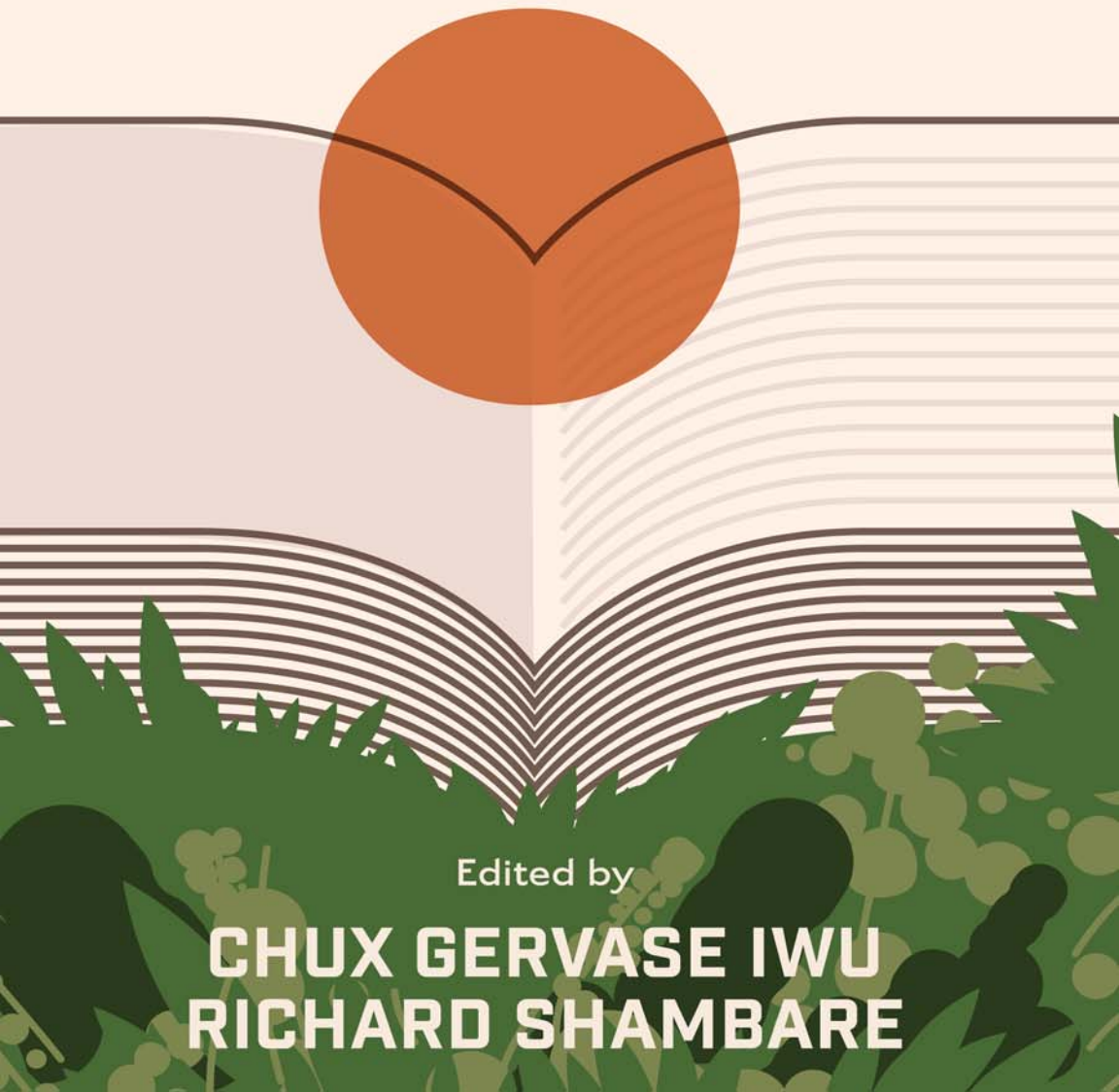
DELIVERING ENTREPRENEURSHIP EDUCATION IN AFRICA

New Perspectives



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Delivering Entrepreneurship Education in Africa

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Delivering Entrepreneurship Education in Africa: New Perspectives

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INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

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Foreword

The normative commitment to entrepreneurship and entrepreneurship education can be found in almost any education and training document in South Africa. It sounds deceptively easy to do and nice to have. There are fewer and fewer jobs in the formal economy, the argument goes; so young people need to learn to create their own work opportunities and earn their own income. I like the idea, of course, especially because South Africa is not a high innovation country and our education system prizes conformity over dissent and group think over individual ingenuity.

It is for these reasons and more that I treasure the idea of entrepreneurship for and among youth. Having lived a sizeable chunk of my academic life in the Silicon Valley I was always amazed at how common it was to meet young people trying out a new idea. It carries risk, of course. You will fail often before you get something right. No doubt you will lose money along the way. But that is exactly the point – to experiment, to think outside of the box and to work towards a breakthrough that could improve lives and yes, make yourself tons of money in the process.

But how do you do that in an anti-innovation culture where risk is punished and the established algorithm followed dutifully. Ask a child in a South African school who tried to solve a quadratic equation in three steps rather than the five laid out by the teacher; punishment is swift.

That is what the editors help us bridge in this remarkable book, the ideals of entrepreneurship policy, on the one hand, and the hard social and educational reality of people's lives, on the other hand. This book is situated within the variable contexts of individual student lives and this immediately gives it a conceptual sophistication often absent in the more preachy forms of entrepreneurship texts. For example, concept mapping, a powerful tool in education that gives you insight into the minds of learners that has, by the way, shown to have enormous value in one of my fields of interests, science learning.

I would highly recommend this book to university teachers, policymakers, planners, curriculum designers and the up-and-coming entrepreneur who is tired of hearing what should be and eager to know how we can build a durable and science-informed entrepreneurship among all our students.

Jonathan D Jansen
Distinguished Professor of Education
Stellenbosch University
16 May 2023

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When this book was conceived, an important consideration was given to the review process. Putting a book of this nature together involves a team of dedicated reviewers and a good reviewer template. We thank Dr Han Ping Fung, Enterprise Architect at Hewlett Packard Enterprise for allowing the use of his template. We are equally grateful to the reviewers for critically assessing the submissions. Through your effort, we are convinced that we have a book that provokes elaborate discourse on entrepreneurship education within the African context. And finally, but by no means a miniature acknowledgment, we thank the Distinguished Professor of Education, Jonathan Jansen, for taking the time to comb through the contributions and offering a foreword. Thank you, Prof.

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Chapter 1

The Flipped Classroom Effect on Entrepreneurship Education: Applying Critical Pedagogy in Digital Environments

Patient Rambe

Abstract

Literature has recognised entrepreneurship education as the main conduit through which entrepreneurial behaviours, attitudes and actions can be built, enacted and delivered. Since the founding of new ventures is largely a resourceful founder-driven enterprise, entrepreneurship education has largely centred on galvanising and shifting the mindsets and cognition of the entrepreneur. Yet, despite over 60 years of delivering entrepreneurship education programmes, hard evidence of the generation of high-growth-oriented and sustainable ventures has been scarce as student entrepreneurship intentions do not always translate into successful venture creation. This is largely because of the complexities of the practicality of entrepreneurial education particularly, the dissonance between acquired education in business schools and the knowledge and competencies needed in the entrepreneurial field. Such dissonance can be attributed to the lack of clarity on the pedagogical approach that most resonates with entrepreneurial action, the diversity in assessment methods and the scholarly illusion pertaining to how pedagogical approaches can be channelled to the generation of growth-oriented ventures. Drawing on Girox's concepts of transformative critical pedagogy (including pedagogy of repression), Socratic dialogue, Hegelian dialectic and Yrjö Engeström's transformative expansive agency, I demonstrate how a flipped transformative critical pedagogy can be harnessed in digitally enhanced learning environments to create new entrepreneurial possibilities for facilitating critical inquiry, complex problem-solving, innovation for the market and fostering tolerance for failure in ambiguous entrepreneurial contexts.

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Introduction

The centrality of entrepreneurial mindsets in driving economic transformation, job creation opportunities, creating regional economic clusters and lifting the bottom of the pyramid of society out of poverty is largely acknowledged in entrepreneurship literature. For instance, entrepreneurship is widely recognised in literature as critical to fuelling economic development and growth (Acs, Estrin, Mickiewicz, & Szerb, 2018; Agu, Kalu, Esi-Ubani, & Agu, 2021; Ndofirepi, 2020), sustaining innovation, enhancing industrialisation, job creation opportunities and reducing levels of poverty (Dima, 2021; Nájera-Sánchez, Pérez-Pérez,·& González-Torres, 2022). Moreover, there is compelling evidence linking sustainable development to sustainable entrepreneurship, as re-oriented business enterprises and entrepreneurial behaviour are acknowledged as the engines for economic, social and environmental progress (Klapper & Fayolle, 2023). In view of the global crises which manifest in resource scarcity, deepening social injustice and growing social inequality, the continual questioning of capital accumulation in capitalist societies and the fragile nature of economic, ecological, environmental, political and national demographic structures (Anand, Argade, Barkemeyer, & Salignac, 2021; Raworth, 2017), the role of transformative entrepreneurship in harnessing economic opportunities and business models to create a more equitable and democratic world cannot be underestimated.

Following the line of reasoning of entrepreneurship as an economic stimulant, many national governments and universities in Africa, the European Union and the world over have recast their attention to entrepreneurship education in their vocational curriculum and training as well as their comprehensive schooling system (Engeström & Käyhkö, 2021; European Commission, 2012). In fact, national governments and university regulatory bodies have looked up to public and private universities, and technical and vocational education training (TVET) colleges as centres of excellence for imparting to learners the mindsets, expertise and practical abilities necessary to launch and manage entrepreneurial ventures through enterprise education programmes and other institutional support mechanisms (Ndedi, 2013; Ndofirepi, 2022).

At the heart of the notion of entrepreneurship education, is the notion that an educational programme that foregrounds human agency, entails new problem-solving, hones creativity, technical skills and instils innovative attitudes (Moberg, 2014; Morselli, 2019; Rae & Wang, 2015) serves as the *raison d'être* for tertiary learning and a force for transforming society. Therefore, the late 1990s have seen the introduction of the human and social dynamics of entrepreneurs that seem to challenge the economic basis on which entrepreneurship has been traditionally founded (Rae & Wang, 2015). Despite the wider reception and projection of entrepreneurship education as the *tour de force* that any entrepreneurial society must be premised on (Engeström & Käyhkö, 2021), compelling evidence of graduating university students generating wealth-creating and self-sustaining businesses is hard to encounter in emerging contexts. For instance,

due to the time span between ruminating about venture creation and engagement in entrepreneurship, Roos and Melodi Botha (2022) have reported the persistence of a wide chasm between entrepreneurial intentions and entrepreneurship action. While entrepreneurial intention denotes students' belief that they will start a new business venture in the future (Bird, 1988), entrepreneurial action comprises the actions that culminate in the development of new products or processes, entry into new markets or the creation of new ventures (Mullen & Shepherd, 2006).

Apart from the contextual difficulties that impact entrepreneurial mindsets and values, the role of family and formal institutions in delivering entrepreneurship outcomes (Roos & Melodi Botha, 2022), a more serious inhibitor to the pursuit of entrepreneurship behaviours is the way entrepreneurship education is delivered. The failure of current entrepreneurial pedagogical models and strategies to resonate with local contexts of their application constitutes one of the chief reasons for the difficulties in deploying entrepreneurship education as a vehicle of generating value-creating and value-enhancing sustainable enterprises. For instance, critics of entrepreneurial education delivery have emphasised the major chasm between the knowledge and skills students acquire through entrepreneurial education and the required knowledge and skills for the real world of business (Baldwin, Pierce, Joines, & Farouk, 2011; Farashahi & Tajeddin, 2018). Following these challenges regarding the efficacy of entrepreneurial education, multiple pedagogical approaches have flourished to bridge this gap and develop the required professional skills. In addition to educator-centred teaching (e.g. lectures, entrepreneurship talks and conferences), other approaches to educational delivery range from action learning, evidence-based learning to practice-based learning (Farashahi & Tajeddin, 2018; Raelin, 2007; Reynolds & Vince, 2004; Rousseau & McCarthy, 2007). While the proliferation of teaching pedagogies and learning approaches was supposed to help educators align teaching and learning approaches to different contexts, this has also created complexities regarding which teaching approaches are well suited for which contexts. Even though the provision of diverse skills and competences remains the essence of entrepreneurial education (Klimoski & Amos, 2012), there is consensus among educators and practitioners on the inadequacy of business education in the development of key management competencies relevant to the 21st century's world of business (Farashahi & Tajeddin, 2018; Mill, 2007).

Although many signature and best model pedagogies for entrepreneurship education have been developed (e.g. Jones, 2019; Peschl, Deng, & Larson, 2021), these frameworks have often been developed from a Western point of view (Bell & Cui, 2023). As such, in view of the paucity of compelling evidence on the exact impact of entrepreneurship education and entrepreneurship outcomes, there has been louder calls for entrepreneurship education to be more contextualised in local settings (Bell, 2020), and for further research into the development of entrepreneurship teaching approaches that are contextualised within local cultures (Lyu, Shepherd, & Lee, 2021).

The chapter contends that the widely employed teacher-centred didactic learning of entrepreneurship education in tertiary institutions, which emphasises transmission pedagogies, entrenches rote memorisation of academic content, cohort-based metrics for assessing academic performance, and obsesses with

assessment is inadequate for realising transformative entrepreneurship behaviours. Such a learning approach seems incongruent with the basic tenets of transformative entrepreneurial behaviour which necessitates learner-based approaches that emphasise an innovative conviction, creative cognitive mindset, founded on continual complex problem-solving, experimentation through trial and error, tolerance for multiple failures and seeking practical solutions to complex global societal challenges (i.e. a social and market-driven orientation). Entrepreneurship education has traditionally been critiqued for assigning limited importance to individual cognitions as its focus has largely been on technical skills such as writing a business plan or preparing financial forecasts (Chen, Greene, & Crick, 1998; Schindehutte, Morris, & Allen, 2006; Tarasanski, 2020). This is surprising as metacognition (that is, one's knowledge of their cognitions, as well as the capacity to regulate them) (Flavell, 1979), itself a cognitive skill, is not only critical to engagement in entrepreneurship (Bastian & Zucchella, 2022) but also fundamental to developing a deeper understanding of what entrepreneurs must know including the generation of new knowledge by identifying potential avenues for applying their creativity (Mitchell, Smith, Gustafsson, Davidsson, & Mitchell, 2005; Schraw & Dennison, 1994; Tarasanski, 2020). Metacognition is credited with assisting entrepreneurs to self-generate different frameworks and combine them with a set of goals to make use of in a changing environment (Haynie & Shepherd, 2009), contributing to higher degrees of responsiveness to uncertainty (Mattingly, Kushev, Ahuja, & Ma, 2016).

Although deemed effective in addressing massification of higher education, high student staff ratios, declining funding for higher education and meeting efficiency imperatives, teaching entrepreneurship education using traditional didactic teaching and learning methods has not been foolproof. Research evidence from several studies revealed that the deployment of traditional learning methods increases the risk of failure in students 1.5 times (Freeman et al., 2014; Yesildag & Bostan, 2023). This could be contrasted with a flipped classroom, a student-centred environment where students learn by cogitating and engaging with texts and peers; they are active listeners and have increased responsibility for their learning (Desai, Jabeen, Abdul, & Rao, 2018). We contend that the fusion of acquisition approaches with transformative constructivist elements premised on promoting active participation, independent enquiry, practical ability, problem-solving skills and teamwork, and reduced reliance on the educator as a 'sage on the stage' that reinforce passive learning, rote memorisation and repetitive training (Bell & Cui, 2023) could greatly transform the delivery of process-oriented entrepreneurship education. While the superimposing of traditional educator-driven approaches on constructivist approaches could trigger systemic tensions, this could be a fine balance between metacognition arising from direct instruction and responsibility for student learning. While there are some inherent contradictions between transfer of knowledge based on instruction, repetition, reinforcement and testing (Tan, 2015, 2016) and ethos of transformative learning of entrepreneurship where the learner is the driving force of critical thinking, reflection, experimentation and active learning, this amalgam could usher in a healthy balance between knowledge acquisition and self-generation of content.

The chapter makes three important contributions. First, the chapter challenges the wholesale importation and transposing of progressive entrepreneurship education models and methods used abroad, which may not necessarily be amenable to local indigene contexts (Lyu et al., 2021). For instance, in traditional educational contexts of Africa, where younger people defer authority to the older mature generations, the institution of constructivist pedagogical strategies would need to be negotiated, adapted and reconstituted to be meaningful to students. The transition from educator-dominated pedagogical strategies of delivering entrepreneurship education would need a deliberate phasing in and combining of traditional transmission mode with constructivist pedagogical styles to prevent 'cultural shocks' for students historically acclimatised to instructivist approaches to delivery. This is particularly critical given the sparse research investigating and combining transformative and traditional approaches to meeting state directives to introduce more progressive education practice (Bell & Cui, 2023; Lyu et al., 2021).

Second, given the lack of compelling evidence on the direct nexus between entrepreneurship education and generation of sustainable entrepreneurship, recent literature points to the uncertainty surrounding the delivery of entrepreneurship education programmes and associated support mechanisms, in delivering the intended goals and impact (Ndofirepi, 2022). This dilemma necessitates further investment in research into this grey area. Martin, McNally, and Kay (2013, p. 211), for example, cast doubt on the significance of provision of entrepreneurship education and training in the development of more socially impactful entrepreneurs. Therefore, attention must be directed at the combination of teaching strategies, activities and practices that would generate transformative entrepreneurship outcomes. Moreover, there has been divergent and inconclusive results on the nature of the relationship between entrepreneurship education and the generation of entrepreneurship intentions. For instance, while some studies suggest that entrepreneurship education exert a direct and positive effect on entrepreneurship intentions (Huber, Sloof, & Praag, 2014; Walter & Block, 2016), some studies have claimed the opposite (Nabi, Walmsley, Liñán, Akhtar, & Neame, 2018; Ozaralli & Rivenburgh, 2016). Yet some studies have pointed to the mediated nature of this relationship (Li & Wu, 2019; Nguyen & Nguyen, 2023).

Third, following the flourishing of research emphasising the potency of providing a conducive context to the success of entrepreneurship activity (Malecki, 2018; Manimala, Thomas, & Thomas, 2019), how the academic context and nature of pedagogical delivery inform the production of demonstrable outcomes and impacts cannot be taken for granted. This is critical as the development of entrepreneurial mindsets is partly dependent on the context of entrepreneurship education delivery. In view of the proliferation of research targeting industrial districts, clusters, innovation systems and entrepreneurial ecosystems as critical milieus and environments for commercial enterprise (De Brito & Leitão, 2021; Ndofirepi, 2022), the role of the space of knowledge production and delivery in shaping entrepreneurship outcomes such as new ventures, job creation and economic transformation cannot be assumed to be obvious. Yet

when considering space of delivery as a factor in delivering dependable outcomes, researchers must be acutely aware of the current limitations of flipped and blended modes of pedagogical delivery. Institutional culture, infrastructure difficulties, deficiencies in technological usability, the lack of pedagogical and peer support and lack of clarity on universities' purpose for its adoption are cited as critical impediments to the adoption of blended and technology-supported flipped learning modes (Brew, Boud, Lucas, & Crawford, 2020; Jensen, Price, & Roxå, 2020). Consequently, technology has often been harnessed for information transfer and administrative purposes, rather than as a key feature of university pedagogy (Rosenbusch, 2020; Truss & Anderson, 2023).

The rest of the chapter is structured as follows: first, the theoretical development section discusses Giroux's critical pedagogy, Socratic dialogue, Hegelian dialectic and Engeström's expansive learning. Second, related literature on pedagogical delivery of entrepreneurship education and flipped classrooms is discussed. Third, the nature and complexion of a flipped critical pedagogy in digitally enhanced learning environments is presented and supported by a proposed conceptual model. Fourth, the implications of the study for theory and practice are discussed. Lastly, a conclusion is rendered.

Theoretical Development

Giroux's transformative critical pedagogy and pedagogy of repression.

Henry Giroux's thinking on transformative critical pedagogy follows the luminary works of Paulo Freire's educational model and pedagogy. Freire believed that existing educational systems mirror the existing power relations between the dominant and dominated groups. As such, such systems imbed the interests of those who hold power and therefore, education systems reflect and shape the structure of society (Mejia, 2004). Consequently, educational systems are incapable of ushering in transformative change in society, as they reinforce and produce a capitalist class structure (Klapper & Fayolle, 2023). The knowledge transmission model in which the teacher (as the knowledge dispenser) disseminates knowledge to students (knowledge receivers) constitutes a manipulative 'banking' pedagogy, which is 'characteristic of education for domination' (Mejia, 2004, p. 66), which denies the learner the validity of ontological and epistemological production of knowledge, silences and disempowers them from having their 'own histories' (Akkari & Mesquida, 2008; Freire, 1998).

Giroux (2019) critiques the current education delivery modes as 'pedagogies of repression' that are founded on annihilating imagination by emphasising rote memorisation of text, the application of objective [teaching and assessment] standards and designed to undercut the possibility for students to be critical thinkers. He submits that, since education pedagogy and assessment methods are silent about the most fundamental questions about education, especially ideology, culture, power and authority, which define the foundation upon which knowledge is based and constituted, education contains the worst forms of repression. The neo-liberal democracy agenda to 'raising standards' and 'mandating

competencies' through statewide and national standardised testing, including the wider calls to abandon multicultural and secular humanist curricula in favour of 'traditional values' and a back-to-basics 'core curriculum' (Franca, 2019), would not sufficiently transform education. For him, the current system of education including the technologies that undergird the delivery of such pedagogies constitute fascist politics as they conceal their code for inhibiting students to appreciate the role that education plays ideologically, in producing particular forms of knowledge, power, social values, agency and narratives about the world (Franca, 2019; Giroux, 2019).

For Giroux, critical pedagogy challenges the existence of the premise that education can be ideologically neutral and posits that the notion of neutrality hides what education really involves. Critical pedagogy, therefore, challenges the myth that education can be neutral as it implies that educators responsible for the production of education must not be accountable for the kind of knowledge they produce including the power, ideological and class struggles that undergird such knowledge (Franca, 2019). Therefore, the process of transforming theory and practice of education calls into question the importance of being critical and the transforming of established institutions and practices including transforming society itself (Giroux, 1981). The projection of schools as sorting and tracking institutions that treat and teach working class students differently than middle and upper classes must consider that schools cannot be analysed outside the context in which they operate (Hudson, 1999).

Therefore, the monolithic view of schools as instruments of domination, the curriculum as hidden and students as passive recipient of knowledge fails to take cognisance of their capacity to think, reflect and creatively engage in ways that bring cognitive transformation, and by extension societal transformation. As such, the conception of academic institutions as replications of societal structures of domination fails to adequately account for this reproduction not only as serving the interest of domination but also as containing the seeds of conflict and transformation (Giroux, 1981). Therefore, institutions of learning cannot be narrowly construed merely as institutions reinforcing the dialectical conception of ideology as false consciousness but also accommodate how individuals and groups negotiate, resist and accept such indoctrination. Following the Gramscian conception of hegemony, Giroux contends that hegemony finds expression not only 'in the significations inherent in school texts, films, and academic discourse' but also 'in those practical experiences that need no discourse, the message of which lingers beneath a structured silence' (1981, p. 109). As such, any attempt at examining hegemony must also take cognisance of how such hegemony is sustained, contested and resisted, creating avenues for mental transformation.

Socratic Dialogue

The Socratic dialogue is one of the most celebrated ways of promoting critical inquiry and deeper conversations. For, Schiller (2008), Socrates often proposed a question on complex but interesting subjects (e.g. beauty, virtue, courage) and

allowed his protégés to do most of the engagement on these subjects, while he guided the intense discussions and exposed the inadequacies of his protégés views. Delić and Bećirović (2016) contend that, the purpose of the interactive dialogue between Socrates and his students was to promote a counterintuitive environment in which he posed questions and students would engage with the questions drawing on their past experiences and knowledge in answering the questions. The educator would continually serve as a guide who, when a student reasons illogically, guides the student using counter examples to rectify the problem. The Socratic method has five stages:

(1) *Wonder* (posing question such as what is beauty?). Understanding a problem can take the form of problem clarification through examining the frequency, duration, latency or intensity of the problem (Kratochwill & Bergan, 1990) or examining the nature of the client and the business, their interactions and the circumstances around them (Peterson, 2009).
(2) *Hypothesis* (a response to the wonder which involves verbalisation of one's views – which becomes a hypothesis of the dialogue). Developing a response can take the form of devising a solution to the problem or question through crafting many ideas that can contribute to the quality of thoughts (Basadur, Graen, & Green, 1982) or the use of mental imagery to support creative and innovative thinking (Peterson, 2009).
(3) *Elenchus, refutation and cross-examination* (which involved the unpacking of the hypothesis and the generation of counter example to debunk the hypothesis). This process involves the evaluation of alternatives by providing some detailed explanation of certain costs associated with each alternative considered (Kratochwill & Bergan, 1990; Peterson, 2009).
(4) *Acceptance/rejection of the hypothesis* (the interlocutors would approve or disapprove of the counterexample).
(5) *Action* (acting on the findings of the inquiry) (Boghossian, 2012).

Therefore, change unfolds when students (as future entrepreneurs) improve their capacity to act in the world through dialogic interaction and reflection triggering action or intervention at different societal levels (Freire, 1973), leading to individual transformation in the process (Mejia, 2004). For entrepreneurship students, therefore, creating spaces (e.g. online discussion forums, chat rooms) where students critically engage with ideas can contribute to their cognitive development, assist them in testing ideas with counterevidence and improve the self-regulation of their knowledge. Therefore, the use of Socratic dialogue is envisaged to hone entrepreneurial students' thinking skills, that is, their capabilities to think reflectively and judge skillfully, to ascertain information deemed to be reliable and what actions to consider during informed reasoning and problem-solving (Fung & Howe, 2014; Kwan & Wong, 2014).

The deployment of Socratic dialogue must contribute to five dimensions of critical thinking namely: (i) hypothesis identification – the ability decipher the underlying ideas or unstated assumptions of the problem that necessitates