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**Examining how entrepreneurial educators' perspectives and lived experiences have shaped their pedagogical approaches in secondary education**

Latonya Wiley

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Pepperdine University  
Graduate School of Education and Psychology

EXAMINING HOW ENTREPRENEURIAL EDUCATORS' PERSPECTIVES AND LIVED  
EXPERIENCES HAVE SHAPED THEIR PEDAGOGICAL APPROACHES  
IN SECONDARY EDUCATION

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction  
of the requirements for the degree of  
Doctor of Philosophy in Global Leadership and Change

by

Latonya Wiley

June, 2023

Stephen Kirnon. Ed.D. – Dissertation Chairperson

This dissertation, written by

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under the guidance of a Faculty Committee and approved by its members, has been submitted to and accepted by the Graduate Faculty in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

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DEDICATION

To my ancestors who inspire me to overcome my fears, accomplish my  
dreams and prevail against all odds.

To my Recie for supporting me through this dissertation journey.



## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to thank two individuals without whom I would not have completed my doctoral program. Dr. Stephen Kirnon, my chair, was my master's program professor. I've learned a tremendous deal from his wealth of knowledge and feedback over the years. I am eternally appreciative to have had him as my dissertation advisor, for which I will always be grateful. I would like to thank Dr. Kirnon for assisting me in choosing a topic and guiding me through the entire dissertation process.

I am grateful for the unwavering support of my spouse and best friend of twenty years, Recie Wiley. You were my cheerleader and rock during times of struggle. You demonstrated patience, love, and compassion. Thank you for supporting me during my dissertation journey.

## VITA

## Experience

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## ABSTRACT

The purpose of this qualitative phenomenology study is to explore the perspective of entrepreneurial educators in Southeast Louisiana who teach students in grades 9-12, related to how their entrepreneurial experiences have influenced their pedagogical approaches. There is a gap in our knowledge and understanding of how the lived experiences of entrepreneurs can affect teachers' instructional approaches to introduce the art of entrepreneurship in its many manifestations. The Constructivist learning approach and Kolb's experiential learning theory (1984) are influential in this dissertation. The theoretical framework for this study is an experiential learning theory which helps us understand the impact of the participants' lived experiences. The phenomenological analysis given generated eight themes: (a) engaging activities; (b) business management capabilities; (c) entrepreneurial capabilities; (d) integrating entrepreneurship experience into curriculum; (e) external partnerships; (f) learning by doing; (g) learning from others; and (h) resources and materials. There were nine takeaways as a result of the findings; (a) participants value resources and materials that will enable them to share their lived experiences and enhance student learning outcomes; (b) participants place a high emphasis on student participation in "action-oriented" activities that help the development of entrepreneurial or job skills; (c) to supplement what they are already learning, the participants bring in a variety of other external resources and materials into the classroom to enhance learning outcomes; (d) participants leverage external relationships in order to improve the educational opportunities available to students; (e) participants who have previous experience in business management or entrepreneurship incorporate their real-world knowledge and expertise into their teaching methods; (f) when students are actively engaged in the learning process by participating in entrepreneurial activities, their education is enhanced; (g) when students are able

to learn from others, their own learning is accelerated; (h) integrating the lived experiences of entrepreneurship educators enhances student learning outcomes; and i) educators or administrators with experience in entrepreneurship facilitate professional development training for educators to guarantee that training includes the real-world knowledge of an entrepreneur.

Interview findings and takeaways were used to make recommendations for future research. The findings will help entrepreneurial educators and school administrators identify activities, external partnerships, materials, and resources that work best in the classroom. These insights can also improve student learning and consistency in entrepreneurial education.

Keywords: entrepreneurship, experiential learning, educational entrepreneur

## Chapter 1: Introduction

### Background of the Study

John Dewey is credited with the establishment of experiential education as a pedagogy. His ideas signaled a revolution in education in the late 1890s. Dewey fought against the increasing industrialization of education in his writings. As Dewey saw education becoming universally available, he believed that this wider role of education was becoming divorced from the growth of pupils as individuals and members of society. Unlike other educational thinkers of the period, Dewey advocated for a stronger link between education and the society in which a student lived. Education, he argued, should prepare youngsters to enter society and become productive members. Dewey (1972) wrote that students are "motivated to act as a member of a unity, to emerge from their original narrowness of action and feeling, and to conceive of themselves from the position of the group to which they belong" (p. 438). Rather than seeing education as a barrier between the classroom and the real world, Dewey advocated for a stronger link between the two. He felt that education should reflect the world and prepare pupils to succeed in it.

Dewey's theory of education required him to demonstrate the social value and importance of knowledge. As a result, a school must "avoid teaching abstract ideas; rather, it must establish actual settings in which ideas grow, and the student must be permitted to test moral and social judgements within the school" (as cited in Spring, 2018, p. 10). Dewey anticipated that via school, students would learn how to engage as useful members of a community, thus breaking the expanding industrialization of education. In his early writings, Dewey pushed for a hands-on approach to education that allowed for experimentation, application, and participation. According to Dewey (1972), "Education that does not occur through forms of life, forms that are

worth living for their own sake, is always a poor replacement for actual reality and tends to cramp and to deaden" children's natural urges and thrill (p. 430). Dewey also argued for a different style of teaching, writing that the instructor should act more as a facilitator, guiding pupils' participation and presenting them with options. This method of involving students was a considerable change from prior perceptions of instructors and teaching. Dewey (1972) observed, "The teacher is not at the school to impose specific ideas or habits on the child...but is there as a member of the community to select the influences that shall touch the child" (p. 32). Rather than the usual rote memorizing, Dewey pushed for group projects, "learning by doing, linking material to the interests of the kid, and undertaking projects" (Spring, 2018).

Outside of the classroom, Dewey highlighted the significance of connecting to a larger community and having a purpose. Dewey's emphasis on the educational community became a primary focus of experiential education, and his influence on the field continues to this day. Students who were able to attend public high school in the United States were taught to engage in an industrial society when education systems were being developed. Teachers were seen as knowledge bearers, and instruction was predominantly content driven (Diamond, 2007; LaPrad, 2016; Longmore et al., 2018). As the Industrial Revolution came to a close, it became clear that people needed to be taught how to think critically and solve issues (Goodlad, 2004; Hooks, 2010; Kolb, 1984; Wagner & Dintersmith, 2015).

In the United States today, despite the influence of John Dewey, educational methods are still largely based on outdated educational principles. As a result of inadequate education methodologies, many people and organizations are finding it difficult to cope (Robinson, 2011). Students who are unable to apply their knowledge outside of the bounds of traditional curricula are lacking skills that are critical to their ability to launch a business. These entrepreneurial skills

are essential for the development of society and the organizations for which students will later work (Seelig, 2017).

Despite a number of programs aimed at addressing various educational problems, there is still potential for improvement. For instance, the No Child Left Behind Act of 2002 and the Race to the Top effort of 2009 have strengthened curriculum, testing, and teacher accountability systems uniformity (Gagnon, 2016). However, No Child Left Behind, has repeatedly fallen short of the goals set by the authors of the program (Zhao, 2012). Students in the United States are deprived of the opportunity to apply what they have learned as a result of passive and lecture-based learning approaches (Zhao, 2012). The United States will be economically disadvantaged if it continues to teach in the same approach it has in the past. Since low-skill occupations are being outsourced to other countries, today's students must be competitive, intellectual, and incredibly innovative. Zhao wrote, "A future citizen who is well-prepared must be innovative, enterprising, and globally capable" (p. 32). Entrepreneurship education provides a solution to this challenge by developing fundamental competencies that today's kids will require in the future to address social, cultural, or environmental issues through entrepreneurial means (Obschonka et al., 2017).

Although the concept of *entrepreneurship* has been around since the early 1700s, it wasn't until the 1980s that it really gained flight (Schimmel, 2016). New educational frameworks have emerged in response to the need for instructors to better equip students with the tools they need to explore and develop their academic, leadership, and life skills throughout the previous few decades (Bell-Rose, 2008). Governments eager to establish programs that encourage and develop entrepreneurship in higher education have spurred a huge expansion in the availability of entrepreneurship education around the world over the last two decades (Fayolle, 2013; Greene

& Saridakis, 2008; Neck & Greene, 2011). Entrepreneurship has been recognized as a critical contributor to economic growth and development (Singer et al., 2015), with entrepreneurship education serving as a catalyst for both (Fayolle et al., 2006; Singer et al., 2015).

Some have argued that many entrepreneurship courses are simply traditional management courses with a new label (King & McGrath, 1999), as some are designed to introduce students to responsible business practices, and that, as Solomon et al. (2002) argued, management has tended to teach students how to become competent employees rather than successful entrepreneurs. Nonetheless, entrepreneurship is rapidly being recognized for its role in job creation as well as its use in improving a region's, state's, or country's competitiveness (Davey et al., 2016; European Commission, 2013; Zahra, 1991). Within entrepreneurship education, support for learning environments that vary from traditional lecturer-led passive learning to encourage entrepreneurial studies has been rising for some time (Gibb, 2002; Jones & English, 2004). There should be a greater focus on constructivist approaches, including action-oriented *experiential learning*, problem-solving, and project-based learning (Hagg & Gabrielsson, 2020).

According to Casson (2000), entrepreneurs are defined by their originality and capacity to learn via trial and error rather than by following business formulae. Whether students are learning "about," "through," or "for" entrepreneurship, the focus should transition from traditional to hands-on learning, with opportunities for students to actively engage in, control, and influence the learning environment (Gibb, 2002). Entrepreneurship education should emphasize creativity, transdisciplinary, and process-oriented approaches, and theory-based practical applications in the classroom. Rather than focusing on systems and processes, entrepreneurial education should instill the required attitudes, values, and psychological concepts, as well as develop relevant human traits such as creativity, determination, and self-



direction (Deamer & Earle, 2004; Gibb, 2002). Scholars debate whether entrepreneurship can be taught and, if so, whether it is worth teaching (Fiet, 2001; Katz, 2003; Meyer, 2001; Solomon et al., 2002). Entrepreneurship cannot be taught, according to some (Busenitz et al., 2003; Fiet, 2001; Katz, 2003; Meyer, 2001; Solomon et al., 2002). Entrepreneurs cannot be manufactured, only recognized, according to Chaharbaghi and Willis (2000), who supported the popular theory that entrepreneurs are born, not made. That is, some people are born with outstanding personalities that drive them to engage in innovative and extremely creative business practices (Deamer & Earle, 2004; Gibb, 2002; Llewellyn & Wilson, 2003).

Kuratko (2005) presented a counter-argument, claiming that the question of whether entrepreneurship can be taught is no longer relevant. Some scholars have even stated that, given the characteristics of today's market, everyone may be an entrepreneur (Casson, 2000). Entrepreneurship is increasingly thought to be a learned competence rather than a genetic tendency or cultural attribute throughout Europe and North America (Etzkowitz, 2003; Rae & Carswell, 2000). According to Anselm (1993), individuals may be born with entrepreneurial proclivities, but if entrepreneurial skills are taught, the level of entrepreneurship activity will be higher. Entrepreneurial behavior (Kolvereid & Moen, 1997) and entrepreneurial tendency (Henderson & Robertson, 1999; Lüthje & Franke, 2002; Sexton & Bowman, 1983) are said to be influenced by entrepreneurship education.

Entrepreneurs, according to theory, learn primarily through doing and reflecting, which includes duplicating information and taking advantage of opportunities that arise from failures (Cope & Watts, 2000; Garavan & O'Conneide, 1994). Minniti and Bygrave (2001) also claimed that the only way to learn how to be an entrepreneur is through lived experiences or through direct observation.

According to studies, entrepreneurship educators play a critical role in ensuring that entrepreneurial education is implemented in its genuine spirit (Ruskovaara & Pihkala, 2013). In this sense, through giving real-life business experiences, entrepreneurship educators actively lead, motivate, and inspire students' interest in entrepreneurship (Hannon, 2005; Keat et al., 2011). Entrepreneurship educators with teaching credentials are expected to provide students with successful and strategic small business skills. To improve teaching approaches and improve entrepreneurial and job skills, it is critical to collect and analyze data from credentialed and experienced entrepreneurship educators. Since the lived entrepreneurial experiences of credential entrepreneurship educators can fill the gaps of an ineffective curriculum and flawed teaching practices, there is an opportunity to understand entrepreneurship educators' perspectives and experiences as an entrepreneur, as well as how those experiences impact their instructional practices.

### **Statement of Problem**

The literature suggests that entrepreneurship is vital in our society, that entrepreneurship education is valuable, and that experiential learning is a viable method for teaching entrepreneurship. Few teachers have gotten any training or development in the field of entrepreneurship education, according to Cornell and Clarke (1999), the Jack C. Massey Chair in Entrepreneurship at Belmont University. According to McKeown et al. (2006), the majority of entrepreneurship educators claim to teach practical entrepreneurship courses (57%), a small percentage claim to teach theoretical entrepreneurship courses (5%), and 25% claim to teach a mix of theory and practice. Only a small percentage (3%) used action and experiential learning methodologies, which are often considered to be the most successful strategies for educating entrepreneurs (McKeown et al., 2006). Despite the fact that 43% of entrepreneurial educators

claimed to use numerous channels for material delivery, they were all centered on traditional approaches including lectures, workshops, and seminars (Pittaway & Cope, 2007).

Educators in the field of entrepreneurship, in particular, work with resources that promote creative thinking and inventive behaviors. By applying their lived experiences of successful business tactics and applications, educators may create a classroom climate that invites disruptive ideas and leads students down a non-traditional path to learning. Risk and uncertainty are fostered through the experiential learning process in entrepreneurial education, and it is possible to develop risk-taking and uncertainty-coping skills while enhancing the transformative nature of entrepreneurship education (Arpiainen & Kurczewska, 2017).

Teachers cannot teach students how to be entrepreneurs unless they are themselves entrepreneurs (European Commission, 2013). There is a gap in our knowledge and understanding of how the lived experiences of entrepreneurs can affect teachers' instructional approaches to introduce the art of entrepreneurship in its many manifestations. As the needs of the market continue to shift and our knowledge of how entrepreneurs grow and function advances, it is clear that entrepreneurship education must adapt. As a result, there is an opportunity and a need to investigate entrepreneur educators' perspective and experiences on how to include new experiential learning techniques and methodologies into the classroom.

### **Purpose Statement**

The purpose of this *qualitative phenomenology* study is to explore the perspective of entrepreneurial educators in Southeast Louisiana who teach students in grades 9-12, related to how their entrepreneurial experiences have influenced their pedagogical approaches.

## **Importance of Study**

Teacher education programs have traditionally failed to provide educators with the professional competencies and experiences necessary to actively engage and place students at the center of the learning process (Gautam et al., 2015). According to the European Commission, basic competencies and values in teacher education programs are rarely related to entrepreneurship education, which emphasizes holistic approaches and innovation (Gautam & Singh, 2015). Effective entrepreneurial educators can help students apply their knowledge, attitude, abilities, and competences to their chosen profession (Gautam & Singh, 2015). The acquisition of entrepreneurship knowledge and skills can then be used to assess student performance in entrepreneurial learning environments (Badwan, 2018). By assessing the influence entrepreneurial educators' lived experiences have on entrepreneurs, this study will advance existing research in the field.

School reform efforts have ranged from site-based management and collaborative decision-making to government takeovers of substandard schools (Griffin & Moorhead, 2007). According to Griffin & Moorhead (2007), these strategies will be ineffectual if school reform is not student-centered and does not result in improved student outcomes. Dewey's theory of experiential education was a school reform movement that started with the students, not the administrators. This sort of school reform gained popularity in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century but faded as educators experimented with and abandoned various approaches. Educators are reviewing John Dewey as a possible "new" in education in the 21st century. This study can assist educational administrators in comprehending a different method to implementing Dewey's experiential education theory in their entrepreneurship classrooms.

The study will reveal the soft interconnection within the entrepreneurial process through experiential exercises and by guiding participants to leverage their intrinsic ability to interact with all forms of entrepreneurial thinking. Experiential learning makes use of all of the talents connected with creative thinking, particularly imagination, idea association, and adaptability. Some of the serendipitous characteristics of entrepreneurship may be feasible with experience learning (Jack & Anderson, 1999; Kirby, 2003).

As an emerging topic, entrepreneurship education continues to garner attention in academia and in business settings; therefore, it's critical that educators build models for experiential learning in this domain based on ongoing research. Teachers must examine and re-analyze their methods of education and develop new delivery methodologies based on active, engaged, and experiential learning, much like entrepreneurs do when solving issues. By reviewing best practices in experiential learning and adapting models created by exceptional educators in their field, my research will provide a new curriculum for entrepreneurship education that can be deployed and addresses active learning and teaching to create a meaningful learning experience inside and outside the classroom setting.

Scholars of entrepreneurship have looked into the characteristics that influence successful entrepreneurial endeavors in the workplace. Years of experience and educational degrees are two key predictors of effective, long-term adoption of entrepreneurial practices in the workplace (Lange et al., 2012). All teachers have advanced educational levels that mirror one of the indicators due to the nature of the teaching profession. Years of experience, the other factor, has not been researched to see if it links with an entrepreneurial attitude in instructors. According to Pihie et al. (2014), there is minimal research available to help school leaders identify teachers'

entrepreneurial potential. The results of this study will be used to establish the requirements for an effective instructor who teaches entrepreneurs.

The findings of this study will help program designers, administrators, students, and entrepreneurship educators to improve curriculum development and implementation for entrepreneurship students. The findings of this study could be used to assist entrepreneurship educators in identifying their personal teaching styles and educational philosophies as a result of their lived experiences and the impact such philosophies and styles have on the teaching-learning process. Experiential entrepreneurship education remains a significant topic among educators and in the corporate world, so educators developing models for experiential learning in this domain must perform ongoing research. Teachers, like entrepreneurs, must assess and re-analyze existing educational techniques and construct additional delivery methodologies based on active, engaged, and experiential learning. By reviewing best practices in experiential learning and adapting models developed by outstanding educators in their field based on their lived experiences, a new curriculum for entrepreneurship education can be implemented that addresses active learning and teaching to create a meaningful learning experience inside and outside the classroom setting.

### **Definition of Terms**

- Entrepreneurship - While the term "entrepreneur" refers to a person, the phrase "entrepreneurship" refers to the collective process of producing an idea, identifying a business opportunity, and putting the idea into action (Fueglistaller as cited in Lindner, 2018, p. 116).

- Experiential learning - According to Kolb (1984), this type of learning can be defined as "the process whereby knowledge is created through the transformation of experience" (p. 32).
- Experiential learning theory (ELT) - ELT is a theory developed by Kolb (1984) that discusses how students learn through a number of diverse situations. Various learning styles are dialectically opposed in order to increase general brain activation and promote transformative knowledge growth. ELT also covers the six EL concepts that will guide this research (Kolb, 1984).
- Entrepreneurship educator - a credentialed educator who teaches business topic courses in a high school context and who had real world entrepreneurial experience.
- Experiential education - a hands-on approach to entrepreneurship education that emphasizes problem-solving and design thinking (Val et al., 2017).
- Impact - The difference program designers make in students' lives because of the programs they conduct (Diem, 1997).
- Program designers - Instructional and educational faculty and administrators.
- Entrepreneur - A person who establishes a micro-enterprise and is responsible for its success.
- Entrepreneurship training - Provides prospective entrepreneurs with particular business skills such as how to start and operate a microbusiness.
- Learning outcomes - According to Azizi and Mahmoudi (2019), learning outcomes are "clear explanations of the knowledge, skills, abilities, values, and attitudes pupils are expected to learn by the end of the curriculum" (p. 32). Learning outcomes are what a learner should know, comprehend, or be able to demonstrate at the end of a

learning process; they encapsulate what a learner can now do that they couldn't previously (Azizi & Mahmoudi, 2019). The learner's learning outcomes explain the specific work that they have accomplished, as well as the knowledge, abilities, and attitudes that they have gained (Azizi & Mahmoudi, 2019).

- Traditional learning -\_Consist of classroom settings in which pupils are typically given with well-structured problems with clear answers that fluctuate little across time and context (Collins & Pratt, 2011).

### **Theoretical Framework**

Learning is a classroom teacher's primary priority; teachers, in fact, continue to learn and develop throughout their careers. Much of their learning comes through their experience in transmitting knowledge. Kolb (1984) stated, "Learning is the process through which knowledge is formed via the transformation of experience" (p. 38). Learning is not just a cognitive process, nor is it solely a behavioral process. Experiential learning is a technique of linking the cognitive and behavioral aspects of learning together (Kolb et al., 2001).

Human connection with the environment is the source of all knowledge. As a result, referring to the encounter of new knowledge as an experience (or learning event) is consistent with the reality that all content, whether made or not, must enter the human mind! That point of perception by the brain occurs as a result of some form of experience. People's learning styles are the result of their decisions in how they approach learning circumstances. They are not set characteristics, but rather stable states that can be changed based on the amount of learning necessary or the work at hand. The more a person works through a set of favored options, the more distinct their learning style becomes (Kolb, 1984).



The Constructivist learning approach and Kolb's experiential learning theory (1984) are both influential in this dissertation. The theoretical framework for this study is experiential learning theory. Experiential learning is a form of adult education that incorporates elements of pedagogical, andragogical, and transformational philosophies. Experiential learning, which meets the requirement to develop skills, traits, and competencies, is at the center of a social constructivist learning paradigm (Mueller et al., 2015).

Educators help learners as they work in a social situation to attain better levels of understanding through the process in experiential learning. This approach goes beyond simply teaching "about" entrepreneurship, which teaches the theory of entrepreneurship, to teaching "for" entrepreneurship, which prepares learners for entrepreneurship by developing entrepreneurial skills and competencies, or teaching "through" entrepreneurship, which encourages learners to learn by doing entrepreneurship (Hannon, 2005). Experiential learning is based on pragmatism and may be traced back to James (1907) and Dewey's pragmatist beliefs (1963). Kolb (1984) explained that the "philosophical basis supporting the primary role of personal experience in experiential learning" (p. 18) is referred to as *pragmatism*.

The American educational theorist John Dewey (1910) compared all education to all living as a process of experience. In 340 BC, Aristotle wrote, "For the things we have to learn before we can do them, we learn by doing them" (as cited in Dewey, 1910, p. 21). Kolb's (1984) experiential learning theory posits that people encounter real-life events, notice, and reflect on them, construct or alter concepts and theories, and then test them in a new setting: "Learning is the process by which knowledge is formed via the transformation of experience" (p. 35).

The theoretical framework is relevant to this research because it demonstrates how credentialed entrepreneurship educators' lived experiences can improve their teaching methods.

Work experience, for example, is a major determinant of one's ability to spot a potentially profitable business opportunity (Dhliwayo, 2008). The lived experiences create a unique understanding and perspective for the entrepreneur. Current knowledge of the sector, prior knowledge of markets, and prior knowledge of client problems all boost the chances of entrepreneurial recognition (Corbett, 2005). The lived experiences of entrepreneurs increase critical thinking and problem-solving skills in the workplace. According to Bechard and Gregoire (2005) and Heinonen and Poikkijoki (2006), entrepreneurial skills in the classroom can be defined as the ability to utilize instructional approaches that develop and enhance students' entrepreneurial knowledge.

Entrepreneurship educators' lived experiences can increase students' learning outcomes. This means that entrepreneurial education necessitates an innovative, action-oriented, and experiential-based teaching style as well as appropriate methods (Anderson & Jack, 2008; Hytti & O'Gorman, 2004; Kyro & Carrier, 2005). Entrepreneurship education allows for career planning, offers an entrepreneurial approach to assessing and addressing issues, and can be used to describe teaching and learning (Cooper et al., 2004; Fiet, 2001; Pittaway & Cope, 2007; Rae & Carswell, 2001; Steyaert & Katz, 2004).

Lessem claimed that "usually the entrepreneur learns through trial and error-in other words, through action and reflection" in his conclusion to experiential learning (as cited in Bird, 1995, p. 65). Boisot stated, "Learning by doing provides the ground for the creation of new entrepreneurial insights" (p. 66; as cited in Birley & MacMillan, 1997, p. 41). The goal of Kolb's experiential learning theory from 1984 was to comprehend how entrepreneurs learned from their real-life experiences. This study's theoretical framework provides the lens through which to

analyze how educators' lived experiences benefit entrepreneurs as they build new ventures and revitalize existing ones.

### **Research Questions**

1. How have the lived experiences of entrepreneurship educators influenced how they adapt their teaching practices?

- Which aspects of teaching are most likely to improve as a result of the teachers' lived experiences as entrepreneurs?

2. How do entrepreneurship instructors' incorporate their lived experiences into their teaching of entrepreneurship?

- How do the lived experiences of the teacher improve the students entrepreneurial or job skills?

### **Limitations**

The study's first limitation is that the findings of qualitative studies may not reflect all entrepreneurship educators' personal perspectives and experiences in the United States or around the world. The research is based on information gathered through interviews with entrepreneurship educators from high schools in the southeast United States. Therefore, the participants' strategic and entrepreneurial management training and education could induce bias. Teachers from private and charter schools were not included in the sample. The study's parameters were narrowed, and the outcomes were delimited as a result of this. The generalizability of the findings was limited by a possible bias due to the overrepresentation of one school district.

**Delimitations**

This section defines the scope of the research. Delimitations are systemic biases that researchers can control and may have an unfavorable impact on the research project (Price & Murnan, 2004). Entrepreneurship educators who have never owned a business are excluded from this study. Entrepreneurial educators from Southeast Louisiana who have owned and maintained a successful business in the last 10 years will be among the study's up to 10 with a minimum of 6 participants. Participants will be credentialed high school business content teachers. The demographic sample was constrained by limiting the interview survey to only entrepreneurial educators in Southeast Louisiana.

**Assumptions**

The presumption that these sources, whether academic journals, or other publications, have provided accurate information and are operating with good, unsolicited intent limits the data obtained from multiple sources. The semi-structured interview questions used to identify experiential learning methods and techniques were a trustworthy and valid method of doing so. Participants might indicate how they related their lived entrepreneurial experiences to classroom curricula by reflecting on their own experiences. The obvious impact of this new experiential and constructivist learning strategy for teaching entrepreneurship is that it will create a new form of innovative thinking in students and will help them improve their entrepreneurship abilities further. Since the proposed methodology is focused on experience learning, it is expected that it would improve the abilities students will need to be successful in future entrepreneurial ventures. Additionally, teachers are fully credentialed and are qualified to teach business content courses in the State of Louisiana. It is presumed that the study's participants, teachers, will give honest and forthright comments to the best of their ability during the interviews.

## **Organization of Study**

Today's educators play a critical role in providing their students with the tools they need to succeed in their future endeavors; this task necessitates a type of learning that improves students' skills and capabilities in a way that allows them to apply their knowledge outside of the classroom and excel in competitive work environments. Employers are looking for graduates with these work-ready abilities, as well as those who can add creativity and innovation to the workplace. Teachers use entrepreneurial education to foster creativity, innovation, and teamwork, while also providing students with a platform to recognize and address real-world challenges and opportunities, allowing them to build the skills they will need to succeed. Educators with entrepreneurship experience may bring a skill set that is sustainable and unmatched.

There will be five chapters in this research. The first chapter provides background information on experiential learning in order to gain a broad understanding of the subject. The topic addressed by this study and the purpose, research question, and significance of the study are all stated in the first chapter. The study's limits, delimitations, and assumptions are provided, as well as definitions of relevant terminology. An overview of the literature on (a) experiential learning theory and (b) entrepreneurship, as well as related variables, is offered in Chapter 2. The chapter opens with a study overview, then explains the setting, research topic, and theoretical framework. The chapter then examines experiential learning, entrepreneurship education, and entrepreneur lived experiences and teaching methods. Chapter 2 explains positionality. Finally, the study's organization is announced.

The research design for this study is outlined in Chapter 3, with a focus on approaches for accurately and ethically addressing the study's research topic. In addition to the research design,

the setting, sample, human subjects considerations, instrumentation, data collection process, data management strategies, and data analysis methodology are all covered at length in this chapter.

The findings of the study are presented in Chapter 4. Conclusions based on assessments of findings relating to each sub-category of the study's research topic are offered in Chapter 5. The responses to the research question for this study leading to conclusions, ramifications, and recommendations for further research will be presented in Chapter 5.

## Chapter 2: Literature Review

### Introduction

The purpose of this research is to ascertain how teachers enhance their students' educational experiences and how teachers may foster non-cognitive abilities such as autonomy, independence, and self-assurance that assist in entrepreneurial endeavors. The theoretical and foundational literature pertaining to five distinct knowledge domains of the dissertation is thoroughly reviewed in the literature review. The knowledge domains cover the following topics: (a) entrepreneurship education, (b) teaching methods, (c) experiential entrepreneurship education, (d) entrepreneurial educators, and (e) theories of entrepreneurship and experiential learning. In this qualitative phenomenology study, the aim is to investigate the perspective of entrepreneurial educators in Southeast Louisiana who work with students in grades 9 through 12 in relation to how their educational approaches have been influenced by their entrepreneurial experiences.

Entrepreneurship education (EE) can be seen from a variety of viewpoints, including "about," "for," "through," and "embedded" (Jamieson, 1984; Pittaway & Edwards, 2012; Robinson & Blenker, 2014). Although the focus of EE is typically on new venture formation, scholars recognize that EE has a broader scope and may be used to build an entrepreneurial attitude in students (Neck & Corbett, 2018). Wraae and Walmsley (2020) have pushed for a focus on one element of the "how" of EE. Since teachers bring their own opinions and views to the classroom, the function of the educator and the topic of pedagogy are inextricably linked (Peters, 1959; Wraae & Walmsley, 2020; Zappe et al., 2013).

In their journal article, Wraae and Walmsley (2020) posed the following research question: "How does the entrepreneurship educator perceive their role in entrepreneurship

education, and how is this role influenced by their immediate educational context?" The authors conducted 11 interviews with entrepreneurship educators from five Danish universities of applied sciences teaching entrepreneurship. Five of the participants did have a business-related background, while the remaining six instructors did not. All participants taught at least one course of entrepreneurship: introductory or advanced. By attempting to understand the role of the entrepreneurship educator from their own perspective and using Weber's interpretive Verstehen tradition as a guide, Wraae and Walmsley's research adopted an interpretive approach.

Max Weber created interpretive sociology, a method that emphasizes the significance of meaning and action while examining social trends and issues. Weber's interpretive Verstehen tradition recognizes that humans construct social reality by imbuing the events around them with meaning (Burr, 2003). Similarly, Creswell and Creswell (2018) argued that social constructivists share a belief that people always seek to make sense of the environment around them. The constructivist or social constructivist approach, common in qualitative research, is consistent with an interpretive methodology (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

Some of the findings of Wraae and Walmsley's (2020) inquiry included the observation that entrepreneurship educators who were asked to describe their perception of their job in connection to the student generally concurred that it included a variety of responsibilities, such as being a supervisor, coach, and mentor, as well as having an overall assessment of being a knowledge facilitator. Wraae and Walmsley agreed that some people are drawn to teaching entrepreneurship because of its poorly defined and diversified nature.

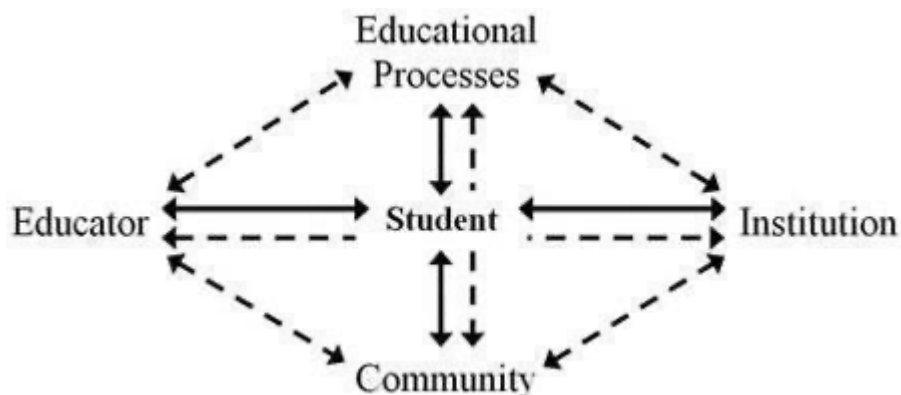
Jones and Matlay (2011) conducted a study that began by reviewing the main issues in regard to the job of the entrepreneurship educator and their place within the EE environment, Jones and Matlay found that entrepreneurship educators saw their role as a facilitator of learning



for their students. This role encompassed a wide variety of responsibilities, from supervising and coaching to mentoring and advising. Educators of entrepreneurship have come to appreciate the field in part because it is challenging to define. Jones and Matlay (2011) also investigated entrepreneurship educators' perspectives of their own duties as entrepreneurship educators and their location within the EE environment.

### Figure 1

#### *Conceptual Framework for Describing Entrepreneurship Education*



Jones and Matlay (2011) proposed that entrepreneurship education can be viewed through their conceptual framework that consists of 10 closely intertwined systems. Those systems are (a) student ↔ educator; (b) student ↔ educational processes; (c) student ↔ institution; (d) student ↔ community; (e) educator ↔ educational processes; (f) educator ↔ institution; (g) educator ↔ community; (h) educational processes ↔ institution; (i) educational processes ↔ community; and (j) the institution ↔ community (see Figure 1). The research conducted by Jones and Matlays led to the formation of four significant hypotheses and conclusions. The first hypothesis is that of the student, in which case the learning outcomes are centered on the student's freedom of choice. There is an option for students to choose how, when,

and where they will engage in their educational pursuits. The second hypothesis is the composition of educators in the field of entrepreneurship and the growing diversity of those educators. The varied educational experiences and individualized pedagogical approaches of the educators are revealed through their lived experiences. Jones and Matlays argued that further study and understanding of the relationships between the lived experiences of educators, the ways in which that experience influences their teaching philosophies, and the educational processes that students are exposed to is necessary. Jones and Matlay proposed that their conceptual framework can be of assistance in this endeavor to better understand this vital connection. The third hypothesis is having an understanding of the interaction between educators of entrepreneurship and the institutions they attend. According to Jones and Matlay (2011), it is critical for educators to study the unsuccessful initiatives and programs in order to gain knowledge from those experiences. A deeper comprehension can be attained through an examination of the interconnectedness of the systems of entrepreneurship education, which is facilitated by the conceptual framework they propose. The fourth and final hypothesis is an awareness of the connections that exist between our local communities and the students in those communities. According to Jones and Matlay, the most effective approach to entrepreneurship education is the unique set of dialogic relations as outlined within their conceptual framework: "In this regard, a variety of dialogic relationships emerge, with the educator's connection to his or her community being balanced against the positioning and purpose of their institutions and the different requirements of their students" (p. 701).

This dissertation literature review examines entrepreneurship education, teaching methodologies, experiential entrepreneurship education, entrepreneurial educators and theories of experiential learning to gain insight into how the lived experience of educators impacts the

outcomes of student learning. The research investigates the prevalent K–12 pedagogical technique. The lived experiences of entrepreneurship educators and their influence on how they introduced entrepreneurship education were also influential in this research. This literature review argues that two factors influence the learning outcomes of entrepreneurs: (a) access to an entrepreneur educator with entrepreneurship experience and (b) learning entrepreneurship through experience. Jones and Matlay (2011) support this dissertation study by helping the researcher understand the relationship between the educator, the environment, the community, the student, and the institution. Understanding the relationship between all the systems can enable the researcher to understand how impactful an experienced entrepreneur educator can be in the classroom.

### **Entrepreneurship Education**

This section on EE will begin with a discussion of the historical context and characteristics of this type of education, followed by a definition of the term. Following the definition of EE are the classroom benefits of EE and the factors that contributed to its development. The final section of EE will conclude with a review of teaching methods and the overall effectiveness of EE.

Over the last three decades, entrepreneurship has emerged as possibly the most powerful economic force the world has ever seen (Raposo & Do Paco, 2011) . Due to the rising interest in the entrepreneur's role in the economy, a significant body of study has been conducted in an attempt to uncover the characteristics that encourage entrepreneurship (Emmanuel, 2002). Entrepreneurship, according to Emmanuel (2002), is defined as the ability to conceive an investment opportunity, construct a venture based on it, and manage it efficiently for social good or profit. This traditional perspective views entrepreneurship as a result, as the creation of

commercially valuable items and businesses. Entrepreneurship education, according to Raposo and Paco (2011), offers four benefits. Individuals first feel more in control, independent, and confident as a result of it. Second, education makes people aware of a variety of work opportunities. Third, education offers knowledge that may be leveraged to develop new business chances. Finally, education broadens people's horizons, improving their ability to perceive opportunities. There has been a surge of EE initiatives, courses, programs that have emerged in undergraduate, graduate, and high schools worldwide.

Entrepreneurship education has grown expeditiously and impressively since the 1950s (Solomon & Fernald, 1991). Over time entrepreneurship has become a key component of business management education in secondary and higher education (Jones & English, 2004). Entrepreneurship has been defined and analyzed by academics, along with how it influences regional, national, and international economies. According to Hood and Young (1993), EE is a practice that instructs participants on how to start a profitable business. At the same time, others describe entrepreneurship education as a means for enhancing innovation and creativity skills (Gottlieb & Ross, 1997). Bechard and Toulouse (1998) defined entrepreneurship education as a program that enhances participants' basic knowledge about start-ups and the skill to manage them. However, Kourilsky (1995) suggested that entrepreneurship education is recognized as education that identifies business opportunities, strategic resource allocation, and business creation. Scholars such as Davidson (2004) suggested that entrepreneurship education is about teaching participants how to explore opportunities and the importance of identifying which opportunities to explore. According to Gottlieb and Ross (1997), EE enhances the skills of innovation and creativity. Often, EE is seen as an education that teaches about business opportunity identification, resource allocation, and new business ventures.

EE strives to inspire people, especially young people, to be responsible, ambitious individuals who become entrepreneurs or entrepreneurial thinkers who contribute to long-term community sustainability and economic progress (Raoso & do Paco, 2011). Many scholars such as Kourilsky (1995) and Raoso and do Paco (2011) have concluded that EE is a unique phenomenon that can educate participants on a variety of skills and approaches to managing and starting a business. EE, according to Esmi et al. (2015), is a systematic, deliberate, and goal-oriented approach of creatively training non-entrepreneurs with critical potential. EE, in actuality, is a process that involves the transfer of entrepreneurship-related knowledge and information, as well as the improvement, development, and enhancement of non-entrepreneurs' attitudes, skills, and talents (Esmi et al., 2015). Furthermore, it shapes students' attitudes and values in order to foster an entrepreneurial culture.

There is no one-size-fits-all approach to EE. An examination of the literature on entrepreneurship reveals a shift in the teaching of entrepreneurship from traditional approaches to current methods focused on *active learning*. For this study we will adopt Esmi et al.'s (2015) definition of entrepreneurship education as a systematic, deliberate, and goal-oriented process by which non-entrepreneurs with the essential potential are creatively instructed.

According to Gatlin (as cited in Smith, 2001), small businesses are *the engine of the economy*. Based on a 10-year study, Gatlin noted that 500 of the nation's largest corporations cut half a million jobs while small businesses added 10 million jobs. Educators should include entrepreneurship in their curriculums as part of Gatlin's "Thank goodness for small businesses" statement (as cited in Smith, 2001). Entrepreneurs are risk-takers with the freedom to own and enjoy such risks (Blasingame, 2002). Gatlin believed that a successful small business "is built on

perseverance, commitment, and plain old hard work" (as cited in Smith, p. 32). He believed that successful businesses benefit us all directly.

According to McGrew et al. (2001), the majority of studies have shown that high school students want to own their own businesses. One study based on a Gallop Poll survey found that 70% of high school students expressed an interest in becoming entrepreneurs (Nelton, 1995). Many high school students are interested in learning more about the steps to starting and running a viable business. Students' interest in small businesses and the economic impact of these businesses is causing many secondary schools in the United States to add entrepreneurship education to their business education curriculum (McGrew et al., 2001).

Organizations such as the Kaufman Center for Entrepreneurial Leadership provide support, educational materials, seminars, and workshops for educators and entrepreneurs. Additionally, small business development centers and chambers of commerce offer assistance to teachers and entrepreneurs. This research supports my research because it argues the benefits and factors that contribute to entrepreneurship education. It also argues that secondary school students are interested in learning about entrepreneurship. My study aims to examine the benefits or lack thereof on how experienced entrepreneurship educators' teaching practices can improve entrepreneurship education.

Entrepreneurship education is becoming a more prominent research field in recent years (Shane & Venkataraman, 2000). The globe has seen a remarkable expansion in entrepreneurship education over the last three decades. The belief that education is a prerequisite for the development of innovative entrepreneurship and capacity (Vanevenhoven & Liguori, 2013; Walter & Block, 2015) has contributed to the growth of entrepreneurship education. In addition, Esmi et al. (2015) stated that government policies have a direct impact on the growth of EE. A

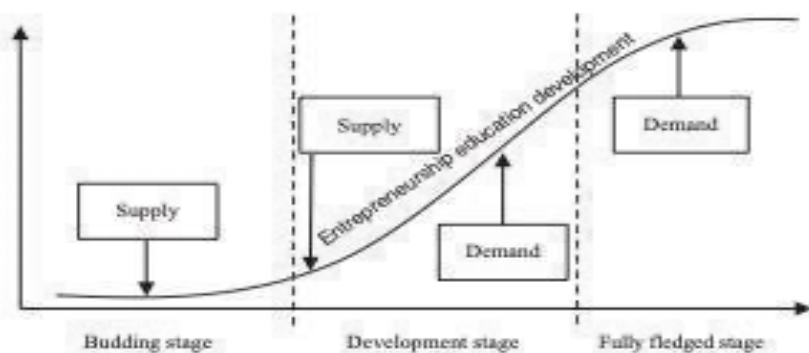
course on EE has been prioritized by a number of universities (Esmi et al., 2015). A significant number of research studies have been undertaken so far on the elements that influence the development of EE. Studies that examine the subject have identified causes that include overall economic development or economic transition, governments, and employment pressure (Carree et al., 2002; Harrington & Maysami, 2015; Kozlinska, 2011; Meng & Huang, 2015; Rideout & Gray, 2013).

In their paper, Lin and Xu (2017) aim to identify the elements that influence the growth of EE and attempt to construct a theoretical framework for entrepreneurship education development in China. This dissertation literature review has multiple points of support from Lin and Xu. Their findings may aid teachers and entrepreneurial educators to recognize the varying phases of the entrepreneurial process and their inter-relation. According to the authors, different stages in the development of entrepreneurship education demand variables that play a different role. The development of EE was primarily driven by supply-side variables, such as the development of academic research on the subject, from 2000 to 2008 – that is, during its infancy. In 2002, the Ministry of Education in China started entrepreneurship education pilot initiatives to foster the development of the field. Since 2009, significant changes in the supply and demand aspects in the growth of EE have occurred. The China federal government has implemented a series of initiatives to encourage entrepreneurship and business schools to make significant academic progress in the sector. There is a great demand for entrepreneurship education because of the low employment rates of college and university students and the low employment rate of migrant workers returning home due to sluggishness in the export-oriented economy (Lin & Xu, 2017).

According to Lin and Xu (2017), there are two variables that influence the development of entrepreneurship education in a typical developing country like China: (a) supply and (b) demand. Lin and Xu's study fills a gap in the literature by investigating the growth of EE in low-income nations. Researchers in developing nations can use this study's findings to zero in on the factors that motivate students to pursue an education in entrepreneurship and then implement policies that will have the greatest impact on that field in their own country. The Chinese government communicates its own expectations concerning the market by enacting policies that have an effect on the performance of the market. It is common for supply factors to have a greater influence than demand factors. This is due to the fact that the supply side of the equation in the growth of entrepreneurship education in China has a greater number of factors than the demand side. This Lin and Xu research adds to the body of knowledge on entrepreneurship education; they created a theoretical framework, see Figure 2, for the elements that influence the growth of entrepreneurship education in China, a developing country (Lin & Xu, 2017).

## Figure 2

*Lin & Xu Theoretical Framework for Entrepreneurship Education Development*





According to Dadoo (1993), the viewpoint of development economics suggests that supply-side factors are likely to play a more significant position in developing countries than demand-side factors do in developed countries. In economies that are still in the process of developing, the market frequently is unable to effectively allocate adequate resources to certain fields. Because of this, a great number of developing nations engage in extensive national intervention through centralized economic planning and control. Their goal is to prevent the adverse effects of market failure on economic development and, as a result, to guarantee that the economy grows in a healthy way (Shi & Ding, 1986). In point of fact, it is necessary to conduct an investigation into the various roles played by various aspects of the supply and demand dynamics. The findings of this study shed light on the necessity of economic policies on entrepreneurship education that reflect the needs of the nation as a whole. The population of the schools in this dissertation represent a low-income community. If a study of the same scale is performed in the United States, the results from Lin and Xu (2017) could provide insight into the effects of an economic policy that's in favor of entrepreneurship education. The economy, unemployment, and worker retention might all benefit from a policy reform and realignment between the two pillars: entrepreneurship education and economics.

In the United States, career-focused education programs and teaching methods are increasingly emphasizing workplace preparedness for the 21st century. Rodriguez and Lieber (2020) conducted a study in two big public high schools in Miami, Florida, with students in the 10th, 11th, and 12th grades. In order to conduct this research, Rodriguez and Lieber made use of Program X, which provides a number of different entrepreneurship classes that are based on *project based learning* and innovative lean startup principles and is housed on an online, interactive platform. Project-based learning is a teaching method used in these programs to

develop a comprehensive, noncognitive skill set that is related to an entrepreneurial attitude (Rodriguez & Lieber, 2020). All students in a treatment group were given international business and finance or digital media design and entrepreneurship courses. The comparison group were given information technology, digital media, and legal studies courses. Students enrolled in entrepreneurship classes exhibited statistically significant improvements in entrepreneurial mentality, communication and teamwork, opportunity awareness, critical thinking, and problem-solving skills. This research sets the door for future in-depth studies on the relationship between career-focused education and noncognitive skills, and it implies that entrepreneurial education can help build noncognitive skills.

The schools in Miami-Dade County were chosen to guarantee that admission policies and student body composition were identical. The final study sample included 171 10th-grade students (38 of whom received treatment), 72 11th-grade students (27 of whom received treatment), and 26 12th-grade students (12 who received treatment). There were 269 students in the study, with 77 in the treatment group. To accurately analyze the intervention, Rodriguez and Lieber (2020) relied on instructors who were educated and using project-based learning and lean start-up projects, new pedagogy, and curriculum for their population. In order to determine if an in-school entrepreneurship education intervention based on PBL and lean start-up concepts is linked to improvements in entrepreneurial mentality and career orientation, researchers used a quasi-experimental technique. The authors found that there was a statistically significant difference in the average entrepreneurial mindset of students who received the intervention. This difference went in the direction that was hypothesized, which is that exposure to an entrepreneurship program (compared to non-exposure) is related to students' development of an entrepreneurial mindset. When controlling for their pre-entrepreneurial mindset score and

important observable factors, students in the intervention sample increased their overall post entrepreneurial mentality by 2.85 percentage points compared to those who did not get the intervention (p.05). In terms of specific entrepreneurial mindset domains, communication and collaboration (3.88 percentage points, p.05), opportunity recognition (3.26 percentage points, p.05), and critical thinking and problem-solving (3.25 percentage points, p.05) were estimated to be related to the intervention in the primary hypothesis.

To test the impact of an education intervention on mentality, this study used a validated measure of a constellation of noncognitive skills linked with an entrepreneurial mindset. As a consequence of the validated measure of the constellation of noncognitive skills, the authors observed high levels of student participation in the intervention classes during their site visits to both schools. This participation was observed during both peer-to-peer interactions and while the students presented their ideas in front of the entire class. This study lends support to this dissertation study by describing the concept of project-based learning as well as the development of non-cognitive skills within the context of EE. My research will investigate the effectiveness of various teaching methods utilized by entrepreneurship educators with experience in business management.

Entrepreneurial activity is both an indication of growth and an instrument of social development in any location (Rasmussen & Sorheim 2006; Wong et al., 2005). Beyond the creation of the entrepreneurial ecosystem, incubation, and funding, entrepreneurship's hegemony has taken on new dimensions. It entails instilling an entrepreneurial mindset in graduates through the traditional higher education system (Ho et al., 2018; Kuratko, 2005). A significant amount of research shows that EE positively impacts graduates' decision to pursue entrepreneurial careers (Galloway & Brown 2002; Henry et al., 2005a, b; Kolvereid & Moen 1997; Nabi et al., 2006).

Mukesh et al.'s (2020) study employed a randomized experimental pre-and-post-tests design with treatment and control groups. The primary objective of the research was to create a new instructional method for EE. One researcher in the study had nine years of experience teaching entrepreneurship, and he or she worked with both the treatment and control groups, as well as coached the treatment group's small business operations. Mukesh et al. argued that when it comes to the impact of EE on improving entrepreneurial intent, the empirical evidence shows that it has a beneficial impact. Mukesh et al.'s findings show that EE is an effective tool for entrepreneurship development. In this regard, the study offered a confirmation on the positive impact of EE on entrepreneurial self-efficacy and entrepreneurial intention and a novel methodological strategy for investigating various pedagogic approaches. The findings demonstrate that EE taught in any form, whether in a standard classroom or through an action learning approach, has a significant impact on entrepreneurial self-efficacy and intention. This necessitates an examination of numerous pedagogical approaches and their effectiveness in order to determine the best approach (Nabi et al., 2017). The findings of this study provided ample support for promoting EE and pedagogic techniques to cultivate a favorable entrepreneurial mindset, confidence, and competency in order to pursue a successful entrepreneurial career (Mukesh et al., 2020).

Mukesh et al., (2020) concluded that action-embedded EE will be more effective than theoretical classroom-centric learning since entrepreneurial learning is more pragmatic. Mukesh et al's., study did not predict the efficacy of EE and pedagogic practice, but it did provide empirical evidence that it is likely to occur.

This section on entrepreneurship education elaborates on the development and evolution of the field of entrepreneurship education as well as the advantages, characteristics, pedagogical

methods, and general efficacy of this field of study. The literature discussed in this section gives support to the current investigation by demonstrating the potential of EE as a tool for promoting the growth of entrepreneurial development. It provides the context necessary to comprehend the significance and benefits of EE improvement based on the real-world experiences of educators with business management expertise.

### **Teaching Methods**

Depending on the learning objectives, there are both practical courses designed to develop students' entrepreneurial skills through experiential learning and more theoretical courses designed to improve students' ability to comprehend, reflect on, and challenge current entrepreneurship dogmas. According to the findings of a study conducted by Solomon et al. (2002), the three most common methods for teaching students about entrepreneurship are (a) business plan development, (b) the use of case studies, and (c) lectures. Lee & Wong (2007) and Hytti and O'Gorman (2004) argued from a different perspective from other scholars that there are three approaches to entrepreneurship education, (a) "old war stories, (b) case studies, and the (c) planning approach" (p. 14) to provide entrepreneurship teaching strategies depending on its outcomes. This suggests that there may be multiple correct methods of teaching entrepreneurship.

If the purpose of education is to broaden students' understanding of what it means to be an entrepreneur, then the most effective way to achieve the desired result and fulfill the purpose of education is to disseminate information through public channels such as the media, seminars, and lectures (Ahmad & Baharun, 2004). These public channels are efficient in terms of disseminating relevant information to a larger number of individuals in less time than would normally be required. However, providing education and training that enables individuals to

participate directly in the entrepreneurial process, such as work experience, is the best way to equip individuals with entrepreneurial skills that are directly applicable to work if the goal is to equip individuals with skills that can be applied to work directly (Ahmad & Baharun, 2004). Ahmad & Baharun (2004) also argued that if the purpose of the education is to equip students with the skills necessary to operate their own businesses, the method that has proven to be the most successful is one that encourages experimentation through the practice of entrepreneurship in a safe setting. This can be accomplished, for example, through business simulation or role playing (Ahmad & Baharun, 2004). It appears that the majority of authors classify teaching methods into two categories: *traditional methods* (consisting of standard lectures) and *innovation methods* (which are more action-oriented), also known as *passive methods* and *active methods*, respectively (Mwasalwiba, 2010). Active methods, according to Bennett (2006), are ones in which the teacher facilitates learning rather than controls and implements strategies that promote students' self-discovery. Tan and Ng (2006) also emphasized (a) problem-oriented learning, (b) active learning, and (c) action learning in entrepreneurial education. According to Mojalalchubql et al. (2011), entrepreneurship teaching methods include (a) problem solving, (b) active training methods, and (c) practical learning activities, as well as giving creativity possibilities, generating new ideas, and hosting seminars and specialized workshops. Kowsari and Norouzzadeh (2009) also evaluated teaching approaches that were from real-life and absorbed learning environments, group work, participation in learning, action research, and a permanent and constant interaction with entrepreneurs.

The three most common instructional approaches are (a) lectures, (b) case studies, and (c) group discussions. These tactics are identical to those employed in other business-related courses, which, according to Bennett (2006), are passive and less successful at influencing

entrepreneurial characteristics. Fiet (2001) emphasized that teachers rely on lecture-based methods since they are simple to implement and need fewer resources. Other, less popular ways include (a) business/computer or gaming simulations, (b) video and filmmaking, (c) role models or guest speakers, (d) the preparation of a company plan, and (e) project works. This last set of strategies is known as "active" and is deemed more suitable for fostering entrepreneurial characteristics in participants (Mwasalwiba, 2010). Instead of introducing concepts and procedures as group projects, developing business plans, practical experience in manufacturing and selling products and services, and learning from mistakes, Oyelola (2013) advocated for process-oriented, problem-based teaching. The most important methods of teaching entrepreneurship, according to Arasti et al. (2012), are (a) group projects, (b) case studies, (c) individual projects, (d) developing a new investment project, (e) problem solving, (f) guiding young entrepreneurs by supporting them in their projects, (g) training in investment, (h) group discussion, (i) official speeches, (j) interviewing entrepreneurs, (k) simulations, and (l) scientific visits.

Entrepreneurship camps, according to Torben (2010), are teaching methods. Potter (2008) emphasized (a) business planning, (b) case studies, (c) students' starting businesses, (d) business games, (e) student entrepreneurs' teams and networks, (f) internships in small businesses, (g) feasibility studies, (h) communication training, (i) getting advice in starting small businesses, (j) distance education, and (k) external cooperation, and offers business simulations, games, real-world analysis and discussion, group work, mentoring, and networking (common experience). Case studies, business planning, talks, research projects, computer simulations, entrepreneurship, site visits, and class practice are also highlighted by Solomon (2007).

Furthermore, according to Yadollahi & Mirarbrazi (2009), practical training approaches such as workshops, seminars, interviews, visiting entrepreneurs, and speeches were highlighted.

Since there is a lack of knowledge about how the lived experience of entrepreneur educators influences selection of teaching methods and associated student learning outcomes, my research will be useful for assessing how entrepreneurial education curricula are developed and implemented by entrepreneur educators with business management experience. Educational leaders and curriculum designers can decide which teaching methodologies are more effective by examining the lived experiences of educators and how those experiences have affected their lessons. A goal of the current research is to understand the lived experiences of entrepreneurial educators in order to determine which teaching methods are effective.

Due to the constructivist core, which encourages students to move beyond task-based learning and cultivate their communication skills in real-world scenarios, the Jones and English (2004) argued that an action-oriented approach to experiential learning is preferable to more traditional types of education. Jones and English (2004) explored a more contemporary approach to entrepreneurship education and its teaching strategies. Their study confirmed that action-oriented teaching approaches are an effective method. Since this dissertation study relies heavily on the action-oriented pedagogy that encourages learning through doing, Jones and English's study, supports action-oriented teaching methods because they are the most compatible with experiential learning approaches.

Kourilsky (1995) divided curriculum components into three categories: (a) opportunity recognition, (b) the mobilization and commitment of resources, and (c) the creation of a functioning business organization. Opportunity recognition entails the identification of unmet market needs and the conception of ideas for services or products that address those needs.



Opportunity recognition requires market observation, customer insight, invention, and innovation as well as a willingness to take risks. Resource management requires the ability to attract outside investment. Financing, marketing, and management skills are required for the establishment of a business organization to provide the product or service. Entrepreneurial teaching methods, according to Jones and English (2004), should be conducted in a new learning environment. Essentially, an action-oriented teaching approach that promotes experiential learning, problem-solving, project-based learning, creativity, and peer review. The purpose of the three categories proposed by Kourilsky (1995) to teach the skills required to launch a new business in an action-oriented manner Noll's (1993) approach was action oriented and focused on the behavioral characteristics of entrepreneurs; this method is applicable to all forms of entrepreneurial endeavors, including those in the private, public, and non-profit sectors. First, learn to generate ideas by identifying business opportunities, researching customer insights, conducting a self-evaluation of personal creativity, conducting a feasibility study, and identifying a variety of business entry strategies. Second, prepare to launch a business by assessing personal resources and financial status, conducting research and evaluating the risks associated with launching a business, writing a working business plan, and approaching others for money and other resources. Finally, construct a viable business by mastering resource allocation, employing a variety of marketing strategies, and managing finances and personnel.

This dissertation study will examine the strategies used by Southeast Louisiana's entrepreneurial educators to teach entrepreneurship effectively. This research aims to identify the various ways to teach high school students about entrepreneurship by sharing the real-world experiences of successful entrepreneurs. This study supports action oriented or active learning as a teaching method that aligns with the experiential learning paradigm.

### *Active Learning*

Active learning has been used in classrooms to help students become more involved in the learning process. Presentations and case studies, as well as simulations, debates, and role-plays, are common types of active learning activities. In the traditional sense, these tactics are usually used in conjunction with classroom lectures (Wurdinger & Rudolph, 2009). Active learning as a defined teaching methodology can be traced back to John Dewey's early publications (1916-1997). Dewey believed that learning requires pupils to take an active role in the process by comparing their thoughts to reality. In the early 1900s, his writings laid the theoretical groundwork for active learning. However, it was not until Bonwell and Eison's (1991) book, *Active Learning: Creating Excitement in the Classroom*, that the literature on this issue began to emerge, as they not only identified specific tactics but also demonstrated how to use them in the classroom. Other books also were published in the 1990s (Harmin, 1994; Meyers & Jones, 1993). Meyers and Jones' (1993) book was a seminal study that explained how to incorporate small-group discussion, cooperative projects, simulations, role-plays, and case studies into college lectures. Harmin's (1994) handbook for teachers was also an important book. The goal of these and other publications was to develop a holistic approach to teaching by implementing active-learning tactics that boost student motivation and self-esteem (Wurdinger & Rudolph, 2009). Bransford, Brown, and Cocking wrote, "When students are actively involved in the learning process, they not only understand more complicated topics but can transfer their learning from one problem-solving setting to another," (cited in Wurdinger & Rudolph, p. 120, 2009). Fink (2003) defined active learning as a "combination of experience and reflection," expanding on more traditional definitions (p. 82). His viewpoint is more in line with experiential learning teaching methods, in which students may be required to leave the classroom in order to

gain hands-on experience. Fink's purpose, whether it's a debate or a role-play, is to get students talking about the course topic and then have them reflect on how they might apply it in real-life settings. The usefulness of active and experiential learning is now well documented by a large body of research. Incorporating these tactics in the classroom necessitates the instructor relinquishing some control in order to enable a classroom atmosphere in which students can freely express their thoughts, resulting in intriguing and surprising debate. As a result, students become more actively involved in the learning process, criticizing each other's ideas and reflecting critically on their feelings.

There are many ways in which teachers can incorporate "experiential" teaching methods into a classroom setting. This following section discusses three main types of problem-based or project-based learning: (a) classroom exercises, (b) problem based, and (c) project-based learning. Using a constructivist perspective, students learn best by doing, so it's crucial to comprehend and investigate teaching strategies.

### ***Classroom Exercises***

Educators working with adults have tried a wide range of innovative approaches to activities designed to engage students' bodies, emotions, and social connections in addition to their minds. One such instance is simulations: For instance, you could assign each member of the group a distinct character with their own goals, backstory, and set of tools, and then give everyone in the group a task that requires them to collaborate with one another to succeed. It's not hard to find books on icebreakers and instructional games like *Games Trainers Play* by Scannell and Newstrom (1980) or Renner's (1994) *The Art of Teaching Adults*. Interpersonal skills can be honed through role play by, for instance, having partners enact scenarios to test out different ways of dealing with a problem, or by making up a made-up situation to see what

happens if certain steps are taken. Adult education programs have begun using popular theater techniques as a means of cultural intervention and individual empowerment (Prentki & Selman, 2000). Adventure education has been adapted by borrowing its use of brief, physically demanding team problem-solving activities. The goal of these so-called "experiential" classroom activities is to encourage students' imagination and wholehearted participation by placing them in novel circumstances.

### ***Problem Based Learning***

The essence of problem-based learning is developing solutions based on a focused and in-depth analysis of a specific problem or issue. Learners can “work cooperatively, apply their informal and formal prior knowledge, engage in constructivism, and enhance their self-directed learning skills” as a result of this (Schmidt et al., 2007, p. 94). This educational approach integrates curriculum and training around situational difficulties, allowing students to absorb and apply information from a variety of disciplines to come up with the best logical solution. As they conduct their research experiments and identify solutions to the problem, students gain a broad range of practical skills while working with teachers who act as cognitive coaches (Major & Mulvihill, 2018).

Coherence and relevance enhance when curriculum is developed from the learner's experience, and learning is understood as producing rather than receiving (Wurdinger & Rudolph, 2009). Inquiry-based learning is similar to problem-based learning, but it varies in that it allows students to choose their own issues to solve or questions to answer (Igo et al., 2008). This system, also known as *discovery-learning*, was developed by cognitive psychologist Jerome Bruner as a response to traditional memory teaching methods. It strongly relies on components of self-directed learning (Kirschner et al., 2006). Since its origin, the use of pure discovery

learning, in which students get little or no instructor direction, has decreased as new insights into how the brain learns and stores knowledge have emerged.

Some key points about the educational effectiveness of problem-based learning follow. Learning improves when a student's experience is structured and guided by an instructor and when the learner applies problem-solving techniques learnt from earlier experiences while taking on new problems or offered through other means (Hmelo-Silver et al., 2007). When instructors or facilitators utilize tactics like task structuring, modeling, coaching, hinting, probing, paraphrasing, and redirecting to help students categorize and store knowledge in long-term memory, learning improves (Hmelo-Silver et al., 2007). Periods of reflection included into the curriculum help students to introduce and retain material in their working memory (Sweller, 2004).

### ***Project-Based Learning***

According to Pearlman's (2009) research, students who are best prepared to face the challenges of the rapidly changing world of technology will need to be skilled in learning and thinking, have the social skills necessary to form a supportive network, and have a sufficient resource base to compete in the future. Students who design projects based on their own interests and learning styles are challenged and inspired by the project-based teaching technique, which results in meaningful learning experiences. Railsback (2002) wrote, "Students become invested in their learning outcomes because these projects are active rather than passive; they are interesting and relevant to the students; they allow for autonomy and self-directed learning; they improve communication skills, and they raise motivation to learn" (p. 22). Many experts, including Ron Newell, co-director of EdVisions, the Buck Institute for Education, and Wurdinger Haar, Hugg, and Bezon, concurred that project-based learning prioritizes student-

centered learning above teacher-directed learning. Students create projects that could be used in the future. As a result, this teaching style takes longer than traditional methods of learning, such as the lecture format, because students may have to complete the assignment numerous times before they are satisfied. This is a crucial notion for educators to grasp before implementing this style of learning in their classrooms, as it necessitates active and involved engagement from both the student and the teacher. Cornell and Clarke (1999) discovered that students who participated in project-based learning reported a higher level of involvement than students who participated in other types of learning. This conclusion was reached based on the findings that project-based structures provided a platform for collaborative chances with classmates, a self-directed learning environment, and a forum for students to discover and grow abilities while working at their own speed and learning style (Cornell & Clarke, 1999).

### **Experiential Entrepreneurial Education**

Academic groups have begun to place a greater emphasis on entrepreneurship education to reinvigorate entrepreneurial energy. Dobson et al. (2017) conducted a study with a total of 27 participants from a small liberal arts university in New England who took an introduction to entrepreneurship course. The class was part of an entrepreneurship minor that was offered to all students at the university. The majority of the students in this class are from management disciplines, with the remainder coming from a variety of non-management fields. Students enroll in the course for various reasons; some wish to become entrepreneurs, but the majority are interested in learning more about it. Dobson et al. were motivated to conduct this study by a concern shared by the great bulk of the entrepreneurship literature: that entrepreneurial education has no significant impact on entrepreneurial activity (Bae et al., 2014). The data show that, while only attitudes were related to intentions at the start of the semester, by mid-semester, both

subjective norms and perceived behavioral control were strongly correlated with entrepreneurial intentions (Azjen & Fishbein, 1980, 2005; Fishbein et al., 2007). Entrepreneurial education based on Dobson et al.'s (2017) findings can have a profound impact on students' intentions once exposed to effective curriculum. Additional research to determine the effectiveness of providing entrepreneurial education to participants by an educator who has adequate entrepreneurship experience is required. Dobson et al.'s (2017) study supported this dissertation by demonstrating that, when students have access to an effective curriculum, entrepreneurship education can have a significant impact on their entrepreneurial intentions.

A study by Malach and Malach (2014) supported this dissertation by confirming the benefits of experiential entrepreneurial education. Experiential education is used to provide students with both concrete and intangible learning opportunities (Kuratko, 2005; McCrea, 2010). The goal of the study by Malach and Malach emphasized the importance of delivering meaningful content centered on a range of traditional management disciplines as they pertain to start-ups, and to highlight the complex challenges faced by entrepreneurs. The goal was to gain students insight into pursuing a career as an entrepreneur. Entrepreneurship educators appear to have a different perspective on business than instructors of other sorts of business courses. The abilities and expertise required to comprehend difficulties relating to company entry appear to be distinct from those required to comprehend the administration of an ongoing business entity (Gartner & Vesper, 1994).

In the Context of Experiential Entrepreneurship Education, a Start Your Own Business experiential assignment centered on entrepreneurial qualities, opportunity identification, opportunity appraisal, and small business operations, students will gain knowledge and insight into the characteristics of entrepreneurs and the establishment of new businesses (Malach &

Malach, 2014). The Start Your Own Business Assignment culminates the course's tangible lessons on business from an entrepreneurial perspective and experience learning relating to entrepreneurial aptitudes and attitudes. Students benefit from the experiential learning in the *Start Your Own Business Assignment*, according to course evaluations, group presentations, and student conversations with the instructor. In comparison to the prior analyses conducted by Dobson et al. (2017), which inquired into the experiential approach's potential to increase perceived behavioral control over time, the between-group comparison reveals that their experiential approach resulted in significant increases in perceived behavioral control as compared to a conventional, theory-laden approach.

Arpianien and Kurczewska (2017) conducted an ethnographic longitudinal study titled learning risk-taking and coping with uncertainty through experiential team-based entrepreneurship education. This study examines how students' perceptions of risk-taking and coping with uncertainty change as a result of being exposed to experiential entrepreneurship education. The authors wanted to understand the dynamics of entrepreneurial thinking among students who were faced with risk and uncertainty while working on entrepreneurial projects in groups. Arpianien and Kurczewska's research aimed to add to our present understanding of risk and uncertainty in terms of how these ideas are perceived by looking at how these notions evolve via experiential entrepreneurial learning. The answer to this question is supposed to provide advice on which pedagogical elements relating to risk and uncertainty should be strengthened throughout entrepreneurial learning. Arpianien and Kurczewska found that risk and uncertainty are viewed as an opportunity for business rather than a threat. Risk-taking and dealing with uncertainty were connected with entrepreneurship by all of the students interviewed, who saw risk and uncertainty as natural parts of any entrepreneurial endeavor that must be acknowledged



and dealt with. They regarded themselves to be risk-takers as well as entrepreneurs. The students talked more about uncertainties and insecurity, characterizing them as a situation in which the conclusion is difficult to foresee, the resources are limited, and their use difficult to conceive. It's like taking a chance because you have no idea what will happen. To paraphrase, the outcome could be more negative than positive.

Arpianien and Kurczewska (2017) presented their interpretation of the results that students learn necessary skills by acting and reflecting in experiential education. For decades, entrepreneurship educators have struggled to figure out how to develop and teach risk-taking and uncertainty-related skills. The authors' findings suggested that risk and uncertainty perceptions change during the experiential learning process, and that risk-taking and coping with uncertainty competencies can be developed through education, highlighting the transformational character of entrepreneurship education. The findings show that through experiential EE, people learn to take risks and deal with uncertainty. These skills are embedded in social processes that happen on both small (in teams) and large (in society) scales. In experiential types of education, students learn by doing (working on projects) and thinking (being aware of the process) about what they are doing.

Arpianien and Kurczewska (2017) emphasized the importance of emotional, cognitive, and conative preparedness in transforming entrepreneurial experiences into knowledge. In the experience-based learning process, the cognitive, conative, and emotional parts interact; yet, little is known about how this interaction occurs. Every entrepreneur must face the challenges of risk-taking and uncertainty. In this review of the literature, the work of Arpianien and Kurczewska is particularly useful because it demonstrates the importance of reflective practices in the face of risk and uncertainty. Kolb's technique of experiential learning places an emphasis

on reflective activities, as it calls for you to reflect on your own learning. You can sharpen your ability to develop and improve one's risk and uncertainty related skills.

Scott et al. (2016) conducted a meta study. The study concluded that approaches to learning that are more based in experiential learning are more effective than traditional learning approaches (Scott et al, 2016). According to Taatila (2010), experiential projects are the "most successful" learning technique since they are pragmatic and use a abductive rather than a "deductive" or "inductive" approach (p. 52). Heinonen and Poikkijoki (2006) and Taatila (2010) stressed the importance of using more effective experiential methods to develop *holistic* business competencies rather than rote learning (Cooper et al., 2004). Traditional lecture-based, didactic teaching and learning approaches alone are insufficient in entrepreneurship education, according to Scott et al. Scott et al. argued that experiential approaches may – theoretically – increase students' learning outcomes in entrepreneurship classes, and these approaches are presumably intended to assist students to build entrepreneurial qualities through experience. Scott et al. (2016) also looked at some of the research on the effectiveness of EE in terms of learning outcomes. Experiential approaches are definitely more useful in developing students' competencies in the art of opportunity identification and exploitation (Jack & Anderson, 1999). The authors have identified in their meta literature review that the argument for experiential entrepreneurship approaches is underdeveloped in that it launches well, rises impressively, but fails to "land" due to a lack of evidence of effectiveness (Scott et al., 2016). However, Scott et al.'s study added to the corpus of knowledge by advocating for a more comprehensive approach to experiential entrepreneurship education, which is how it supports this dissertation. By looking at the curricula of entrepreneur educators with experience in business ownership and

management, this research will look into a potentially more successful method of experiential entrepreneurship education.

Affirming that experiential learning is a successful holistic strategy when entrepreneurship educators incorporate their own experiences into their curricula is the primary objective of this dissertation study's theoretical framework, which is discussed below.

### **Entrepreneurial Educators**

At both the national and global levels, entrepreneurship is increasingly becoming a significant component of economic settings (BarNir et al., 2011). According to studies, entrepreneurship educators play a critical role in ensuring that EE is implemented in its genuine spirit (Ruskovaara & Pihkala, 2013). In this sense, through giving real-life business experiences, entrepreneurship educators actively lead, motivate, and inspire students' interest in entrepreneurship (Hannon, 2005; Keat et al., 2011). Only a limited amount of educational and pedagogic training has been provided to entrepreneurial educators, leaving them to fend for themselves in pedagogic practice (Lackeus et al., 2016; Neck & Corbett, 2018).

The education of teachers should incorporate concepts and programs that instruct future entrepreneurship educators how to interpret societal, economic, cultural, and professional phenomena that influence the way in which they carry out their responsibilities (European Commission, 2011). The development of active citizenship participation and the strengthening of creative and innovative capacities are at the center of the educational goals pursued by the Ministry of Education in Finland. According to the objectives, entrepreneurship should be integrated into the curriculum of elementary teacher preparation programs (Ministry of Education of Finland, 2009). An article by Lepisto and Ronkko (2013), aimed to investigate teacher students' opinions of entrepreneurship education and how they view entrepreneurship as

a component of their future pedagogical practice. A teacher's awareness of his or her own guiding values, the teacher's ability to reflect upon his or her own performance as a teacher, and the teacher's readiness in developing both teaching methods and professional experience are critical matters from the perspective of professional development. All of these things are connected to the fact that a teacher acts as a guide for their pupils. Developing and putting enterprising teaching into practice are challenging tasks that require two central skills: (a) being willing to take risks and (b) fully involving oneself in the learning process along with students (see Hytti & O'Gorman, 2004; Seikkula-Leino et al., 2010; Shane & Venkataraman, 2000; Shulman & Shulman, 2004).

Creating and putting enterprising teaching into practice are challenging tasks. The process of developing enterprising teaching and putting it into practice can be challenging. The results for Lepistö and Ronkko's (2013) study categorized teacher applicants into three unique categories: (a) followers, (b) innovators, and (c) skeptics. A skeptical student teacher who doubts the importance of entrepreneurship education in teacher education or elementary education is missing the big picture. He or she is perplexed as to why entrepreneurship education occupies such a major position in the field of teacher education and why it is such a popular method. The skeptical student teacher believes that instructors have always had a considerable interest in training individuals who are enterprising and engaged in their communities, even if they were not formally aware of entrepreneurship education in the past.

Independent initiative, extracurricular participation, and an entrepreneurial spirit are all essential traits that should be nurtured via school, regardless of whether entrepreneurship lessons are given. According to this viewpoint, the education of entrepreneurial skills should have been the norm for a very long time. A follower has a favorable opinion of entrepreneurship education

and its objectives. Entrepreneurship and personal initiative are crucial components of basic education and teacher education, according to this individual. Meaningful possibilities of entrepreneurial education include stimulating one's interest in learning, demonstrating concrete aspects of employment, and boosting one's self-esteem. A follower also believes that one may urge kids to engage in social action and teach them to assume personal, environmental, and societal responsibility. A follower also feels that he or she should direct the observation of nearby communities by students. Followers often avoid the phrase "enterprise education" since they do not consider themselves to be educators of entrepreneurs, but they do wish to instill an entrepreneurial spirit in students. In education, an innovator employs a constructivist approach. Entrepreneurship is an organic component of education, the student's role, and both teachers' and students' courses of action. Therefore, entrepreneurship is a teaching method, a way of thinking, and a mode of operation.

Innovators are interested in developing entrepreneurial ways of instruction. They believe a teacher must be attentive to his/her students' feelings of doubt and failure and must learn from failure freely. Failures are regarded as issues for which solutions are sought. Fear of failure or inadequacy of preparation, according to the innovator, can hinder the confidence required to employ alternative teaching approaches. An innovator approaches entrepreneurship and its instructional prospects positively and critically. He/she emphasizes the objectives of entrepreneurship and believes that this methodology is applicable to all subjects.

Entrepreneurship education offers numerous components (corporate, external, and spontaneous entrepreneurship) from the standpoint of innovators. They acknowledge that familiarity with entrepreneurship, production, and commercialism is essential to comprehending how society functions. My research is aided by the findings of the Lepisto and Ronkko (2013) studies

because they provided me with a better understanding of the various types of entrepreneur educators that I might come across. It will assist me in understanding their thought process as well as their beliefs, which in turn will assist me in better comprehending how their life experiences impact the ways in which they teach.

Andrew Fejes et al. conducted a study in 2019 in Sweden. According to them, teachers are given a lot of leeway in their interpretation and transformation of entrepreneurship education curriculum into teaching practice by including a narrow and broad definition of entrepreneurship education. According to their research, students should learn to start their own businesses and develop abilities useful for life in general. The school should contribute to advancing knowledge and practices that encourage students to engage in entrepreneurship, enterprise, and innovation (Fejes et al., 2019). According to Fejes et al., (2019) some of the teachers highlighted concerns about how useful this knowledge is when vying for curricular space with more traditional, profession-based knowledge taught in the handicraft program, identifying entrepreneurship both in the narrow sense and a more generic project-based sort of content.

According to recent studies, the importance of business entrepreneurship for economic growth and employment is expanding, as is the awareness that techniques to successfully encourage and allow entrepreneurship may be taught (Kirby, 2003; Levie & Autio, 2008; Levie et al., 2009; Schwartz & Malach-Pines, 2009). Students in academic institutions who are just starting out in their careers are a key target demographic in this regard, as they have expressed a rising interest in learning entrepreneurial knowledge and skills (Schwartz & Malach-Pines, 2009). According to Gimmon (2014) more research is needed to present a more complete picture. Gimmon (2014) argued that mentoring as a method of evaluating the effectiveness of various educational approaches to competency development in business school is ideal. This

research was based on two different and unique live projects in which students acted as mentors to aspiring entrepreneurs who had less experience than themselves. To be more specific, this approach was used in two unique but equivalent programs in which students serve as mentors. First, mentoring teams of adolescent entrepreneurs in a high school; second, mentoring retired budding entrepreneurs. Both of these programs involve students serving as mentors. The majority of students who took part in one of these programs for at least one semester said they improved "much" in their own entrepreneurial talents and had increased self-efficacy. This apparent improvement was indicated by less than one-third of students who took the same entrepreneurship classes but did not participate in either of these programs. The mentorship processes used in the two programs are outlined below.

Mentoring models can be applied to similar entrepreneurial training programs at different institutions by practitioners according to Gimmon (2014). Due to the practical character of the mentoring process, these mentoring strategies may be even more effective in non-academic programs than in academic programs (Gimmon, 2014). The two programs reported in this study used an approach in which students engaged in entrepreneurial activities and were required to mentor others who require assistance. Although the kids have no prior experience with entrepreneurship, they are capable of acting in a non-condescending manner. They play the part of mentors while being mentored by their academics behind the scenes. These pupils were inspired after participating in mentorship. These students were able to create superior business ideas for a variety of new companies after receiving mentoring. Entrepreneur educators who have past business expertise are excellent mentors (Ibrahim & Soufani, 2002). According to the Gimmon study, having mentors when engaged in entrepreneurial activities is a key factor in successful businesses.

## **Theories of Experiential Learning**

The section will talk in depth about David Kolb's works on experiential learning. We will also discuss David Boud, who looked at the role of context in Kolb's model of experiential learning. First let's take a look at the historical foundations of experiential learning and how it's defined.

### ***Historical Foundations of Experiential Learning***

Stonehouse et al. (2011) speculated that experiential learning (EL) dated back to Plato and Aristotle. However, Kolb (1984) argued that the concept of EL began with Dewey's work in 1892. The educational philosophy of John Dewey emphasizes the significance of using one's imagination to boost one's thinking and learning forward, and it calls for educators to create opportunities for students to suspend judgment, participate in the playful consideration of possibilities, and investigate speculative possibilities. EL is the process whereby knowledge is created through the transformation of experience (Kolb, 1984). According to Kolb, for learning to take place, experiences must occur.

### ***Experiential Learning Defined***

According to Dewey, Kolb, Piaget, and Lewin, experience plays a vital part in the development of knowledge and self-awareness, and it is a well-established adult learning theory (Ng et al., 2009). In order to better understand the learning process, researchers have looked at the core concept of active and experiential learning in order to construct management learning models (Illeris, 2007). Illeris (2007) defined the concept of experiential learning in his article, *What do we Actually Mean by Experiential Learning?* When it comes to defining learning, Illeris (2007) argued that the more complex the type of individual learning, the more likely we are to



label it as experiential. Further, resistance to learning generally results in experiencing learning, whereas defense against learning generally prevents it.

### ***Theory of Learning by Reflection on Experience***

Reflection is the cornerstone of the conventional understanding of what experiential learning includes. This establishes the individual as the principal protagonist in their own internalization of meaning. The learner first reflects on actual life events, and then interprets and generalizes these experiences in order to construct mental structures. The knowledge that comprises these structures is stored in the mind as concepts that may be represented, communicated, and moved to new situations. From this perspective, reflective theoretical models describe how people attend to and comprehend experience, how they interpret it and arrange it into categories of concepts, and how they continue to adapt or modify their conceptual frameworks.

It is widely understood that individuals develop their own knowledge through interaction with their respective contexts. This school of thought is generally referred to as *constructivism* (Fenwick, 2001). Alternative explanations of experiential learning and critics of this perspective take issue with the notion that the "person" is essentially distinct from his or her environment and relationships with other individuals. These critics argued that reflective processes cannot be distinguished from experiences because it is impossible to do so.

After studying adolescents as they learn via play, Swiss psychologist Jean Piaget (1966) coined the term *assimilation-accommodation* to characterize this building process which is to build and refine constructs of knowledge in people's heads. His theory proposed that people learn by "building" and refining mental representations of their world through engagement with various objects (including physical ones, names for things, thoughts, relationships, etc.) in their

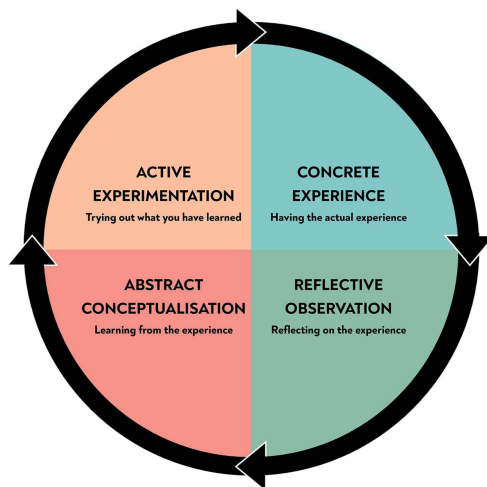
surroundings. Assimilation of new bits of information occurs when new bits of data are added to an individual's preexisting set of mental constructs. Other times, when confronted with fresh experiences that may contradict prior knowledge, people accommodate by modifying these structures. The key issue is that people create significantly different understandings after engaging with the same objects in the same environment because they are actively engaged in the learning process rather than passively absorbing whatever occurs. This concept posed a threat to the widely held beliefs that scientists and professionals have constructed a body of knowledge that exists independently of humans and that learning consists of absorbing this external knowledge. Experienced educators know what they know due to the *assimilation-accommodation process*. Their lived experiences play a role in their assimilation-accommodation process because their experiences add data to their preexisting knowledge as a result of their active engagement with their environment.

Lev Vygotsky (1978) argued that people's interactions with their sociocultural surroundings are crucial to the knowledge-building process. He proposed a hypothesis of the *zone of proximal development*, an area of communal activity around an individual that, over a certain period of time, might either stunt or foster that person's mental growth. The zone of optimum development is where the learner actively participates, especially in conversation. Vygotsky, like other constructivists, felt that learning's end goal was the maturation of the self through a combination of internal dialogue (what Vygotsky called "inner speech") and external engagement with the world. Vygotsky's approach will support the reflective theory because through reflection the learner will mature using internal dialogue and engagement with their environment.

According to the researcher, active participants can improve their communication, problem-solving, and other work-related and entrepreneurial skills through reflective practices because they will actively engage in a process in which they will self-reflect on their experiences and engagement with the environment and learn to improve in these areas.

### ***David Kolb - Experiential Learning: A Constructivist Model***

Kolb's (1984) experiential learning cycle is undoubtedly the most widely cited, and arguably the most successful, expression of experiential learning theory (Seaman et al., 2017). Boud et al. (1993) stated that an experience devoid of meaning is merely an event that occurs. Dixon (1999) went on to say that true experiential learning requires analyzing, or reflecting, on the event, processing both in a holistic way, and then applying what you've learned to future decisions and actions. According to Kolb's learning cycle, learning is best accomplished by moving through a cycle of four stages: (1) experiencing something (*concrete experience*), (2) reflecting on it (*reflective observation*), (c) learning from it (*abstract conceptualization*), and (d) putting what you've learned to use (*active experimentation*; Wijnen Meijer et al., 2022). Kolb viewed learning as an integrated process with each stage being mutually supportive of and feeding into the next. It is possible to enter the cycle at any stage and follow it through its logical sequence. However, effective learning only occurs when a learner can execute all four stages of the model. Therefore, no one stage of the cycle is effective as a learning procedure on its own (See Figure 3).

**Figure 3***Kolb Experiential Learning Process*

To effectively encourage learning through experience, some researchers (Gill & Johnson, 1991; Mifsud, 1990) that models of experiential learning must include critical reflection. Despite the fact that Kolb's model of experiential learning is widely recognized, it fails to pinpoint the crucial conditions that encourage it. While the model includes reflective observation as a cycle component, it does not specify which forms of reflective practices and activities encourage personal growth and knowledge transformation.

Experiential learning, according to Wurdinger & Rudolph, 2009, is nothing more than an experiment without a reflexive component. Experiential learning is a way to teach adults that uses parts of the pedagogical, andragogical, and transformational philosophies. A social constructivist learning paradigm is based on the idea that skills, traits, and competencies can only be learned through experience (Mueller et al., 2015). As a result, a more robust model is required, one that includes reflection as part of the experiential learning cycle. This dissertation

study may enhance Kolb's model by examining the role of reflection in entrepreneurship education at secondary institutions in Southeast Louisiana.

Despite the existence of numerous conflicting perspectives within the constructivist movement, it has a long and illustrious history (Glaserfeld 1981; Piaget 1966; Vygotsky 1978; Wells, 1995). In a constructivist classroom, students are depicted as active participants in the learning process, as opposed to passive receivers of knowledge. There is, however, a key premise on which all perspectives can agree: a learner obtains, through introspection, a unique understanding of significant meaning structures derived from their actual experience in the world.

There is also an issue associated with interpreting what exactly is meant by a concrete experience in the Kolb model that remains unresolved. Bergsteiner et al. (2010) claimed that Kolb's typology is "highly muddled" in this regard (p. 32). Nevertheless, experiential learning gives young people the freedom to pursue their own interests and solve challenges as they occur. Additionally, it gives children the opportunity to fail and learn how to overcome obstacles. Students are taught to analyze their actions, thoughts, and even emotional reactions through experiential education. Students benefit from this inward reflection by improving their personal connections, addressing their emotional needs, and preparing for the workplace. It also assists them in making important life decisions. The development of a deeper understanding of this concept may facilitate the facilitation of scholarly work on the topic and contribute to it. As a result of this concern, the present study aimed to comprehend the meaning teachers assign to concrete experiences.

### ***David Boud: Exploring the Role of Context in Experiential Learning***

Although Boud et al., (1993) model of experiential learning is similar to Kolb's, it is enhanced in two key ways: first, the authors acknowledged that different contexts shape an individual's experience in different ways; second, the authors were interested in how differences among individuals—particularly past histories, learning strategies, and emotion—influence the kind of learning developed through reflection on experience. According to Boud and Walker, the degree to which we learn is proportional to the amount of forethought we put into an experience, the degree to which we pay attention to our own actions during the experience itself, and the processes we employ when thinking back on the experience, processing the emotions it evoked, and reevaluating it. As a first step, we take an inventory of the surrounding environment's potentials and formulate our own goals. We also bring our individual histories and experiences, as well as particular abilities in observation and meaning making.

During a given experience, we give importance to and interact with various aspects of the surrounding environment based on our own unique set of biases and perspectives. By reflecting on our experiences as we go along, we are better capable of achieving a healthy balance between observing the world around us and being mindful of how we are contributing to it. After the fact, we use four methods to reflect upon and evaluate our past encounters. The process of association involves linking novel ideas with previously established ones. Integration is the process of trying to fit together disparate parts. Taking in new information and making it our own is called *appropriation*, while validating our thoughts and emotions about the experience is called validation. Take note that this model places a premium on emotions, arguing that ignoring negative emotions can prevent any learning from occurring. In addition, Boud and his coworkers highlighted the significance of the learner's own level of readiness or preparation for the

experience, as well as the learner's immediate environment. Boud's outlook on experiential learning confirms that he believes that this is the best pedagogical approach for entrepreneurial educators to utilize in their classrooms. The educators' own histories and lived experiences, as well as their own reflection of those experiences, can provide depth to lessons that will improve their teaching methodologies.

Educators have the task of guiding and teaching students to become productive employees, citizens, and eventually self-directed lifelong learners. They take on this obligation when they accept the profession. In order to achieve this goal, it is necessary to enhance the level of involvement beyond the traditional methods of education. In order to encourage active participation and reflective practices in the classroom, experiential learning and chances for reflection are essential. We need more schools and teachers who encourage independent thought and learning on one's own initiative. The educational system needs to be shaken up, and teachers should consider new approaches to teaching. The incorporation of active and experiential learning methodologies into the curriculum may present a challenging and time-consuming task, but the benefits to the student, the educator, and society as a whole will be well worth the effort.

## Chapter 3: Methodology

### Introduction

The purpose of this qualitative phenomenology study is to explore the perspective of entrepreneurial educators in Southeast Louisiana teaching students in grades 9-12 and related to how their entrepreneurial experiences have influenced their pedagogical approaches. This chapter will re-state the purpose of the study and research questions as well as describe the methods used, the setting, the participant population, issues related to using human subjects, data gathering, data collection, data management and analysis, and finally a summary of this chapter.

The study is driven by the following research questions:

1. How have the lived experiences of entrepreneurship educators influenced how they adapt their teaching practices?
  - Which aspects of teaching are most likely to improve as a result of the teachers' lived experiences as entrepreneurs?
2. How do entrepreneurship educators incorporate their lived experiences into their teaching of entrepreneurship?
  - How do the lived experiences of the teacher improve the students entrepreneurial or job skills?

### Purpose Statement

The purpose of this qualitative phenomenology study is to explore the perspective of entrepreneurial educators in Southeast Louisiana who teach students in grades 9-12 and, how their entrepreneurial experiences have influenced their pedagogical approaches



## **Nature of the Study**

By concentrating on themes within the data, this qualitative study used a descriptive approach to address the research objectives (Creswell, 2014). The researcher looked at the information to identify common themes that was used to differentiate between and within transcripts. The transcripts were coded in order to find common themes. Bryman (2016) defined coding as "the process by which data are disaggregated into their component parts and then labeled," (p. 32) which is an essential step in the analysis of qualitative data. The researcher then looked for patterns in these coded text sequences within and between cases, as well as connections between the various codes. Since the main study questions and its follow-up questions were intended to elicit descriptions of the effects of experiential learning from the viewpoint of entrepreneurship educator, they were classified as descriptive.

The descriptive aspect of the study was attained through open-ended interview questions designed to allow entrepreneurship educators to express their "experiences, perspectives, options, sentiments, and knowledge" (Patton & Patton, 2002, p. 23). Qualitative interviewing is a successful method for gathering data since it allows the researcher to control the flow of questions and encourage participants to provide their viewpoints on the data (Creswell, 2014). During the research design phase, the researcher also took into account the qualities of qualitative research.

According to Creswell (2014), the characteristics of qualitative research are that it (a) typically involves conversations with participants in a natural setting, (b) relies on the researcher as the instrument for data collection, (c) can use a variety of methods, and (d) uses both inductive and deductive methods of data analysis. This type of research also relies on the researcher learning meaning from the participants' perspectives. Additionally, a qualitative study is

distinguished by one of two forms of research: interpretive or critical theory (Locke et al., 2010). The interpretive aspect of this phenomenological investigation makes it useful to comprehend this methodology.

An investigation that aims to interpret the participants' experiences through their feedback should use an interpretive research approach. This approach helps to understand the participants' perspective on a certain circumstance. In interpretive research, the researcher is in charge of gathering the data and maintaining an exhaustive log of participants' insights. The "key instrument" in acquiring the data is the researcher (Creswell, 2014, p. 185). The basis of exploratory theory is built by the researcher through data collection, organization, and analysis (Locke et al., 2010). An exploratory and interpretative methodology are required for use in qualitative research.

### **Research Methodology and Rationale**

A qualitative research approach known as *phenomenology* focused on the relevance of a person's experience as seen from that person's perspective (Locke et al., 2010). For this study, a phenomenological qualitative research approach works best for understanding the lived experiences of entrepreneurship educators through their individual experiences. With this study approach, meaning can be established and interpreted for a variety of people in light of their unique encounters with a phenomenon, idea, method, or tactic (Creswell, 2014). Boeije (2010) asserted that in interviews the researcher is the primary tool. The researcher can discover more about the individuals' lived experiences through qualitative interviews. According to Boeije,, study participants have the opportunity to transmit knowledge, share their experiences, and open up about their thoughts on a variety of topics.

This phenomenological study's main objective is to analyze the effects of experiential learning from the viewpoint of an entrepreneurial educator. The study commits to maintaining the perspective that matches the goal of this study because there are few studies in the research literature that analyze the influence of experiential learning from the perspective of business educators with entrepreneurial experience.

The researcher aims to learn about the best practices in experiential learning in a hands-on learning context through a phenomenological research approach. The researcher looked over the data to identify commonalities and differences in the transcripts. The transcripts were coded in order to determine common themes. According to Bryman (2016), coding is a procedure in the analysis of qualitative data in which the data are deconstructed into their various components and the labels are assigned to the pieces. The researcher then looked for recurring sequences of coded text within and across cases, as well as for connections between distinct codes. The themes that emerge from the data collection findings provide crucial information for school administrators and other stakeholders.

The researcher used a phenomenological design to interview a small group of people, then interprets the patterns that appear in the interview data (Moustakas, 1994/2010). Creswell (2014) modified Moustakas' (1994/2010) description of the phenomenological research design process into the following steps: (a) confirming that the research problem can be addressed using a phenomenological approach, (b) choosing the phenomenon of inquiry, (c) outlining the phenomenological presuppositions and bracketing her own personal experience with the phenomenon; (d) data collection, (e) data analysis, (f) developing themes, and (g) summarizing the results. The researcher for this study learned more about the phenomena from the lived

experiences of entrepreneur educators with a successful business. This was made possible by the phenomenological research approach.

The researcher "looked at the genuine difficulties" influencing people's lives when using a phenomenological technique (Cibangu & Hepworth, 2016, p. 152). Using open-ended questions, the researcher studied a fresh angle and gained insight into the entrepreneur educator's lived experiences as well as the difficulties and accomplishments they overcame (Creswell, 2013). This phenomenological qualitative research methodology was chosen as an appropriate method to examine entrepreneurship educators' input with a focus on their lived experiences based on the description of phenomenology (Creswell, 2014).

### **Weaknesses**

Even if the phenomenological technique is thought to be acceptable for this study, it is important to point out the approach's shortcomings. Creswell (2013) identified a number of flaws in a study of this nature, including: (a) disclosure of researcher biases, (b) discriminating participant selection to give the researcher access to interview subjects who have firsthand knowledge of the topic under investigation, and (c) disclosure of the researcher's own research-related discoveries are all necessary. Last but not least, participant responses may be influenced by the researcher's strategy (Creswell, 2014). By (a) purposefully choosing a population that can be constrained by defining the selection criteria for a particular sampling frame, (b) disclosing her biases, and (c) considering the phenomenological theoretical approach, the researcher might, nevertheless, lessen these possible shortcomings. For this kind of research, subjectivity is a real problem, particularly when trying to prove validity and dependability. As the study progresses, the researcher jotted down memos detailing his or her impressions of the research process so far,

any theories or hypotheses the researcher had formed, and any worries or fears about how the participants are responding to the study (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

### **Strengths**

The phenomenological approach had several advantages, especially with the possible limitations addressed as discussed in the following sections. First, interviews were the most popular method for gathering data (Donalek & Soldwisch, 2004), as they enable direct communication (Creswell, 2014). Second, since the researcher asked follow-up questions, personal connection stimulates more in-depth responses and helps participants to express their opinions (Anderson, 2010). Last but not least, this approach enabled the researcher to pay attention to and hear what matters most to the participants personally in order "to obtain insight at both the individual and collective level" (Donalek & Soldwisch, 2004, p. 354). A greater comprehension of the issue and the sincerity, uniqueness, and honesty that emerges are the strengths of this particular methodology.

### **Suitability of the Phenomenological Approach**

Since the goal of the study is to determine the entrepreneur educators' lived experiences and its impact on their curricula, the method of inquiry was particularly well-suited to the task. Through awareness and the deliberate recognition of the relationship between the subject and the world, the personal experiences are meant to elicit reaction and emotion to the occurrence (van Manen, 1990).

### **Setting**

The interviewer choose to conduct the interview in person at a mutually convenient location excluding public or private school campuses or via online using zoom. Zoom, an online

virtual platform, was used for the virtual interview. The recorded meeting is kept in a password-protected folder on the researcher's desktop. The in-person meeting occurred at a predetermined location, and it was recorded with a recording device. The recording was then uploaded to a password-protected external hard drive and backed up on a password-protected cloud server.

### **Population**

Six to ten high schools in Southeast Louisiana served as the study's geographic focus points. In Louisiana, there are 1,033 public schools spread throughout 70 districts, with income levels ranging from low income to middle class. Due to their close proximity to one another and the similarity of their entrepreneurial and Career and Technical Education (CTE) course offerings, six schools were selected for this study. These high schools, like the majority of districts in Louisiana, are mostly attended by middle to lower-class African Americans. Each of the six schools has a student body of at least 1,000, a CTE program with at least five distinct courses, and alternatives for students to participate in *work-based learning*. Additionally, the superintendent and board of education for each school district decided on the courses and programs. A defined set of individuals who had common traits pertinent to the research make up the population included in the study (Sokolowski, 2008). The commonalities included a high school entrepreneurship teacher who owned and maintained a successful business in the last 10 years. The researcher solicited 18-30 potential participants working at 6-10 high schools that teach entrepreneurship and meet the requirements. The researcher obtained six interviews from the total population. According to Creswell and Creswell (2018), 3 to 17 interviews are required to validate qualitative phenomenological studies.

## **Sample and Sampling Procedures**

Purposive sampling, the approach utilized for the study, indicates that the sampling was specifically chosen to support the research aim and objectives. The study investigates educational entrepreneurs. It seems reasonable that the sample deliberately targets entrepreneurial educators who have had entrepreneurial experience in the recent ten years. As a result, the participants were capable of sharing the most important and pertinent details of their experience and are certain to have firsthand knowledge of the phenomenon being examined (Creswell, 1998).

The study's participant group consisted of 18-30 people, and the researcher will reach out to 6-10 high schools in Southeast Louisiana that offer entrepreneurial education and meet the criteria. Six people were interviewed out of the entire population for the study.

## **Human Subject Considerations**

The major goal of the Pepperdine University IRBs is to safeguard the welfare and dignity of human subjects. The secondary goal of the Pepperdine IRBs is to assist researchers in doing ethical research that complies with applicable laws. Any academic member, student, or employee of Pepperdine University who wishes to undertake research involving humans must therefore submit a research proposal for evaluation by the IRB. All studies involving human subjects at Pepperdine University is required to follow established ethical, legal, and professional standards for research and must receive IRB approval, according to university policy. This IRB application was an initial review which refers to a study being submitted and reviewed for the first time. See Appendix B for IRB approval.

Boeije (2010) stated that "beneficence is regarded as an overarching principle that relates to achieving beneficial results for science, humanity, and the specific research participants while

avoiding or eliminating required harm, risk, or wrong" (p. 45). Having informed consent is one of the most fundamental ethical needs. The researcher utilized the Pepperdine University informed consent template. The researcher protected the study participants' privacy and confidentiality by utilizing pseudonyms. Anonymity was linked to confidentiality, so those participants' names and other distinctive identifiers were kept private (Boeije, 2010).

### **Instrumentation**

The interview question instrument was adopted from an earlier investigative process. The selection of interview questions was extracted from a prior research methodology written by Monica Lesley Knight, Ph.D. Dr. Knight approved the use of the structured open-ended interview questions she developed via email. To fit the research goals for this study, the structured open-ended interview questions were modified. See Appendix A.

Participants were asked a series of open-ended, structured questions that were intended to elicit detailed, vivid responses from them while giving the interviewer the freedom to follow up with more clarification or probing questions as needed (Dearnley, 2005). The participants took part in a structured interview process that was recorded and last for about 45 minutes. Zoom, a web-based program, was used to conduct the structured interview. With each participant's consent, audio recordings of all interviews were made.

Gall et al., (1996) believed that interview questions are measurements that must adhere to the requirements for validity and reliability, claim. It is also essential to maintain uniformity throughout each interview procedure while preserving an authentic subject experience and reaction (Frey & Oishi, 1995; Silverman, 1993). The researcher conducted six interviews for this study.



## Instrument Validity

Validity, however, is concerned with (a) whether the content measured is valid for what the researcher intends to study, and (b) the quality of the measure a researcher uses to complete a specific study. Something that works in one study might not work in another.

Dr. Monica L Knight approved my use of her interview questions that she utilized in a previously published study. The research interview questions that Dr. Knight used were validated by a panel. The interview questions were modified slightly to reflect the verbiage in my study.

## Interview Questions

Below is a table displaying the research questions for this study.

**Table 1**

### *Research Questions*

Research Questions	Corresponding Interview Questions
<p>RQ 1: How have the lived experiences of entrepreneurship educators influenced how they adapt their teaching practices?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Which aspects of teaching are most likely to improve as a result of the teachers' lived experiences as entrepreneurs?</li> </ul>	<p>IQ 1: How long have you taught entrepreneurship?</p> <p>IQ 2: Did you receive entrepreneurship training when being trained as a teacher? If yes, please expand:</p> <p>IQ 3: What professional experience as an entrepreneur do you have?</p> <p>IQ 4: What written resources do you use in your Entrepreneurship classes?</p>
<p>RQ 2: How do entrepreneurship instructors' incorporate their lived experiences into their teaching of entrepreneurship?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How do the lived experiences of the teacher improve the students entrepreneurial or job skills?</li> </ul>	<p>IQ 5: What experiential activities have you conducted using external partnerships/consultants?</p> <p>IQ 6: What experiential exercises/ games have you used to teach entrepreneurship?</p>

Research Questions	Corresponding Interview Questions
<p>RQ 2: How do entrepreneurship instructors' incorporate their lived experiences into their teaching of entrepreneurship?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How do the lived experiences of the teacher improve the students entrepreneurial or job skills?</li> </ul>	<p>IQ 7: What use do you make of external partners/consultants?</p> <p>What other resources do you find helpful?</p> <p>IQ 8: What activities do your students engage in that prepares them for entrepreneurship and business management?</p> <p>IQ 9: What experiences do you bring from your entrepreneurial pursuits to the classroom that benefit your students?</p> <p>IQ 10: Did you teach intrapreneurship (entrepreneurship practiced within an existing organization) in your entrepreneurship class? If yes, what resources do you use in addition to the written notes in the curriculum guide</p> <p>IQ 11: Is there anything else you would like to add to your interview?</p>

### Data Collection

The researcher used the district's website to access teachers' names, emails, and other contact information for teachers who teach entrepreneurship courses. An initial email detailing the parameters of the study was issued in an effort to recruit and retain potential participants. Once participants were deemed eligible, they were urged to respond by email and state whether they were interested in participating in the study. Eligible participants were those educators who teach entrepreneurship courses and also have entrepreneurship or business management experience. The researcher notified entrepreneurship educators in secondary schools in Southwest Louisiana via zoom to determine eligibility by asking eligibility questions. Eligible participants were asked what courses they currently teach, and for their education and

professional experience information. After the participant's answered the eligibility questions and met the criteria, the researcher then conducted the interview.

Prior to the scheduled meeting time, the interviewer arrived at the prearranged site to set up two voice recorders, water, snacks, and other materials for the meetings. Participants meeting via Zoom were given a Zoom link and time to log in. Participants logged in and the session was recorded and stored on a password protected computer and folder. Consent was assumed once participant arrived at the agreed upon location or logged into Zoom at the appropriate time. The researcher took the following steps: (a) Record each interview held on Zoom or face to face; (b) The researcher took notes during each participant's interview. Subject names will be specifically avoided during the recording, and recordings will be destroyed after five years upon completion of the study. All of the electronic documents, transcriptions and notes will be kept in the password-protected folder.

The researcher followed the following steps during the interview:

- Recorded each interview held on Zoom or in person
- Took notes during each participant interview
- Transcribed the audio recordings and interview notes using Nvivo
- Coded and segmented the data following Boeije's (2010) steps of open, axial, and selective coding.

## **Data Analysis**

The study's analysis followed the guidelines for phenomenological research design (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Moustakas, 1994). Creswell (2014) developed a general six-step process to analyze qualitative research data: (a) organizing and preparing the data, (b) assessing the data, (c) coding the data, (d) generating themes, (e) using narratives and visuals to represent

the data, and (f) interpreting the findings in relation to the literature. For a phenomenological study such as this study, Creswell (2013) also offered an approach to analysis and represent the data that he modified from Moustakas (1994/2010), which entails the researcher (a) bracketing her experience of the phenomenon, (b) identifying information categories from significant participant quotes, (c) developing themes, (d) writing a description of “what” and “how” the participants experienced the phenomenon, and (e) concluding with a summary of findings. I will follow Creswell's six step process to analyze the qualitative data.

Once interviews were finished, audio recordings were transcribed and added to the qualitative data analysis program Nvivo for analysis. Using this program, the data was initially coded by grouping similar responses to identify emerging themes. Participant file identities was made anonymous to combat researcher bias during the coding procedure. Chapter 4 presents the findings of the data collecting and analysis.

The researcher engaged in two cycles of coding. The initial coding phase is an NVivo Coding approach that takes into account all of the data. Words or phrases from the participant's native language were used as codes in the data record for NVivo coding. To capture the overarching themes and potential new categories emerged from a large data set, holistic coding is used (Miles et al., 2020). Data was summarized into manageable portions using first coding, and then those summaries were further organized using the second cycle method. The key statements from the interviews were compiled in a list. The data was listed in a horizontal format with significant statements. After that, a list of distinct, non-overlapping assertions was created. Each statement was treated as having worth. Thematic or semantic units were created from significant statements. The textual description was written after that. This includes the experiences that the study's subjects had. It explains what occurred and contains quotes from the events. An outline

for the structure was then written. This comprises the circumstances and settings in which the event occurred as well as the person's state at the time. Context and setting were emphasized in the structural description. The experience's essence was described using a composite description that combines the textural and structural descriptions. This clarifies what was experienced, how it was experienced within the context, and most crucially, what the participants' overall essence or feeling was.

### **Validity of Study**

Verifying validity is a crucial step in any study. Validity serves a slightly different purpose than reliability. Reliability guarantees trustworthiness and dependability. Reliability is when researchers can have confidence in their findings if they remeasure the same group of people multiple times and get the same results each time.

### **Peer Review Validity**

This research was peer-reviewed by current and former doctoral students at Pepperdine University. Review by colleagues is standard procedure in the academic world. However, this stage of data collection is a crucial cross-checking strategy in qualitative research. When qualitative research is combined with cross-checking data, validity is increased, as stated by Thyer (2010). In addition, qualitative researchers rely on a network of colleagues to verify the accuracy of their own notes and conclusions (Thyer, 2010).

### **Positionality**

In Southeast Louisiana, the researcher teaches entrepreneurship at one of the high schools; therefore, a potential bias in the interpretation of the data may have occur because the instructor is familiar with the participants. Potential biases in the researcher's work come from her prior experience instructing entrepreneurship classes in Southeast Louisiana secondary

schools. In order to lessen biases and "to limit the potential harmful consequences of unacknowledged preconceptions connected to the research and so raise the rigor of the undertaking" (Tufford & Newman, 2012, p. 85), the researcher adopted reflective practices. According to Creswell and Creswell (2018), readers will identify with the researcher's openness and honesty because it is the result of self-reflection. One essential quality of qualitative research is reflexivity (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Good qualitative research includes comments from the researchers regarding how their backgrounds, such as their gender, culture, history, and economic origin, impact how they perceive the data (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). In this study, the researcher wrote memo notes throughout the study that will conclude observations about the process of data collection, hunches about what the researcher is learning, and concerns about the reactions of participants to the research process (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

The researcher recognized a need to look into potential strategies to enhance learning outcomes for entrepreneurship students because of her professional expertise as a secondary entrepreneurship educator. In addition to her teaching certification in business content, the researcher holds a bachelor's degree in human development and a master's degree in social entrepreneurship and change. Additionally, the researcher has over 10 years of experience running a profitable business. Because of my background and professional experience, I recognized the benefits that an experienced entrepreneur educator can bring to a classroom's pedagogical strategy and lesson plans. My positionality gives me a unique perspective because I am familiar with the curriculum and students that we serve in Southeast Louisiana. To minimize bias, I was engaged in reflective practices such as memo note taking of the interview that I conducted. I also made sure that I separate my bias from what I am told with each interviewer using reflective and bracketing practices.

**Summary**

In Chapter 3, the phenomenological method used in the study's design and the qualitative method used to address the presented research questions were described. The examination of the lived experiences of entrepreneurship educators and their influence on the creation and execution of curricula was found to be an appropriate application of the phenomenological approach to qualitative research. The study's methodology and nature both called for the use of purposeful sampling approaches to choose participants. In addition to data collection processes that involved conducting one-on-one interviews utilizing a semi-structured interview strategy, methods for safeguarding human subjects were also implemented. Chapter 4 presents the data findings.

## Chapter 4 - Findings

### Introduction

The purpose of this qualitative study was to look at the perspectives of educators in Southeast Louisiana who teach students in secondary high schools about entrepreneurship and how their own experiences as entrepreneurs have influenced how they approach teaching. In Chapter 4, a detailed finding of the data analysis is presented, which was acquired from six business education teachers through interviews using the Zoom online platform. Each of the six educators has satisfied the requirements necessary for eligibility. All of the participants have entrepreneurship or business management experience within the last 10 years and they all now teach courses in Southeast Louisiana that fall under the umbrella of CTE.

The research questions are as follows:

1. How have the lived experiences of entrepreneurship educators influenced how they adapt their teaching practices?
  - Which aspects of teaching are most likely to improve as a result of the teachers' lived experiences as entrepreneurs?
2. How do entrepreneurship instructors incorporate their lived experiences into their teaching of entrepreneurship?
  - How do the lived experiences of the teacher improve the students entrepreneurial or job skills?



## Overview

Chapter 4 starts with a summary of the data gathering process, including review of the data collection process and description of the sample population. The chapter then presents the research findings gathered by conducting interviews with the six educator-entrepreneurs, including the themes that arose from the phenomenological analysis. This section continues with a list of discussed topics and their relative frequency, arranged by theme. The analysis of the data produced eight themes, each of which focuses on a different aspect of the participants' use of their prior business expertise into their instructional strategies.

A qualitative and phenomenological approach was taken in order to conduct the analysis of the data. Individual narratives as well as a summary of the data analysis are provided in order to provide insight into how the educators integrate their lived experience as an entrepreneur into their pedagogical approaches. The narratives are the results of an evaluation and a thematic analysis that were performed to establish the aspects of the entrepreneur's lived experience that contribute to or are significant for the entrepreneur. The findings also include an examination and acknowledgment of the similar perspectives and points of view expressed by the respondents.

The scope of this type of research is reflected in the narratives, which highlighted qualities that may have helped the educators' success as entrepreneurship educators. Therefore, representative passages from participants are included to demonstrate responses to the interview questions. It was determined to be significant if four or more of the six people reported the same response.

### **Data Collection Process**

All research data were obtained from one-on-one interviews with participants, which were conducted using the online platform Zoom at the participants' earliest convenience. In addition, an in-depth interview was conducted with every person who took part in the research. The interviews with the participants were recorded using Zoom with the participants' agreement, and verbatim transcriptions were prepared when the interviews were completed. The researcher went over each transcribed document and reviewed it for accuracy. Before conducting the analysis, every inconsistency, inaccuracy, and additional idea contributed by the participants was entered into the transcripts. The direct quotes that have been included in the edited narratives are an accurate representation of the full and genuine comments that the participants have made. These direct quotes may have grammatical errors or other errors, but they do an accurate job of capturing the participants' perspectives. The only adjustment made to the quotations was the elimination of extraneous phrases like *you know* and *uh*, along with other similar terms.

### **Participant Description**

Six volunteers were recruited from a single Southeast Louisiana district. Participants in this district come from three schools. Two of the six participants were male, while four were female. All participants have entrepreneurship or business management experience within the last 10 years. Four participants have expertise with both entrepreneurship and business management, while one has engaged in entrepreneurial activities while managing a business. However, only two have more than 10 years of experience in entrepreneurship or business management. Figure 1 condenses the participants descriptions. All six participants instruct CTE courses including entrepreneurship, marketing principles, customer service, quest for success, career readiness, advanced career readiness, and business computer applications.

Through interviews with entrepreneurs, the purpose of this study was to get an insight of the entrepreneur's lived experience. The use of pseudonyms protected the participants' privacy, as they frequently disclosed highly personal information throughout the interview. Additionally, in certain instances, the description of the business, product, or service had been disguised to preserve their privacy and conceal their identities. Therefore, the integrity of the participant-shared data is preserved.

**Table 2**

*List of Participants, What They Teach, Their Experience, and Number of Years of Teaching*

<b>Teacher</b>	<b>Gender</b>	<b>Course taught/currently teach</b>	<b>Number Of Years Teaching</b>	<b>Entrepreneur or Business Management Experience</b>
Sara	Female	Entrepreneurship, Principles of Marketing	6	Entrepreneur
Susan	Female	Customer Service, Quest for Success, Advance Career Readiness, Career Readiness	3	Entrepreneur and Business Manager
Sam	Male	Customer Service, Quest for Success, Advance Career Readiness, Career Readiness	9	Business Manager
Sandra	Female	Entrepreneurship, Principles of Marketing	7	Entrepreneur and Business Manager
Sissy	Female	Principles of Marketing 1 & 2, Business Computer Applications	26	Entrepreneur and Business Manager
Stewart	Male	Entrepreneurship, Principles of Marketing	12	Entrepreneur and Business Manager

**Table 3**

*Summary of Participants' Course They Teach and Their Business Management Experience and/or Entrepreneurship Experience*

<b>Teacher</b>	<b>Course taught/currently teach</b>	<b>Entrepreneurship/Business Management Experience</b>
Sara	Entrepreneurship, Principles of Marketing	Retail management, transportation company management, dealership management
Susan	Customer Service, Quest for Success, Advance Career Readiness, Career Readiness	Retail management, Dance Choreographer
Sam	Customer Service, Quest for Success, Advance Career Readiness, Career Readiness	School Leadership/Education management
Sandra	Entrepreneurship, Principles of Marketing	Business Consultant
Sissy	Principles of Marketing 1 & 2, Business Computer Applications	Entertainment company management, retail management, Real Estate Agent
Stewart	Entrepreneurship, Principles of Marketing	Jamba Juice store manager

### **Findings**

The assessment of the data consisted of both a textual and a structural analysis leading to the themes. The textual analysis consisted of participant accounts of their experience, whereas the structural analysis explored how the participants interpreted and felt about their experience. Initial textual and structural analyses give a foundational understanding of the participant experience, providing the way for the discovery and analysis of themes in the data, both for individual participants and the sample as a whole. In order to ensure data validity, the following process was utilized including peer checking.

### ***Step 1 - Epoche***

During this *bracketing* procedure, the researcher maintained an open mind and put her preconceived notions and prejudices on hold. The researcher concentrated on analyzing the experience of the entrepreneur as a whole in order to get to the bottom of its significance and its core.

### ***Step 2 - Horizontalization***

Next, the researcher went through the transcripts of each of the participants who had participated in the study and looked for significant details that could be used to describe the process of how they integrated their experiences into their curriculum. Each horizon contributes new significance to the discussion and paints a more accurate picture of the participants' entrepreneurial experiences.

The horizontalization process, as experienced by the participating entrepreneurs, is demonstrated by the excerpts that follow. Each statement was accorded the same amount of weight in order to comply with the horizontalization principles, which contributed to a better comprehension of the phenomena of how they gained entrepreneurial experience.

#### 1. Horizontalization: Sara

“OK , so I'll say my first experience being an entrepreneur, I actually launched a marketing and public relations event planning company . When doing that, I handled some marketing for small businesses and did some public relations for some individuals during that time, The largest larger events that I produce or fashion shows that were very they were very successful.”

#### 2. Horizontalization: Susan

I have engaged in all parts from the startup of having to select the name, have your name LLC within the state, having to acquire advertising, market to your clientele, to advertise to the market or your target market. For your business and to be mindful of the demographic you're in , to get the target market that you want to have in your business, so . Those are things that I had to constantly be conscious of in the process of. I Mean, I was marketing too.

### Figure 3

#### *Summary of Themes*

Theme	Summary
<b>Research Question One</b>	<b>How have the lived experiences of entrepreneurship educators influenced how they adapt their teaching practices? Which aspects of teaching are most likely to improve as a result of the teachers' lived experiences as entrepreneurs?</b>
Business Management Capabilities	Participants recognize opportunities and successfully put them into action while managing the day-to-day operations of a business.
Entrepreneurial Capabilities	Participants launch small businesses in their communities by recognizing opportunities and successfully putting them into action.
Resources & Materials	Items used to supplement participants curriculum. Participants use a variety of tools to instruct students on how to launch a business or run day-to-day operations of a business.
<b>Research Question Two</b>	<b>How do entrepreneurship instructors' incorporate their lived experiences into their teaching of entrepreneurship? How do the lived experiences of the teacher improve the students entrepreneurial or job skills?</b>
Engaging Activities	Students learn how to manage the daily operations of a business or launch a company through action-oriented exercises. Various activities, including computer games focused on entrepreneurship and Shark Tank.
Integrating Entrepreneurship Experience into Curriculum	Participants demonstrate integrating their entrepreneurial skill into their pedagogical approaches.
External Partnerships	Participants partner with organizations, mentors, consultants, and guest speakers to provide students with real world entrepreneurial and/or business management experiences.
Learning by Doing	Participants provide experiential entrepreneurship activities to enhance student learning outcomes. Students engage in action-oriented activities such as shark tank or internship programs.
Learning from Others	Through internships and workshops, participants give students the opportunity to learn firsthand from outside sources. Students gain practical experience running a business or starting one by working closely with mentors, advisors, and outside companies.

### ***Step 3 - Textual Descriptions***

Texture description is about what the experience is like (Creswell, 1998). The following textual descriptions illustrate that although all of the participants have expertise with entrepreneurship or managing a business, they all have different textual qualities. When all of the details from each distinct description of the texture are put together, they give a full description of the texture. What follow are two examples of individual entrepreneur's textural descriptions,

#### 1. Individual Textural Description: Sara

I actually launched a marketing and public relations event planning company. When doing that, I handled some marketing for small businesses and did some public relations for some individuals during that time. The largest larger events that I produce or fashion shows that they were very very successful.

#### 2. Individual Textural Description: Sandra

I've done multilevel marketing network one and then I've done two service businesses. But I also have a consulting business.

### ***Step 4 - Textual-Structural Descriptions***

The phenomenological research that was conducted ultimately led to the creation of a textual-structural description of the phenomena of the participants integrating their entrepreneurial experiences in their teaching practices. This description is sometimes referred to as the phenomenon's "essence." Within the framework of the phenomenological tradition, the textual-structural description was developed by carefully expanding upon the findings from the data analysis in the same way that they are discussed in this section. This was done with the

intention of demonstrating how the data analysis contributed to the bigger picture. The technique called for in-depth research all the way up until the point when the necessary components were distinguished from the specific and non-essential components. (Polkinghorne, 1989).

### ***Step 5- Cluster of Themes***

The themes highlighted the ways in which the participants were able to put their prior expertise in entrepreneurship and business management into practice on the development of their curriculum. We discovered how they engaged their students through the utilization of external collaborations and resources. The eight themes are: (a) Engaging activities; (b) Business management capabilities; (c) Entrepreneurial capabilities; (d) Integrating entrepreneurship experience (EE) into Curriculum; (e) External partnerships; (f) Learning by doing; (g) Learning from others; and (h) Resources and materials. Three themes were related to research question one and five themes related to Research Question 2 as shown in Table 4.

**Research Question One: How Have The Lived Experiences Of Entrepreneurship Educators Influenced How They Adapt Their Teaching Practices?** Which aspects of teaching are most likely to improve as a result of the teachers' lived experiences as entrepreneurs? There are three themes that address research question one and its sub question: a) business management capabilities, b) entrepreneurial capabilities, and c) resources and materials.

***Theme One: Business Management Capabilities.*** Six out of six participants have business management experience. During their time spent working in business management, each participant was in a position to recognize ideas or opportunities, put those ideas or opportunities into action, and achieve a high level of success. Each participant mentioned that business management capabilities influence their teaching practice.

Theme one is demonstrated by this quote from Sissy:



Basically, management skills. OK., so customer service and management skills because one thing I teach them all the time. The best. And the cheapest form of advertising is word of mouth.

Theme one is also demonstrated by this quote from Sara:

I basically just showed them real life stuff, so I've actually shown them like my listing on the trademark website. I've shown them kind of broken down. What do you have to do in order to obtain a trademark? I also showed them stuff from like bank statements and. Overall reports, as far as I'm and reports where you see the amount of products and things I've sold and just kind of showing them on the data analytics side, how you use those type of things to guide your business from day to day.

***Theme Two: Entrepreneurial Capabilities.*** Bennis and O'Toole (2005) said that the lecturer's experience is very significant because ground management ideas are getting more complicated in the actual world. Entrepreneurship educators should be *pracademic*: a person with both real-world experience and academic credentials who can help put theory into difficult and risky situations like entrepreneurship (Penaluna et al., 2012).

Five of the six participants mentioned that their entrepreneurship experience influences teaching. Real estate, the entertainment industry, automotive, business advising, and the supply of beauty products are among the industries involved.

Theme two is demonstrated with this quote from Sara:

I basically just showed them real life stuff, so I've actually shown them like my listing on the trademark website. I've shown them kind of broken down. What do you have to do in order to obtain a trademark? I also showed them stuff from like bank statements and. Overall reports, as far as I'm and reports where you see the amount of products and things

I've sold and just kind of showing them on the data analytics side, how you use those type of things to guide your business from day to day.

This quote by Susan demonstrates theme two:

All examples that are offered, I always try to pull from my personal experience that I've endured, or I encountered. I often use something I've actually been through or experience to make it relatable to the students, whatever portion of our unit we may be on, I always do that helps connect the dots. I don't just go on.

***Theme Three: Resource and Materials.*** Four out of six participants use additional external resources and materials utilized in actual businesses. Sara demonstrates theme three with the following two quotes:

Excerpt 1

I've actually use some of the sources that I've purchased for myself. So, there's two platforms, one in particular by actually a influencer, by the name of Erin on demand. And I subscribe to her program and a lot of the information that she actually teaches. I use it to teach them to teach the same information to my students.

Excerpt 2

We do some virtual modules through a platform called eVerify Boulder, where they have to go in and actually follow the prompts, answer the questions, and it's basically like they're playing the game. So, they're able to see, you know, if I get if I spend this amount of money on this product. How much do I have left is to purchase these products. So, it is definitely a hands-on type of virtual experience where they're able to kind of see real life and be able to see different scenarios and play around with different scenarios to see what the outcome would be based on what they put in.

Sissy demonstrates theme three with the following quotes:

Excerpt 1

I just ordered that Knowledge Matters study is an online tutorial where you open your business online, you run your business, finding people find items, and it does everything a business. Do everything you teach in a book; you know they are applied in real life. OK, yeah, they apply to that.

Excerpt 2

I use H&R Block to teach students about their personal and business taxes. Partnerships that I had was with Holiday Inn, and I used them at one point as on the board for the school. We had a board of directors, but these were people who came out of industry to meet with the industry to tell us what the industry is looking for. Burt Baker real estate is used to teach, and I still touch upon that to show them how real estate you have to be an agent and so on. And the logistics of that I do.

**Research Question Two: How do entrepreneurship instructors' incorporate their lived experiences into their teaching of entrepreneurship? How do the lived experiences of the teacher improve the students entrepreneurial or job skills?**

There are five themes that address research question two and its sub question: (a) engaging activities, (b) integrating entrepreneurship experience into curriculum, (c) external partnerships, (d) learning by doing, and (e) learning from others.

***Theme Four: Engaging Activities (Active Learning).*** Ryan et al. (1989) argued that students learn both passively and actively. Passive learning takes place when students take on the role of receptacles of knowledge; that is, they do not directly participate in the learning process. Active learning is more likely to take place when students are doing something besides listening

A theme was engaging activities. Engaging activities referred to the experiential activities that the participants utilized to integrate their entrepreneurial or business management experience into their teaching practices. The activities include filling out mock applications, creating business plans, and playing a variety of online games designed to get students involved in entrepreneurial endeavors.

Four participants utilized the following engaging activities: (a) the shark tank, and/or (b) simulations of entrepreneurial games. Two participants confirmed not using any engaging activities including Sam only uses “old school” methods when teaching his students.

***The Shark Tank.*** Two of the four participants that provide engaging activities use the shark tank activity. Presenting your product to a fictitious audience of possible investors was the objective of the educational activity known as *Shark Tank* in the classroom. First, put the participants into groups of three to five people, then give them the task of coming up with a fictitious product to offer to the "Shark" investors, who can range in size from two to four people. This was one of the most popular activities that encouraged students to participate in experiential learning strategies. Students are given the opportunity to collaborate with their classmates on the development of a product or service. Sandra and Stewart used Shark Tank as a tool to engage in entrepreneurial experiences.

Sandra demonstrates theme four in this quote:

Shark Tank. We watch it, then there are the sharks reenact shark tank in groups of 3 -5. I recruit a panel and the students compete to win with their fictitious product or service.

We use junior achievement.

***Entrepreneurial Experiential Game Simulations.*** Two of the four participants that provide engaging activities utilize entrepreneurial experiential game simulations. Role plays,

simulations, and games can be used to help students experience "stressful, unfamiliar, complex, or controversial situations" by creating circumstances that are momentarily real, thereby lettering students develop and practice those skills necessary for coping (Davidson 1984, p. 91) Game simulations are another popular technique that participants use to involve their students in real-world games that allow them to construct a company from the ground up. The game simulations were designed to be aligned with the syllabus and offered a variety of different levels and modules. Susan and Stewart utilized role playing and simulation games as an experiential learning method to teach entrepreneurship.

Sissy demonstrates theme four in this quote:

I just ordered that Knowledge Matters study is an online tutorial where you open your business online, you run your business, finding people find items, and it does everything a business . Do everything you teach in a book; you know they are applied in real life.

OK, yeah, they apply to that.

***“Old School” Techniques.*** Two of the participants were adamant about continuing to use old school teaching strategies in their respective classrooms. Traditional teaching techniques, sometimes known as old school approaches, included assigning students’ homework and quizzes, holding lectures, and using chalkboards. Sam has been in education for over 10 years and states that he is comfortable with the more traditional methods. Susan says, that “walk throughs” are how to complete various tasks related to advertising or sales.

**Table 4**

*Summary of Participants Courses They, Years Teaching, and Practical Experience Offered to Students*

Teacher	Gender	Course taught/currently teach	# Of years teaching	Practice Hands on Experience
Sara	Female	Entrepreneurship, Principles of Marketing	6	Business portfolio, website, mock SOS registration, budget,
Susan	Female	Customer Service, Quest for Success, Advance Career Readiness, Career Readiness	3	Advertising
Sam	Male	Customer Service, Quest for Success, Advance Career Readiness, Career Readiness	9	Internships
Sandra	Female	Entrepreneurship, Principles of Marketing	7	Corporate and personal taxes, business plan, business related forms
Sissy	Female	Principles of Marketing 1 & 2, Business Computer Applications	26	Real Estate, marketing
Stewart	Male	Entrepreneurship, Principles of Marketing	12	Concession stands, vendors, internships, business plan, budget

**Theme Five: Integrating Entrepreneurship Experience Into Curriculum.** Five out of six integrate their entrepreneurship experience into their curriculum by practical hands-on work to advertise or set up a business as shown in Table 5.

Sara demonstrates theme five in this quote:

So, we have they actually have to make a do a portfolio that literally walks them through like conception of a business all the way through execution. So, we do like mock registration with the secretary of state, how they would go about setting up a website, sourcing vendors so they pretty much have to do like every component. I give them a

starting budget. And with its starting budget, that's what they're able to use to actually determine what they're going to, you know, how there are going to be able to do the financials for that particular business, so it requires them to be able to think about how are they going to either raise funds or how they're going to operate. The business started off with what they have. OK.

Susan also demonstrates theme five in this quote:

To teach it? I like to do a lot of walk throughs, those who want to get into an engage, showing them how they're going to do stuff and how to begin and how to use the knowledge that you know, to sell for you. That's how you use yourself to advertise for. The business you're trying to provide show what you know is how you will attract more people to come.

**Theme Six: External partnerships.** One of the most common approaches utilized to improve students' understanding of entrepreneurship was to form partnerships outside the classroom. Six out of six participants utilized external partnership or consultant as a resource to create opportunities for student engagement and entrepreneurial activities.

Stewart demonstrates theme six with this quote:

We are we would use like guest speakers and mentors. Like I said before, in vendors for concession stands. We also Pozzo partner with local businesses that provide internships for students. OK.

Sam demonstrates theme six with this quote:

Well, I formed an internship program as a as a principal with. It was a local. Aluminum plant, and they were having trouble finding workers, this is years before the pandemic that probably did just start with people not wanting to work, so I made a deal with the

gentleman to take five of the with the CEO of the corporation. Well, no, no, not the CEO, the regional manager, to come up with the training program specific, I would say credentials. But you know, markers of competency that would make these people, these students, prime candidates to move up in the company and to basically start about it like a manager and training role rather than at the bottom.

**Theme Seven: Learning by Doing.** According to Rae and Carswell (2001), business owners and entrepreneurs are "action-oriented" (as cited in Cope, 2003, p. 430). Entrepreneurs, according to Young and Sexton (1997), learn primarily through *learning by doing*, which might include activities such as making mistakes, explicitly solving problems, and making discoveries (Cope, 2003, p.430). Arrow (1962) contended that "learning can only take place through the attempt to solve a problem (however mundane), and, as a result, only takes place during activity" (Deakins & Freel, 1998, p. 147). Learning by doing was a common theme among 6 out of 6 of the participants.

Susan commented:

#### Excerpt 1

We do a lot of role play a lot of role play being on both sides of the. Of being the entrepreneur in the client or the client and the entrepreneur, just that, I could see how. How it should play out in from, and they are able to take the toll of the things they've learned in class and to how to apply, and that is to their current experiences to try to nail down how they should conduct themselves in different situations. So well placed before me at that they hate it. But Wednesday, anything it would do. I feel like it's a better way for them to learn because if he is already actively doing it for.



Stewart commented:

Excerpt 1

Well, we go through, we go. I take my students through a business plan, so they get a little experience in marketing and budgeting and working with the school concession stand in the school store. And students also participate in the interim program SCHIP Program Internship Program.

Excerpt 2

Students will, well, how to write a business plan and marketing plan and budget, and how to enter into a contract at work with various vendors. I also teach them about different corporate entities and provide them with tax advice to avoid, you know, spending pretty much all of their money that they're making going and going back to the government for my taxes.

**Theme Eight: Learning From Others.** Learning takes place for entrepreneurs within the broader context of their personal as well as professional connections. Nelson remarked: "We learn from friends...On the other hand, we also pick up useful information from competitors."

The most important thing we can take away from them is the knowledge that they let us recognize our own shortcomings from every angle. If we are willing to improve ourselves, everyone around us, including our friends, our coworkers, and even our rivals, can serve as a kind of mirror for us. It is imperative that we pay attention to the people and businesses that around us, namely how they operate. The process of observation is the means by which we gain knowledge. Of the six participants, five utilized, consultants and resources to equip students with the knowledge and skill to be successful entrepreneurs.

Sara demonstrates theme eight saying:

Now we went to a field trip to the Small Business Career Center, located on Southern University's campus, although it is a field trip there, but we haven't had any guest speakers. Workshops and free consulting services are provided by the Small Business Incubator in order to help entrepreneurs establish and expand new and existing small businesses.

Sandra demonstrates theme eight saying:

So, I have in this place or two with the small business development team or something universities. My kids are going to work in the lab and learn a classroom lecture. It's a practice they got to get an office experience. How how does it feel to sit in on a desk? That is a field to kind of sit at the conference table. It went over business forms, business plans, et cetera, which is my kids have done site visits and smaller businesses in town, and the owners tend to walk them through how their business got started. What are the day to day operations and then even gave the kids the opportunity to kind of work their business for a couple of guys?

## **Summary**

The findings of the phenomenological data analysis is presented using Moustakas' format, which entails data analysis with examples of each theme. The examples supported how each participant demonstrated how their lived experiences influenced how they adapted their teaching practices. Other examples also demonstrated how participants incorporated their lived experiences into their pedagogical approaches and improved students' entrepreneurial or job skills. The researcher used bracketing to exclude personal views and biases before collecting and analyzing data. Eight themes emerged from the analysis. The themes are: (a) Engaging activities;

(b) business management capabilities; (c) entrepreneurial capabilities; (d) integrating entrepreneurship experience (EE) into curriculum; (e) external partnerships; (f) learning by doing; (g) learning from others; and (h) resources and materials. The next chapter presents the discussion of key findings, conclusion, implications for policy and practice, and recommendations for further study.

## **Chapter 5 - Conclusion**

### **Introduction**

Included in this chapter are the discussion of findings, conclusions, and recommendations for this study. The research explored the lived experiences of entrepreneur educators and how they integrated these experiences into the curriculum to teach entrepreneurship effectively. This chapter starts with a review the problem statement, purpose of study, research questions, study design; next the discuss the findings and its relationships to the research question, and conclusions are discussed. Finally, we will discuss the implications of policy or practice and suggestions for further research.

### **Study Problem**

Few teachers have received any training or development in the field of entrepreneurship education, according to Cornwall et al. (1999). The lack of entrepreneurial training for secondary business education teachers may devalue the curriculum. Teachers cannot teach students how to be entrepreneurs unless they are themselves entrepreneurs (European Commission, 2013). There is a gap in our knowledge and understanding of how the lived experiences of entrepreneurs can affect teachers' instructional approaches to introduce the art of entrepreneurship in its many manifestations. As a result, there is an opportunity and a need to investigate entrepreneur educators' perspective and experiences on how to include experiential learning techniques and methodologies into the classroom. This study explored how entrepreneurship educators incorporate their lived experiences into their teaching practices. This study was conducted to explore what activities, materials and resources entrepreneurship educators use to effectively teach entrepreneurship.

## **Purpose of Study**

The purpose of this qualitative phenomenology study is to explore the perspective of entrepreneurial educators in Southeast Louisiana who teach students in grades 9-12, related to how their entrepreneurial experiences have influenced their pedagogical approaches. To provide this study's context, the researcher presented relevant literature in five streams: (a) Entrepreneurship Education, (b) Teaching Methods; (c) Experiential Entrepreneurial Education; (d) Entrepreneurial Educators; and (e) Theories of Experiential Learning. The researcher achieved this study's purpose by collecting and analyzing data from six participants.

## **Theoretical Framework**

The constructivist learning approach and Kolb's (1984) experiential learning theory are both influential in this dissertation. The theoretical framework for this study is experiential learning theory. Experiential learning is a form of adult education that incorporates elements of pedagogical, andragogical, and transformational philosophies. Experiential learning, which meets the requirement to develop skills, traits, and competencies, is at the center of a social constructivist learning paradigm (Mueller et al., 2015). This study's findings and conclusions provide insights that address the following the research questions.

## **Research Questions**

1. How have the lived experiences of entrepreneurship educators influenced how they adapt their teaching practices?
  - Which aspects of teaching are most likely to improve as a result of the teachers' lived experiences as entrepreneurs?
2. How do entrepreneurship instructors' incorporate their lived experiences into their teaching of entrepreneurship?

- How do the lived experiences of the teacher improve the students entrepreneurial or job skills?

### **Research Design Overview**

The method of research known as qualitative phenomenology was used for this study. For the purposes of this research, a phenomenological qualitative research strategy has proven to be the most effective method for comprehending the lived experiences of entrepreneurship educators in Southeast Louisiana. Through qualitative interviews, the researcher was able to learn more about the experiences that the individuals had lived through. The primary purpose of this phenomenological investigation was to investigate the impacts of experiential learning from the perspective of an entrepreneurial educator.

### **Discussion of Key Findings**

Through the application of phenomenology and the use of semi-structured interviews with a total of six participants, this research endeavored to get an understanding of the ways in which educators in the field of entrepreneurship integrate their own life experiences in the classroom. The findings from the analysis of the data presented in Chapter 4 reported eight themes: (a) business management capabilities, (b) entrepreneurial capabilities, (c) resources and materials, (d) engaging activities, (e) integrating entrepreneurship experience into curriculum, (f) external partnerships, (g) learning by doing, and (h) learning from others. This section discusses the findings with reference to their presence in the literature.

***Research Question One: How Have the Lived Experiences of Entrepreneurship Educators Influenced How They Adapt Their Teaching Practices? Sub Question: Which Aspects of Teaching Are Most Likely To Improve as a Result of the Teachers' Lived Experiences as entrepreneurs?***

There are three themes that address research question one and its sub question: (a) business management capabilities, (b) entrepreneurial capabilities, and (c) resources and materials.

**Theme One - Business Management Capabilities.** According to Menzel et al. (2007), “entrepreneurship and organizational intrapreneurship are the basis of technological innovations and firm renewal” (p. 732). Bosma et al. (2011) added intrapreneurial activities such as the recombination of resources, the building of internal coalitions, and the persuading of management to the list of characteristics of intrapreneurship. These intrapreneurial activities are in addition to the activities that are typically attributed to entrepreneurs, such as opportunity-seeking and opportunity recognition.

Theme one is oriented toward those participants who already have prior experience working in business management positions that require them to carry out tasks related to entrepreneurship in their day-to-day work. Each of the participants have experience either in entrepreneurship or in the management of businesses. The participants have previous experience in managing a business that requires one to recognize ideas and possibilities and successfully put them into action. The educational practices of the participants were improved as a direct result of their experiences in business. Each participant, with their own distinct set of life experiences and points of view, incorporated those aspects of their own lives into the teaching practices they developed.

Entrepreneurship educators teaching methods are more effective when they have business management experience. Participants who have previous experience in business management incorporate their business management lived experiences into their teaching practices.

Entrepreneurship educators learn from their lived experiences. Their lived experiences are real world on the job professional development opportunities. Teaching practices are more engaging and practical because they are based on real world problems and activities. Students are taught to, while managing a business, recognize ideas and possibilities and successfully put them into action. Educators bring their curriculum to life with their business management experiences.

**Theme Two - Entrepreneurial Capabilities.** In their definition of educational entrepreneurs, Smith and Petersen (2006) described them as "a rare breed of innovator whose characteristics and activities may lead to the transformation—not merely the slight improvement—of the public school system" (p. 2). According to the research review, educators in entrepreneurship are defined as learning facilitators for their students. The position of the educator may entail a wide range of responsibilities, including advising, mentoring, coaching, and supervision of their students. The problem, according to European Commission (2013), is that educators in the field of entrepreneurship cannot adequately teach entrepreneurial skill unless they themselves had expertise in the field. Five of our six participants, in their capacity as educators, act as mentors, coaches, advisors, or supervisors to the students in their classes. These five participants have entrepreneurship experience. They have started a business and managed it withing the last ten years.

According to the findings of the research, the researcher identified that five participants have prior experience in business ownership, which they draw upon when developing their instructional strategies. Sara established a number of enterprises in a variety of fields, including



the automobile, public relations, and retail sectors, among others. Sissy is a licensed real estate agent who works on her own and also has previous experience working in the nightclub industry as a manager and promoter. Susan works as a choreographer in the dance industry. She is the sole proprietor of and instructor at a dancing studio. Sandra, one of the participants, runs her own business as a business consultant and has prior experience in multilevel marketing as well as the management of consumer portfolios. Last but not least, Stewart is a seasoned retail manager as well as the owner of a retail store. Each participant contributes a unique set of skills and capabilities that improves the education of their students. All of the participants were able to successfully incorporate their business expertise into the classroom setting by making use of a wide variety of resources, materials, partnerships, and engaging activities that reenacted aspects of their real-world experiences.

The research confirms the importance of entrepreneurship educators having entrepreneurial experiences that are relevant to the curriculum. The real world lived experiences of the educators increases their confidence, problem solving skills that enable them to lead, motivate and inspire students' interest in entrepreneurship. Participants are innovative entrepreneurship educators by implementing a constructivist approach in their classrooms. The participants were able to develop entrepreneurial ways of teaching as a result of their lived experiences.

**Theme Three - Resources and Materials Insight.** It is important to organize and make use of instructional materials in order to achieve maximum teaching and learning and to aid in the retention of previously learned concepts. Mkpá (2005) suggested that students remember 20% of what they hear, 30% of what they see, 50% of what they hear and see, 70% of what they hear, see, and talk about, and 90% of what they hear, see, talk about, and do. Akinfe et al. (2012)

pointed out that instructional material speeds up the process of learning, saves the instructor time and effort, boosts students' interest, and makes it easier for them to remember what they've learned. In addition to the aforementioned assertion, Akinfe et al. (2012) believed that the utilization of instructional resources in the process of teaching results in less stress for both the instructor and the students.

Participants offered their students a variety of resources and documents, with the goal of improving their employability and entrepreneurship skills. In the classrooms, participants utilized the resources of online literature, entrepreneurship education computer games, government websites, Small Business Administration (SBA) websites, H&R Block IRS forms, and Secretary of State forms. Other resources included websites of the government and the SBA literature. The findings indicate that the participants made use of resources and materials in order to improve the learning outcomes for the students. Students were successfully given a tool to increase their entrepreneurial or work skills by using the materials and resources that were provided. The resources and materials provided were also useful tools for the instructors in the field of entrepreneurship to use when sharing their own lived experiences.

Participants value resources and materials that will enable them to share their lived experiences and enhance student learning outcomes. To supplement what they are already learning, the participants bring in a variety of other external resources and materials into the classroom to enhance learning outcomes. The research concludes that the use of instructional resources and materials improves student learning because it gives students access to resources that either aid in their comprehension of the work at hand or give them support and guidance as they put their newly acquired knowledge into practice. The materials and resources gave students concrete learning opportunities to fill out real business forms. Students gain exposure to practical

materials they will utilize in the real world. These experiences will give students confidence, problem solving skills, logical and analytical skills. Instructional resources and materials provide students with a deeper understanding of entrepreneurship and how to create and maintain a business. Students are exposed to tax forms and other documents that corporations use every day.

***Research Question Two: How Do Entrepreneurship Instructors Incorporate Their Lived Experiences Into Their Teaching of Entrepreneurship? Sub Question: How Do the Lived Experiences of the Teacher Improve the Students Entrepreneurial or Job Skills?***

This section will discuss the findings of the five themes that address research question two and its sub question: (a) engaging activities, (b) integrating entrepreneurship experience into curriculum, (c) external partnerships, (d) learning by doing, and (e) learning from others.

**Theme Four - Engaging Activities Insight.** Action oriented and problem-based learning, also known as PBL, are teaching approaches that show great promise for fostering the application of acquired information in actual activities involving problem-solving. Lambros (2002) wrote in her book *Problem-Based Learning in K-8 Classrooms* that "PBL creates opportunities in the classroom that traditional approaches simply do not" (p. 4).

To educate students in entrepreneurship in an engaging and effective manner, the participants led *action learning*, project-based learning and problem-based learning (PBL): activities such as shark tank and entrepreneurship computer games. Students have the opportunity to practice problem-solving skills while participating in either of these activities. Students were given opportunities to create business plans or projects based on their own interests.

When students are actively engaged in the learning process by participating in entrepreneurial activities, their education is enhanced. The participants place a high emphasis on

student participation in action-oriented activities that help the development of entrepreneurial or job skills. Students are able to learn the skills necessary to establish and manage a business in real time through the use of action learning, which serves as the foundation for experiential entrepreneurship education. Students are encouraged to take an active role in the process of problem solving, building self-esteem, accumulating experience, and reflecting on their learning. Students will be motivated to collaborate in order to put their recently acquired information into practice by the problem-solving skills they have acquired. Students also became active learners and were self-directed because they were invested in their own projects during shark tank and business plan creation activities.

Students' abilities to think independently and to handle problems more effectively was cultivated as a result of the lived experiences of their teachers. PBL and active learning opportunities are more effective than traditional teaching practices. When compared to more traditional methods of instruction, PBL and active learning have the potential to have a beneficial impact on the learning process. This impact includes improvements in student attitudes toward learning, improved utilization of problem-solving processes, and the acquisition of content knowledge.

**Theme Five - Integrating Entrepreneurship Experience Into Curriculum.** According to Scarborough & Cornwall (2019), very few entrepreneurship educators, such as the participants in this study, have received any training or development in the subject of entrepreneurship education. However, as an inclusion criterion, each of the participants has prior experience in either business administration or business ownership. Five of the six participants have prior experience in entrepreneurship, and one of them has previous experience in business management. As a direct consequence of this, each of them was able to incorporate their lived

experiences into the learning process. The participants made an effort to ensure that the information and activities were relevant to their lives.

Participants' prior work experience includes registering trademarks, developing business plans, comparing bank statements and other financial records, learning how to conduct data analysis, and conducting marketing analysis. While other participants placed an emphasis on professionalism, cursive writing, the creation of business plans, the completion of a variety of business forms, and the management of day-to-day activities in a company, learning how to draft contracts with a variety of vendors, and researching relevant tax laws, customer service, general management of businesses, and preparing business and personal tax returns using H&R Block. Apprenticeships were also organized by participants, which provided students with opportunities to acquire real-world, hands-on experience. Students were expected to be able recognize opportunities that were appealing and monopolize on them.

Integrating the lived experiences of entrepreneurship educators enhances student learning outcomes. Participants would use their lived experiences as a foundation for connecting the dots in order to generate new ideas and approaches. Entrepreneurship educators have a significant impact on students' entrepreneurial intentions by integrating their lived experiences into their teaching practices. Recognizing opportunities and how to strategically monopolize them builds confidence, analytical and problem-solving skills.

**Theme Six - External Partnerships.** According to McMullan and Long (1987), an education in entrepreneurship should be creatively grounded, with student exposure to problem solving and exposure to ambiguous and complex situations. Furthermore, students should have hands-on working experience with community business organizations. Shepherd and Douglas (1997) proposed that the emphasis should be shifted from teaching to learning through hands-on,

active participation in real-life endeavors with constructive feedback from an expert. This shift in emphasis would take place rather than teaching.

Students are able to be completely immersed in a profound external learning process when they participate in entrepreneurship education programs that include practical experience based on involvement with the environments of actual workplaces (Cooper et al., 2004; Jones & English, 2004). In order to help their mentees, achieve their goals and become successful, mentors can play a variety of roles, including those of leaders, models, coaches, teachers, advisers, counselors, and even "friends" (Kent et al., 2003, p. 442).

It was reported that participation in mentoring programs, in which experienced entrepreneurs act as role models and offer advice and support to aspiring entrepreneurs, can increase entrepreneurship behaviors. (Ibrahim & Soufani, 2002). It is possible for mentoring in the realm of entrepreneurship to involve more hands-on forms of assistance, more akin to those of advising or even consulting, making it potentially more comprehensive than mentoring in other contexts (Gravells, 2006).

This study found that all of the participants used external partnerships, mentors, or internships to enhance student learning outcomes. Students were given the opportunity to develop their relationships with their mentors. Students would receive informal internship opportunities from mentors, allowing them to learn about the day-to-day activities of a business. Individuals who have previously held positions on corporate boards of directors were recruited to act as mentors. Participants also arranged for various individuals to come into the classroom and speak to the students about their experiences and areas of expertise. Also, participants set up a mentorship program and facilitated opportunities for students to work and learn directly from concession stand vendors at the school. Opportunities for external partners teach students various

aspects of entrepreneurship and how to manage a business. They learned how to establish their own businesses and how to properly fill out a variety of business forms. Participants make use of the platform provided by YouTube to listen to guest speakers discuss a variety of subjects that are related to the curriculum and work in collaboration with the NAACP to bring students together for a variety of entertaining activities and social events. Students gain experience in event planning, coordination, and performance by participating in these activities.

The participants leverage external relationships in order to improve the educational opportunities available to students. Students were provided with opportunities to participate in real-world entrepreneurial experiences through the use of external collaborations. Exploring the world of entrepreneurship through the lens of experiential education is the most effective method to do so. PBL and active learning were both instances of student learning experiences when the approach is hands-on. Hands on learning experiences with external partnership increase both soft and hard skills among students. Problem solving, analytical skills and self-confidence is cultivated during these interactions. This finding strongly suggests that external partnership opportunities in secondary classrooms are valuable.

**Theme Seven - Learning by Doing.** The student experience is enriched by a learning-by-doing program, which in turn improves the development of the students' entrepreneurial skills and knowledge (Rae & Carswell, 2000). According to Kanji and Greenwood (2001), the most effective method for fostering experiential and opportunity-centered learning is to provide aspiring entrepreneurs with a set of actions to be completed. Experiential projects are a powerful tool in making learning environments meaningful (Higgins & Simpson, 1997), as they enable interaction and effective learning to take place, which fosters the development of reflective skills (Graham, 2004) by introducing uncertainty. There is strong evidence from the literature that

experiential activities are an effective tool in making learning environments meaningful (Heinonen and Poikkijoki, 2006; Higgins & Simpson, 1997).

This study found that participants incorporated learning experiences that were hands-on to cultivate entrepreneurial skills among students. The learning outcomes were enhanced through the hand-on activities provided to students. The hands-on, “learning by doing,” approach provided students with insight on real world applications of entrepreneurship. Students were able to engage in problem solving strategies and then later reflect on their decisions and experiences. Meaningful learning environments that foster connection and successful learning are fostered by the opportunities afforded by the educators' lived experiences.

**Theme Eight - Learning From Others.** In contrast to the more common types of Work Integrated Learning (WIL) opportunities such as co-operative education; traditional internships; and apprenticeships, in which the student is guided by an experienced supervisor; students who are taking part in entrepreneurship education internships and workshops are frequently expected to establish their own business venture (Malach & Malach, 2014; Vincett & Farlow, 2008). Traditional work experience in the workplace WIL programs give students the opportunity to apply the information and skills they have gained in their academic fields within a setting that is more similar to an actual working environment.

One participant in this study established a partnership with the management team at an aluminum plant in order to coordinate and carry out the implementation of an internship program for some of the students. Students were offered the opportunity to work in the plant, receive on-the-job training for different positions within the plant, and even receive promotions in some cases. In conjunction with Southern University's small business development team, participants are a collaborator in that effort. Students at Southern University have access to a lab that teaches



them about business strategies while also providing them with the opportunity to gain practical experience by working in an office environment. In addition, some participants work together with the Small Business Center at Southern University and a number of different guest lecturers. Students learn how to develop business plans, how to start a business, and how to fill out business forms through the Small Business Center's workshops. Finally, participants offered a variety of opportunities to participate in hands-on activities that taught them how to launch and run their businesses. In addition to managing a concession stand, students crafted business plans with the guidance of mentors, emphasizing marketing strategies and budgeting. Students had the opportunity to acquire a variety of skills related to business management and entrepreneurship through the course of their internship experiences.

When students are able to learn from others, their own learning is accelerated. This study found that students had opportunities to learn from others through various activities that were based on the lived experiences of the participants. The events were engaging and based on problem-based learning and active learning. Kolb's experiential learning theory was shown in the study's literature to be a good way for students to learn about entrepreneurship. Kolb's four step process, (a) concrete experience, (b) reflective observation, (c) abstract conceptualization, and (d) active experimentation is carried out with learning by doing opportunities. Students are engaged in active experimentation by trying out what they are learning in the classroom during internships, working the concession stand, filling out forms and participating in shark tank or entrepreneurship games. Students have the concrete experiences during the activities. Afterwards, students reflect on their experiences formally or informally and then learn from their experience.

## Conclusions

Conclusions from this study cannot be generalized to all entrepreneurship education programs as the focus was primarily on entrepreneurship educators' lived experiences in Southeast Louisiana secondary schools. However, this study confirms that entrepreneurship educators' lived experiences are valuable and beneficial to students. Entrepreneurial competence and knowledge of business management are crucial success factors in entrepreneurial endeavors; therefore, teachers who are to teach entrepreneurship should also possess these competencies (Capote & Vedula-Dinagsao, 2016). There are two conclusions for this study: (a) Entrepreneurship educators' entrepreneurial competence and knowledge of business management are crucial success factors and (b) This study also affirms that collaboration between schools, external partnerships, and other community members is vital for the success of skill-based training aimed at increasing employment and aspiring entrepreneurs.

This qualitative phenomenological study sought to understand how entrepreneurship educators implement their lived experiences into the classroom. Understanding how entrepreneurship educators integrated their lived experiences into their pedagogical approaches in secondary classrooms allows school administrators and other educators to enhance student learning outcomes. The main themes that emerged from the thematic analysis of the answers to the research questions addressed the integration of the educators' lived experiences into their teaching practices. In addition, entrepreneurship educators utilized external partnerships, action-oriented, project-based, and problem-solving activities to foster entrepreneurial and business management skills in their students. This study also confirms that collaboration between schools, external partnerships, and other community members is critical for the success of skill-based training aimed at achieving a higher level of employment and entrepreneurial aspiration. The

studies by Barr et al. (2009) and Thursby et al. (2009) demonstrate that entrepreneurship education programs that adopt a learning-by-doing approach are effective in enhancing the entrepreneurial characteristics and abilities of students and in promoting the beginning of an entrepreneurial career.

### **General Implications**

The study's results are significant for two reasons. The study contributes to the field of entrepreneurship education by (a) assisting school administrators with implementing a more effective experiential learning theory in their business content classrooms and (b) assisting entrepreneurship educators with implementing effective teaching styles as a result of their lived experiences. This research has significant implications for educators and school administrators because it provides effective ways entrepreneurship educators can enhance their teaching approaches. This study highlights engaging activities, effective instructional materials and resources, various external partnerships and other significant ways the lived experiences of teachers can impact student learning outcomes. Little research has been done on entrepreneurship teachers and how they use their own experiences to teach entrepreneurship.

This research explored how entrepreneurship educators brought their lived experiences as entrepreneurs into the classroom through the use of various resources, materials, external partnerships, and engaging activities. Given that students learn about everyday occurrences, the lived experiences of entrepreneurship educators have a significant effect on students gaining entrepreneurship and job skills. This finding will benefit entrepreneurship educators and school administrators when determining what activities, external partnerships, materials and resources are more effective when teaching entrepreneurship. These findings can also create consistency within entrepreneurship education and how they enhance student learning outcomes.

This research can shape entrepreneurship education policy for secondary schools. Local government, national government and other non-government organizations can create and implement laws, regulation and processes that support effective learning strategies in the classroom. Law makers can implement regulations that insist that entrepreneurship educators all have entrepreneurship education. Also, a future implication is professional development training for teachers on how to use their entrepreneurship experience more effectively in their teaching. Professional development training is accessible to all entrepreneurship educators. The results of this study will create a framework for entrepreneurship education that all educators can use. The framework will be a set of standards that align with appropriate instructional materials and resources, external partnership and engaging activities that are project and problem solving based. By providing a more thorough knowledge of the theory that supports the pedagogical practice, the proposed framework aids educators in their capacity to provide experiential entrepreneurship education. This will serve as a recap to help teachers improve their methods to the fullest extent possible.

This study has important implications for entrepreneurship education. Entrepreneurship Education has a significant impact on all of our economies: local, regional, national, and worldwide. Giving young people real-world and hands-on ways to learn about business improves their ability to solve problems and think critically. Students can take part in action-based, PBL-based learning in a safe and supportive setting that fosters learning.

### **Theoretical Implications**

In addition to Kolb, the findings from this study relates to two other theories or ideas in the field of entrepreneurship education. The first theory is connectivism proposed by George Siemens and Stephen Downes in 2004. Connectivism is one of the newest learning theories in

education. It emphasizes the concept that individuals learn and develop through social connections. This may include connections with each other or with their duties and responsibilities in life. Hobbies, objectives, and persons can all serve as learning-influencing connections.

Connectivism can be used in the classroom to help students make connections to things that stimulate them, thereby enhancing their learning. Educators can use digital media to establish beneficial learning connections. They can facilitate the formation of connections and relationships between their students and their peers in order to motivate students to learn. Students are viewed as *nodes* in a network according to connectivism. A node is any object that can be connected to another object, such as a book, a website, or an individual. Connectivism is based on the theory that we learn by forming connections, or *links*, between different nodes of information, and that we continue to form and maintain these connections in order to form knowledge.

Connectivism proposes that technology is altering what, how, and where we learn by building upon previously established theories. Siemens and Downes identified eight connectivism principles in their research.

The main principles of connectivism are:

- Learning and knowledge rests in the diversity of opinions.
- Learning is a process of connecting.
- Learning may reside in non-human appliances.
- Learning is more critical than knowing.
- Nurturing and maintaining connections are needed for continual learning.
- The ability to see connections between fields, ideas, and concepts is a core skill.

- Accurate, up-to-date knowledge is the aim of all connectivist learning.
- Decision-making is a learning process. What we know today might change tomorrow. While there's a right answer now, it might be wrong tomorrow due to the constantly changing information climate.

If we apply the above principles of connectivism to entrepreneurship education we'd conclude:

- Learning and knowledge rests on the diversity of opinions of the different entrepreneurship educators.
- Learning is a process of connecting with external partnerships, peers (during project-based assignments), and engaging "action-oriented" activities.
- Learning may reside with online virtual entrepreneurship games.
- Learning is more about thinking critically about the knowledge and experiences that the lived experiences of entrepreneurs bring to the field of entrepreneurship education.
- Collaboration and maintaining relationships with external partnership and other community organizations or leaders to enhance entrepreneurship education.
- The ability to make connections between course content and real-world connections and experiences.
- Entrepreneurship Education must be innovative and evolve with time, technology, culture and the economy.

The second theory is social cognitive theory by Bandura in 1992. Albert Bandura's (1986) social learning theory establishes that the environment causes behavior, but behavior also causes the environment. Bandura referred to this notion as *reciprocal determinism*, in which the environment and human behavior are mutually caused. Bandura believed that human behavior

must be explained in terms of the interaction between cognitive, behavioral, and environmental factors. If we apply the concepts to entrepreneurship education programs, we can conclude that student observation and interaction with previous entrepreneurs can reinforce entrepreneurial behavior. The observation and imitation of former entrepreneurs will have an impact on the cognitive factors of the students and can help them determine whether or not to imitate the observed behaviors. However, educators must implement this theory to the curriculum (workshops, extracurricular activities) and student interactions.

### **Recommendations for Future Research**

Based on the findings and conclusions of this study, there are two recommendations for future research. A longitudinal study might be done in the future to examine the long-term effects of entrepreneurship education. Exploring cultural and economic differences could also be investigated by repeating the study with a larger sample or a different community.

The second suggestion will address the future studies that might contribute to the field of education. The incorporation of entrepreneurship principles into other class curricula besides an entrepreneurship class would be beneficial research for schools. The relevance of classes to the business world would help students comprehend the significance of what they are learning overall, as well as how to implement the skills they have acquired outside the classroom.

### **Summary**

This chapter provided a review of the study's problem, purpose of study, research questions, research sub questions, the study's emerging themes, insight for each of them, implications, theoretical implications and recommendations for future research. There were nine major takeaways from the themes: (a) participants value resources and materials that will enable them to share their lived experiences and enhance student learning outcomes; (b) participants

place a high emphasis on student participation in action-oriented activities that help the development of entrepreneurial or job skills; (c) to supplement what they are already learning, the participants bring in a variety of other external resources and materials into the classroom to enhance learning outcomes; (d) participants leverage external relationships in order to improve the educational opportunities available to students; (e) participants who have previous experience in business management or entrepreneurship incorporate their real-world knowledge and expertise into their teaching methods; (f) when students are actively engaged in the learning process by participating in entrepreneurial activities, their education is enhanced; (g) when students are able to learn from others, their own learning is accelerated; h) integrating the lived experiences of entrepreneurship educators enhances student learning outcomes and i) educators or administrators with experience in entrepreneurship facilitate professional development training for educators to guarantee that training includes the real-world knowledge of an entrepreneur.



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## APPENDIX A

## Interview Questions

Research Questions	Corresponding Interview Questions
<p>RQ 1: How have the lived experiences of entrepreneurship educators influenced how they adapt their teaching practices?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Which aspects of teaching are most likely to improve as a result of the teachers' lived experiences as entrepreneurs?</li> </ul>	<p>IQ 1: How long have you taught entrepreneurship?</p> <p>IQ 2: Did you receive entrepreneurship training when being trained as a teacher? If yes, please expand:</p> <p>IQ 3: What professional experience as an entrepreneur do you have?</p> <p>IQ 4: What written resources do you use in your Entrepreneurship classes?</p>
<p>RQ 2: How do entrepreneurship instructors' incorporate their lived experiences into their teaching of entrepreneurship?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How do the lived experiences of the teacher improve the students entrepreneurial or job skills?</li> </ul>	<p>IQ 5: What experiential activities have you conducted using external partnerships/consultants?</p> <p>IQ 6: What experiential exercises/ games have you used to teach entrepreneurship?</p> <p>IQ 7: What use do you make of external partners/consultants?</p> <p>What other resources do you find helpful?</p> <p>IQ 8: What activities do your students engage in that prepares them for entrepreneurship and business management?</p> <p>IQ 9: What experiences do you bring from your entrepreneurial pursuits to the classroom that benefit your students?</p> <p>IQ 10: Did you teach intrapreneurship (entrepreneurship practiced within an existing organization) in your entrepreneurship class? If yes, what resources do you use in addition to the written notes in the curriculum guide</p> <p>IQ 11: Is there anything else you would like to add to your interview?</p>

## APPENDIX B

## IRB Approval

Pepperdine University  
24255 Pacific Coast Highway  
Malibu, CA 90263  
TEL: 310-506-4000

## NOTICE OF APPROVAL FOR HUMAN RESEARCH

Date: January 26, 2023

Protocol Investigator Name: Latonya Wiley

Protocol #: 22-12-2039

Project Title: Examining how entrepreneurial educators' perspectives and lived experiences have shaped their pedagogical approaches in secondary education

School: Graduate School of Education and Psychology

Dear Latonya Wiley:

Thank you for submitting your application for exempt review to Pepperdine University's Institutional Review Board (IRB). We appreciate the work you have done on your proposal. The IRB has reviewed your submitted IRB application and all ancillary materials. Upon review, the IRB has determined that the above entitled project meets the requirements for exemption under the federal regulations 45 CFR 46.101 that govern the protections of human subjects.

Your research must be conducted according to the proposal that was submitted to the IRB. If changes to the approved protocol occur, a revised protocol must be reviewed and approved by the IRB before implementation. For any proposed changes in your research protocol, please submit an amendment to the IRB. Since your study falls under exemption, there is no requirement for continuing IRB review of your project. Please be aware that changes to your protocol may prevent the research from qualifying for exemption from 45 CFR 46.101 and require submission of a new IRB application or other materials to the IRB.

A goal of the IRB is to prevent negative occurrences during any research study. However, despite the best intent, unforeseen circumstances or events may arise during the research. If an unexpected situation or adverse event happens during your investigation, please notify the IRB as soon as possible. We will ask for a complete written explanation of the event and your written response. Other actions also may be required depending on the nature of the event. Details regarding the timeframe in which adverse events must be reported to the IRB and documenting the adverse event can be found in the *Pepperdine University Protection of Human Participants in Research: Policies and Procedures Manual* at [community.pepperdine.edu/irb](http://community.pepperdine.edu/irb).

Please refer to the protocol number denoted above in all communication or correspondence related to your application and this approval. Should you have additional questions or require clarification of the contents of this letter, please contact the IRB Office. On behalf of the IRB, I wish you success in this scholarly pursuit.

Sincerely,

Judy Ho, Ph.D., IRB Chair

cc: Mrs. Katy Carr, Assistant Provost for Research