than older entrepreneurs in obtaining external financing due to their lack of proven experience and lack of personal savings, collateral and credit history (Eurofound, 2016; Schøtt, Kew & Cheraghi, 2015; cited in OECD/European Commission, 2020).

Due to their limited work experience **[OB2.3.]**, young entrepreneurs have had less time than older entrepreneurs to build a professional network and rely to a larger extent on the support of their family. Social networks are important both for building a customer base and for getting support and encouragement to start a new business (Jones, Brinkley and Crowley, 2015; cited in OECD/European Commission, 2020). Social networks may be important as a source of motivation and inspiration for example by having entrepreneurial role models or by receiving support from family and friends. However, professional networks tend to offer more value because they are more likely to provide connections to potential suppliers, customers, and other stakeholders (Hite, 2005; Davidsson and Honig, 2003; cited in OECD/European Commission, 2020). Without a professional network, it can be difficult for the entrepreneur to identify the range of public actors who may be able to provide funding and support. All this could have negative consequences for the entrepreneur's ability to obtain financing as well as for how they make use of obtained resources (Laufer and Wennberg, 2017; cited in OECD/European Commission, 2020). Entrepreneurial networks have a number of different roles in supporting entrepreneurship (OECD, 2014), including: acquiring motivation; opportunity perception; idea validation; resource identification for business launch and development (i.e. partners, suppliers, customers, employees, financing, ideas); and negotiating to get into business (build relationships to secure resources, customers, employees, suppliers and distributors).

Encompassing all the evidence mentioned above, where should be a greatest emphasis placed on a comprehensive program: financial support, entrepreneurship training, coaching and mentoring, or network building. If the objective is to support youth in business creation, evaluation evidence tends to indicate that financial supports often have the greatest impact, while "soft" support are the most appreciated by youth entrepreneurs (Eurofound, 2016; cited in OECD/European Commission, 2020). However, if the objective is to develop entrepreneurial mindsets, a greater emphasis should be placed on training and activities that allow youth to experience entrepreneurship (e.g. business competitions).

b) CONTENTS/COMPETENCIES

This section depends largely on the objectives defined in the previous section. Since the above stated objectives are yet to be agreed upon (not consensus reached yet), this section only points out some illustrative examples of issues/items of concern for Objective 1 **(OB1).**

- **OB1.1. Raise self-confidence and present entrepreneurship as a career option.** Personal development: entrepreneurship education should build confidence, motivate progress, strengthen the entrepreneurial mindset, foster a desire to achieve and inspire action.
- **OB1.2. Strengthen transversal key competencies and an entrepreneurial mindset: initiative taking, teamwork, creativity, responsibility, risk taking…** Entrepreneurial skill development: entrepreneurship education should provide training in social skills, networking, creative problem solving, opportunity seeking, selling, interviewing, presentations, group leadership, community co-operation, dealing with bureaucracy, local cultural norms and how they affect business, etc.
- **OB1.3. Teach technical competencies and knowledge related to entrepreneurship: about starting, running and owning a company (planning a business idea, marketing, financial literacy…).** Business development: Technical, financial literacy and skills to engage in self-employment, employment and in entrepreneurship that can lead to self-improvement. This would include the expected business and functional curricula (General business and management skills).

c) PROGRAM STRUCTURE

- **Training held in a classroom setting (in-person synchronous lessons with a teacher/trainer/educator) based on experiential learning and/or mentoring or business coaching.**

Justification and description

In literature, it is found that most successful programs (see Kapitsa, 2002; Haftendorn & Salzano, 2003; OECD, 2014; Psilos & Galloway, 2018; OECD/European Commission, 2020; Bonavitacola et al., 2018); that is to say the ones that helped/reached more people and that supported a higher number of business; provide the training services in a classroom setting, mainly with an experiential learning approach: learning by doing (Psilos & Galloway, 2018). Moreover, as mentioned in the objectives, programs usually include additional supports like mentoring or business coaching and access to finance (Kapitsa, 2002; Haftendorn & Salzano, 2003; OECD, 2014; Psilos & Galloway, 2018), as well as networking, (Kapitsa, 2002; OECD, 2014; OECD/European Commission, 2020; Bonavitacola et al., 2018).

- **Two sessions per week to ensure frequency and refresh the contents.**

Justification and description

An intensive group-training schedule is generally preferable (Bonavitacola et al., 2018): an average of two sessions per week gives a tighter rhythm that might help keep participants 'hooked'. A minimum of one session per week is mandatory, to avoid long, 'vacant' time in which participants are likely to lose touch with the training.

- **Tasks to carry out between lessons.**

  1. To practice the competences worked in class and generate continuity between classes.
  2. Doing activities that require reflecting on the contents and applying them in new situations: case studies research/comparison, interview potential customers, be the client of a business that offers a similar solution to one's project…

Justification and description

Assigning tasks between lessons and discussing them at the beginning of each session may help students establishing continuity between sessions (Bonavitacola et al., 2018). It can also encourage participants' initiative and self-confidence, thus contributing to develop and test transversal skills crucial to an entrepreneurial activity. Therefore, the main purpose is to ensure participants are keeping track of the course, reflecting on the concepts and trying to apply them **[point 1]**.

Taking the YEP (Bonavitacola et al., 2018) as a reference, the following examples are mentioned **[point 2]**:

- o Homework: between classes, participants should carry out tasks independently. This is to consolidate newly gained skills and knowledge, as well as contribute to the 'flow' of

the training, by giving it continuity. Among viable follow-up activities, some of the most important are:

- o Case studies/benchmarks research: consistently with Design Thinking, looking at other existing solutions comparable to the one being developed is a very effective way to improve a project.

- o Mystery client is a tool to test customer satisfaction, company standards and the overall quality as perceived by customers. It requires the 'mystery client' to engage in a transaction in a business comparable to the one being designed, take note of the elements contributing to the overall process and evaluate a series of aspects.

- o Customer Discovery is a qualitative research tool to understand whether a marketing plan is successful and how to improve it. It implies asking questions to potential customers focusing on one's own product or service". (p. 22).

- **Teaching the soft-skills simultaneously to the hard-skills, basically contextualizing the transversal competencies in applied contexts and situations of the technical competencies.**

Justification and description

Taking the Young Enterprise Program (YEP) (Bonavitacola et al., 2018) as an example, the Transversal Competence Modules are provided in no particular order. However, some of them can and should be linked to the relevant Technical Module, in order to test and put into practice the content of the technical session. For example, a module on "Communication" is closely linked to the possible technical module "Communication and Marketing", while "Creativity" to "Idea Development".

Technical aspects and transversal competences can be carried out separately (i.e. a single technical training module and a single transversal competence development module) or combined within the same module (i.e. a technical module with some brief transversal competence development activities included). If trainers decide to deliver transversal competences training via stand-alone modules, these should be carried out in the same week when related technical modules are organized: this gives consistency to the training and enables participants to focus on the specific learning while keeping the schedule "lighter" and more manageable (Bonavitacola et al., 2018).

d) <u>TEACHING METHODS</u>

- **Group sessions: to provide general and theoretical notions that will be exemplified, discussed with peers and applied in groups and individual tasks.**

  1. Explaining a concept or a set of ideas and apply them in group activities (problem solving, case studies, group start-up project, role plays, business games and simulations etc.)

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2. Exemplifying the concepts with case studies.
3. Guest lectures explaining their experience, it is especially important that the guest entrepreneur have a similar background to the participants, so they can feel motivated.
4. External review of students' assignments (group or individual projects) by business managers.
5. External activities, for example, study visits to successful (local) businesses.
6. Transversely to all activities: inspire reflection of one's performance and decisions, with the aim to find out if it was a proper approach, why was this approach chosen and what does it say about oneself (knowledge, potentialities, limits and ways to improve).

Justification and description

Regarding **points from 1 to 4**, in Wilson et al. (2009; in tune with Bonavitacola et al., 2018; Haftendorn & Salzano, 2003; OECD, 2014; OECD/European Commission, 2020) it is stated that action-oriented learning or activating teaching methods form the center of a well-founded entrepreneurial education at universities and colleges. The capability to act on one's own authority and make decisions should thus be strengthened. The relevant literature lists the following procedures and methods for stimulating such a learning behavior:

- Practical case studies, especially of high growth enterprises (written, live and video cases)
- Group and team techniques for creating new business ideas and managing growth
- Business games and simulations (for business formation, early development and growth of the enterprise)
- Lectures from entrepreneurs and other practitioners (possibly in connection with visits to high-growth enterprises)
- Interviews with entrepreneurs, especially high-growth entrepreneurs
- Project work
- Development and assessment of business plans
- Foundation of student enterprises (development of new venture creation and growth projects)
  (Wilson et al., 2009, p. 61)

The same authors mention that these methods give students the chance to experience a wide range of entrepreneurship issues and experiment with their own entrepreneurial ideas in a "dry run" or real small business scenario. However, within this low-risk environment traditional educational methods, such as lecturing, do not correlate well with the development of entrepreneurial thinking and acting. There is a need for more interactive, interdisciplinary and proactive learning approaches, in which the teacher becomes more of a moderator than a lecturer.

This does not mean that standard lectures are not a very efficient method, and can be as interactive and lively as the speaker makes them (Wilson et al., 2009). The course tutor needs to cover information, concepts that are more easily taught through a standard lecture using boards, flip charts, presentations, and so on. This is a very academic approach that may require pre-reading and group discussions.

Taking a closer look at guest lectures **[point 3]**, guest speakers – practitioners – often provide great role model effects. There is a danger with guest speakers that they get onto a hobbyhorse of their own and do not respect the needs of the curriculum. Guest speakers need very careful management, both in terms of respecting their input and in ensuring that they deliver what is asked of them. The tutor typically places himself or herself in a "middle-man" position and care has to be taken (Wilson et al., 2009).

With respect to the **point 5**, external activities (Bonavitacola et al., 2018) may include study visits to successful businesses or business incubators, exchanges with other groups engaging in similar training programs, as well as visits to local events such as entrepreneurship fairs and youth weeks. These activities, despite being time-consuming in organization and implementation, are extremely important for both training and personal and competence development purposes: they contribute to peer networking and team building, strengthen motivation and participation, and help young people putting into practice and getting first-hand experiences of what they learn during the group training. More specifically, visiting local businesses is an essential part of entrepreneurship education (Ribs Project, 2022). Visiting companies can boost young people's interest in entrepreneurship and encourage students to become entrepreneurs.

Concerning **point 6** about reflection, individuals who are being encouraged to modify the way they think and behave need to have time to reflect on what they have learned and how they will internalize lessons and ideas. Time and tools for reflection include (Wilson et al., 2009.p 102):

- Quiet time with a diary or learning log. This requires discipline
- Writing a letter or note to oneself
- Talking through the insights with a facilitator or mentor
- Committing to take action that comes from the desired new behaviors.

It is important in any learning environment to build in time for reflection, especially with expectations of new behaviors.

- **Individual/one-to-one project reviews (mentoring approach): to provide tailored feedbacks concerning a personal project.**

  1. Help students to perceive the utility of the program for their personal goals.
  2. Support youngsters in applying the notions learnt during group sessions to their own entrepreneurial project.
  3. Clarify doubts

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4. Help participants who might be reluctant to express themselves in front of their peers and trainers.
5. Pay a high degree of attention to every single participant: 1- monitoring their knowledge and competencies being learnt in the course. 2- considering their background, intentions, motivations, etc.
6. Increase value feeling.

Justification and description

Regarding the individual project **[point 1]**, if learners are able to stablish a relation between the current learning experience with their future expectations and action plans, students' motivation and perceived value of the learning will increase (Coll, 2018). This is extremely important so that learners feel it is worth it to effort and get involved in the program (Coll, 2011). Therefore, it is important that each student has a personal project (in addition to the other tasks or group works) so them can apply the contents to their own desired project.

As mentioned in the objectives' justification and description, mentoring is a key element of most successful entrepreneurship programs, and it is because the supports can be individually adjusted to each person's situation, project and intentions **[point 5]**. Some articles refer to mentoring separated from the training, as a business support, and others presented as a complement to the training.

Following YEP (Bonavitacola et al., 2018) ideas, individual reviews are crucial to complement group sessions and ensure their effectiveness in the overall training. On one hand, they support youngsters in applying the notions learnt during group sessions to their own entrepreneurial project **[point 2]**; on the other hand, they help young people clarify any doubt and/or issue **[point 3]**. In fact, participants might not be particularly used to participatory training settings and they might be reluctant to express themselves in front of their peers and trainers **[point 4]**.

Moreover, young people sometimes struggle to keep their attention in a classroom environment, while a one-to-one approach involves them directly and keep them alert (Bonavitacola et al., 2018; in tune with Coll, 2018). Finally, by paying specific attention to their project, not only support is more effective, but young people may feel more valued, as they actually are **[point 6]**.

Within the training course, group and individual sessions should be kept separate (Bonavitacola et al., 2018)**.** Firstly, engaging in individual meetings during group sessions would imply to focus on one participant at a time and thus to lose hold of the class. Although this may not represent a problem in other contexts, it is rather unproductive, especially with disadvantaged youth: these generally hold a lower ability to autonomously focus on precise tasks for a prolonged time, compared to other groups (e.g. university students). Therefore, they might be unlikely to profit from 'free time' in which they are not directly involved with the trainer(s) in learning or reviewing activities (Bonavitacola et al., 2018). Nevertheless, if there were factors that would force group and individual sessions to occur simultaneously, the

participants that are not in the individual session should have group tasks to develop. Nonetheless, in a setting where multiple groups are doing a task simultaneously the role of the trainer is to walk around the groups and listen to their reasoning and understandings, assisting them when necessary (Tharp et al., 2001); hence group and individual sessions should be kept separated as much as possible.

Moreover, individual sessions are aimed at reviewing and assessing the project design and development and at building skills and self-confidence in participants **[point 5]**. For this, it is recommended that they (Bonavitacola et al., 2018, p.14):

- Last approximately 30 minutes. In case of very advanced and well-structured projects, a shorter time might be appropriated. However, it is advisable to carefully evaluate the participant's needs in order to offer adequate support.
- Be mandatory: this provides stronger motivation for participants to engage in the training and work on their project. It also enables the trainer to hold onto each participant's progress.
- Have participants rotating in taking part in the meetings: each of them should engage in at least 3 individual project reviews throughout the whole training.
- Be scheduled each week for the next one, to allow participants to properly prepare and make the most out of the meeting.
- Naturally, trainers should communicate by phone and email with the participants between group and/or individual sessions, so as to keep them engaged and motivated throughout the course.

- **Training conducted by a recognized educator.**

  1. To ensure a clear and consistent overview of the entire path.
  2. Might get support from additional trainers, with complementary competencies, including technical matters.

Justification and description

Paying attention to the YEP recommendations (Bonavitacola et al., 2018), it is advisable to employ one single trainer who follows the group throughout the entire course. This is to facilitate the engagement of the young people referring to a unique figure may foster trust and confidence between trainer and participants, thus facilitating their experience of the training itself **[point 1]**. Moreover, a single trainer might be preferred to ensure a clear and consistent overview of the entire path, so that he/she has both an in-depth knowledge of participants and of what they have been trained about and effectively learnt at each step **[point 1]**.

In any case **[point 2]**, the single trainer should benefit from the support of additional trainers, with complementary competencies, including on technical matters (financial, legal,

administrative/regulatory, access to funding, etc.) and/or specialized in competence development.

- **Use evaluation as a tool to adjust teaching to orient individuals' knowledge building towards the desired competencies (mainly in individual project reviews).**

    1. Initial evaluation: to gain insight about student's previous knowledge about entrepreneurship.
    2. Formative evaluation: to obtain information about students' learning process and modify teaching and supports adapting them to learners' needs. This information should be obtained from the different tasks that make up the course, for example: group tasks during sessions, individual assignments, group projects reviews, individual projects reviews...
    3. Summative evaluation: to determine the overall learning outcomes and the effectiveness of the course.

Justification and description

The evaluation has two main functions (Mauri and Rochera, 2010). The first one refers to the accreditation of the learnings that have been successfully achieved (social/accrediting function). The second one refers to helping and fostering student's learning by informing them and the trainer about the learning process (pedagogical function). In a setting where the objective is to maximize student's learning **[point 1-2]**, the evaluation should not be limited to the mere verification of the achieved learning and must be used to obtain information about the students' knowledge building process and adjust the aids to it (formative evaluation). This information should also be used to encourage students to regulate their own learning process **[point 2]**.

Following Mauri and Rochera's (2010) approach once again, the evaluation allows the trainer to collect information about students' learning process, understanding how they are learning and the effectiveness of the teaching methodology. This information gathering should be carried out before, during and after the teaching-learning process **[points 1-3]**. As a result of the information obtained about students' learning, the trainer's supports and the teaching plan should be adjusted to the students' needs, as well as to involve students in the monitoring and management of their own learning **[point 1 and 2]**. In other words, the trainer should regulate the conditions of the teaching-learning process, as well as his/her direct interaction with the students so that they can achieve the required competences and knowledge.

e) <u>START-UP SUPPORT SYSTEMS</u>

- **Offer coaching and mentoring even after the end of the training.**

Justification and description

In addition to the evidence exposed in the objectives section, coaches and mentors (OECD/European Commission, 2020) typically provide advice and guidance to youth entrepreneurs before business creation and during the early stages of business development. The advice is often based on their experience and provided as needed to the young entrepreneur. However, it could include a more formal development plan that sets out milestones for the entrepreneur and their business. Another important role for coaches and mentors is to provide young entrepreneurs with access to their networks.

Business advisors, coaches and mentors can be paid professionals or volunteers. When volunteers are used, it is necessary to ensure that there are sufficient incentives for their participation (OECD/European Commission, 2020). This could include, for example, networking events for advisors or public recognition (e.g. awards). Programs that recruit volunteer advisors and mentors should ensure that the volunteers also have appropriate experience and skills to work with youth. Coaching and mentoring programs can seek to improve the quality of the relationships by offering training to the coaches and mentors. This could include training on communication with youth and tips for managing the relationship.

One of the key success factors for entrepreneurship coaching and mentoring relationships is effectively matching young entrepreneurs with a coach or mentor who is equipped to address their needs (OECD/European Commission, 2020). This usually involves each party outlining their objectives and responsibilities in writing at the beginning of the relationship. It is helpful to have coaches and mentors with experience in a related sector because it can help facilitate the quick establishment of trust with the entrepreneur. In El Hallam & St-Jean (2016) the findings show that in order to maximize entrepreneur's learning that occurs throughout a mentoring relationship, the entrepreneur must perceive similarity and mutual trust with his or her mentor. The data shows that in exerting psychological and career-related functions, the mentor enables the entrepreneur's learning.

Another important success factor is the accessibility of the coach or mentor (OECD/European Commission, 2020). When working with youth, it will be important that coaches and mentors are responsive. It is also critical that they can communicate through relevant channels such as email and text messages.

In setting up entrepreneurship coaching and mentoring programs for youth entrepreneurs, policy makers should seek to develop partnerships with business professionals and organizations that have a history of working with youth (OECD &European Commission, 2020). Often coaches and mentors are identified with open calls by partner organizations.

Strong support after business creation is particularly important for improving the survival rates of businesses created by youth (OECD/European Commission, 2020). However, it is also important to caution that coaching and mentoring programs should not provide such intensive support that the entrepreneur becomes dependent on their coach or mentor for the operation

of their business. This will limit the young entrepreneur's capacity to operate their business after the coaching or mentoring relationship is finished. To address this, it can be helpful to set a limit for the length of the coaching or mentoring.

In OECD/European Commission (2014) it is highlighted that some activities are more beneficial with face-to-face interactions, mentioning that coaching and mentoring tends to be more effective when delivered though face-to-face interactions. Moreover, meta-analysis (Perren, 2003) on e-mentoring in entrepreneurial education conclude that current research falls short of a robust evaluation, at best, academic commentators have pointed to the advantages of low cost and flexibility. Against this they have highlighted the limitations of virtual mentoring when dealing with more complex interpersonal issues and that such schemes should be seen as a supplement to face-to-face mentoring, not a substitute.

- **Provide access to finance, for example:**

  1. Providing finance through loans or grants.
  2. Funding as the prize of a pitching competition presenting the business plan and idea.
  3. Give a certificate that validates that the student has the necessary competencies to successfully drive a project; or that validates the viability of a project. (To help finding financiers).

Justification and description

Programs for nearly all youth subgroups/populations can be built around a core set of features, typically producing outcomes related to entrepreneurial and economic status. More specifically, program designers should strongly consider providing access to finance or means of gaining access to finance whether through cash grants, loans, partnerships with microfinance institutions, or other means (Psilos & Galloway, 2018).

The majority of programs (Psilos & Galloway, 2018) provided small capital grants or loans to start up a business **[point 1]**, provided financial prizes based on pitch/business model competitions **[point 2]**, provided access to more formal loans (support for accessing credit) **[point 3]**, or selected participants who were already in microfinance programs.

- **Foster entrepreneur's network**

  1. Doing group tasks in which group participants rotate and vary, allowing learners to meet and work together with all the rest of his/her peers.
  2. Create a WhatsApp/Facebook/LinkedIn group with the participants and the trainers.
  3. Let students have the contact of the trainers, visited companies or guest lecturers.

Justification and description

In OECD/European Commission (2014) it is mentioned that some activities are more beneficial with face-to-face interactions, for example, building relationships within networks is more beneficial when the interactions require greater effort, such as attending an in-person meeting or event.

Nevertheless and regarding **point 1**, doing group tasks is not enough to maximize learner's chance to expand and build a rich entrepreneurial network. According to Tharp et al. (2001) ideas, it is necessary to ensure that students engage in joint activity (group tasks) with different students in heterogeneous groups and not always with the same individuals. This will give the chance to students to meet their peers and discover others' way of thinking and capabilities. When working together there is the need to share ideas and reach a consensus (intersubjectivity); finding an agreement and having a shared vision increases affinity between individuals (Tharp et al., 2001).

Although face to face interaction is a nuclear aspect, it is also important to allow youth to participate in networks in various ways, for example, online and face-to-face (OECD/European Commission, 2020) **[point 2]**. In this regard, it would be interesting to profit from ICT communication potentialities, facilitating and fostering communication among students out of class time. Effective network management requires strong buy-in from youth. To achieve this, networks need an active manager who can animate the network and maintain regular communication with members (the course itself can serve as stimulus). In addition, policy makers can have a role in supporting entrepreneurship networks that have been created and developed by entrepreneurs and businesses. This includes promotion, referrals from public entrepreneurship programs, and financial support.

The principal challenges for youth who are considering business start-up and self-employment area lack of assets (OECD, 2014), including financial, human and social capital, low credit ratings, and a lack of experience in entrepreneurship and in the labor market more generally. One consequence of this lack of capital and experience is that young people have limited networks and often struggle to build legitimacy among financers, suppliers and customers (OECD, 2014). In this respect and as it has already been mentioned, another important role for coaches and mentors (OECD/European Commission, 2020) is to provide young entrepreneurs with access to their networks **[point 3]**.

f) <u>PROGRAM ASESSMENT AND EVALUATION: EFFECTIVENESS AND IMPACT</u>

- **Evaluation not only of the learning outcomes (knowledge and competences) but also business and start-ups related outcomes.**

    1. Assessment of the perception of entrepreneurship and their self-confidence to be self-employed (pre and post).

2. Evaluation of competences of each individual before the start of the training (and after).
3. Compare the results with a control group.
4. Number of start-ups created.
5. Number of successful businesses.

Justification and description

One of the most complex issues when dealing with an entrepreneurship program is how will the impact of the program evaluated. Evaluation is an important but under-utilized tool in inclusive entrepreneurship policies and programs. This includes ongoing monitoring and ex post evaluation to identify strengths, weaknesses and gaps in support, as well as ex ante evaluation that is used to inform policy design **[points 1 and 2]**. In general, evaluation practices for inclusive entrepreneurship policy lag behind those of other policy areas. This represents a missed opportunity to design effective policy interventions (OECD/EU, 2013).

In the YEP (Bonavitacola et al., 2018), it is recommended to carry out an assessment of competences of each individual before the start of the training **[points 1 and 2]**. When working with disadvantaged youth, given the profile of the target group, this relates to evidencing and recognizing informal learning and experiences, that young people may not even be aware of possessing. Also, this might be useful to identify severe skill gaps and follow up with a higher number of individual one-to-one sessions.

Regarding to **point 3**, randomized control trials - which are an experimental research design that compares treatment groups which are exposed to an intervention to a control group which is not exposed - are the best method for assessing the impact of entrepreneurship training programs (Cho & Honorati, 2014; Glaub & Frese, 2011; cited in Ismail, 2018). The comparison of the treatment and control groups eliminates the effect of extraneous variables which the study cannot control for, such as macroeconomic changes. The randomized control trial is more effective if the sample size is larger because the statistical analysis will have greater precision and the study has more power to detect the small effects of changes which may occur after the intervention. In this respect and concerning **points 1 and 2**, it is necessary for this kind of study to have a baseline assessment of the key indicators before the intervention and three to four follow-up assessments which can evaluate short-term and long-term effects. Studies which utilize this approach can determine if the short-term spike in self-employment rates, income or profits which typically occur after training are sustainable over a longer time period (McKenzie & Woodruff, 2013; cited in Ismail, 2018).

In our case, after determining which competences (and knowledge) will be trained, proper instruments (questionaries and assessment tools) need to be selected to carry out the evaluation. For example, if self-efficacy is argued and chosen as it has been initially proposed, Kee et al. (2006) propose Bandura's self-efficacy questionnaire (1977; cited in Kee et al., 2006) to evaluate project impact.

Monitoring and evaluation for training is important to gather information about the effectiveness and quality of the training offer (IDB LAB & YBI, 2018). As a minimum, organizations capture the number of participants and the drop-out ratio. The majority of organizations follows up on participants' satisfaction with the training, and how many participants create a business **[point 4]**. It is more challenging, but good practice to collect data on former participants that created a business to see whether businesses are still operational after a certain period **[point 5]**. Some organizations also collect more detailed information on the businesses, such as number of staff, turnover, etc. **[point 5]**. Methods used to collect information include evaluation sheets at the end of training, personal check-ins with the entrepreneurs either in person or via telephone, as well as sending out online surveys.

In relation to indicators, Ismail (2018) provides an intriguing compilation of indicators regarding entrepreneurship:

– Business performance indicators **[point 5]**
  ▪ Income and profits. Cho and Honorati (2014) find that income and profits were the most common outcome assessed in the studies which they reviewed (28% of the 37 studies included income or profits among the outcomes). More specifically, individual salary, business profits, assets and household consumption were assessed (Cho & Honorati, 2014).
  ▪ Sales (Cho & Honorati, 2014).
  ▪ Number of wage workers (Cho & Honorati, 2014).
  ▪ Size of inventory (Bloom et al., 2013; Cho & Honorati, 2014).
  ▪ Business start-up (Cho & Honorati, 2014; Patel, 2014). Few studies considered the rate of new business start-ups but some used proxies such as self-employment and increased business income (Valerio et al., 2014).
  ▪ Productivity (Valerio et al., 2014, Bloom et al., 2013).1
  ▪ Increased hours of work or increased employment (Cho & Honorati, 2014).
  ▪ Reduced inactivity (Cho & Honorati, 2014).
  ▪ Loans (Cho & Honorati, 2014; Field, Jayachandran, & Pande, 2010).
  ▪ Savings (Valerio et al., 2014).
  ▪ Business survival (Patel, 2014; Valerio et al., 2014).
  ▪ Business growth (Patel, 2014; Valerio et al., 2014).

– Psychological indicators **[point 1]**
  ▪ Women's agency or decision-making capacity (Patel, 2014).
  ▪ Confidence (Patel, 2014; Valerio et al., 2014).
  ▪ Self-confidence and teamwork (Valerio et al., 2014)." (pp. 5-6).

In the same paper, Patel (2014, p. 3; cited in Ismail, 2018) is cited providing some insight with regard to indicators for short-term versus long-term assessments by distinguishing between the intermediate and final outcomes of entrepreneurship training programs:

▪ Intermediate outcomes
  o More start-ups **[point 4]**

- o Increases in investment
- o Improved business knowledge/skills **[point 2]**
- o Improved agency over business decisions
- o Higher formalization
- o Improved business practices and performance **[point 5]**
- o Increased market access

▪ Final outcomes
- o Growth for enterprises reflected through increases in revenue, profits and number of employees
- o Enhanced role for women through greater agency or earnings.

4. CONCLUSIONS

To sum up, next the main conclusions are synthetized:

- International and academic organizations have made many efforts to study and foster youth entrepreneurship, mainly by means of programs and trainings. In this report, 29 references regarding entrepreneurship education and training programs (evaluated experiences, meta-analysis, literature reviews, etc.) have been selected and analyzed to stress the most effective practices suggested by the current evidence.

- To ensure the effectiveness of the project it needs to be designed and developed from a context perspective, considering the characteristics, needs and motivations of the target population. The impact of the program will highly depend on how the project is tailored to participants needs and motives.

- Nevertheless, a common feature is that most successful programs offer in-person entrepreneurship training with a participatory approach (to foster entrepreneurship transversal skills and business-related knowledge) accompanied with additional supports, mainly: providing coaching or mentoring to help participants running their own company, facilitating access to finance and fostering young entrepreneurs' social networks.

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