MJBE Malaysian Journal of Business and Economics

THE IMPACT OF ENTREPRENEURIAL TRAINING PROGRAM ON ENTREPRENEURIAL INNOVATIVENESS: A CASE STUDY AMONG START-UP ENTREPRENEURS IN PITCHBORNEO

Saverinus P. Kitingan
Asia Graduate School of Business, UNITAR International University,
Petaling Jaya, Selangor, Malaysia

*** Corresponding author's email:**
caroline@ums.edu.my

Received: 15 September 2020

Accepted: 20 October 2020

Keywords: *Pitchborneo, training, entrepreneurial innovativeness, pitching*

ABSTRACT

This study presents an examination of the impact of the Pitchborneo training program as an entrepreneurial program focused on entrepreneurial innovativeness for idea generation, development and presentation (the pitch) among start-up entrepreneurs in Sabah, Malaysia. Pitchborneo is a unique entrepreneurial training program which is also a disbursement vehicle of government grant worth RM200,000 annually since 2011. In this study, the objectives are: (i) to determine the level of effectiveness of the Pitchborneo training program based on content, delivery, mentoring and coaching, and training needs fulfilment; (ii) to determine the level of entrepreneurial innovativeness in terms of idea generation, development and presentation; (iii) to compare entrepreneurial innovativeness of the start-up entrepreneurs based on their demographics (age, gender, highest academic qualification, length of business experience); and (iv) to determine the impact of the Pitchborneo training program on the entrepreneurial innovativeness of the start-up entrepreneurs. This descriptive and quantitative study used online survey to gather information from 200 respondents who were randomly selected from past participants of Pitchborneo program. Descriptive and inferential statistical analyses using IBM SPSS 23.0 determines the level of training effectiveness and innovativeness in idea generation, development and presentation, as well as to test the research hypotheses. Findings showed that respondents perceived highly of

the Pitchborneo training program in terms of content, delivery, coaching and mentoring, and fulfilment of training needs. It was also found that entrepreneurial innovativeness was high and not differentiated by demographics. The Pitchborneo training program impacted significantly on entrepreneurial innovativeness. For future research, it is recommended to focus on pitching competencies among the entrepreneurs. This study concludes the effectiveness of Pitchborneo and its potential as a model of best practice and benchmarking to other organizations offering entrepreneurship education.

INTRODUCTION

Background of the Study

Nowadays, it is generally accepted that entrepreneurship is vital to create growth and a healthy and stable economic environment in society and nation (Ashouri, Boroumand & Darzi, 2013). Entrepreneurship is about idea creation, opportunity, discovery among the created ideas and idea exploitation (Madhoushi, Sadati, Delavari, Mehdinvand & Mihandost, 2011). Hall, Daneke and Lenox (2010) mentioned that entrepreneurship and innovation have become the means of competitiveness rather than efficiency and quality now. Entrepreneurship contributes to new ideas, creates new firms and employments and advances the economy as a whole (Fitriati, Lubis, Shakuntala & Guntara, 2011).

The promotion of entrepreneurship in most countries including Malaysia is also very much prompted by the need to address the rising trend of unemployment, particularly among youths including university graduates. A country with a high rate of unemployment implies that the labour force is not used fully. Theoretically, a country that did not use its resources efficiently does not achieve its maximum output. The macroeconomy goal of a country is to maximise its output (Mohamad Idham, Asliza, Wan Nor Syazanan, Wan Effa & Abd Hakim, 2014). Employment rate is an important criteria to portray the status of a developed nation. Therefore, Malaysia as a country moving towards a 'developed nation' status need to ensure that unemployment rate is minimised. Over the years, efforts have led to a reduction in unemployment rate in Malaysia with 3.3% annual rate in the past three decades (Noor Azina Ismail, 2011). According to the International Labour Organization, with this rate, Malaysia has attained full employment status (Mokhtar, 2013). However, on a more in-depth evaluation, it was noted that there were 65,500 unemployed graduates or 16.7 per cent from the total number of unemployed labour in 2010 (Che Mohd Zukifli & Rajoo, 2016). In 2015, the largest percentage of unemployed persons are youths aged between 20 and 24 years old, at 42.1 per cent (Department of Statistics Malaysia, 2016).

The gravity of this problem has led to the various entrepreneurship education – formal and informal, during or after formal education – and organised and implemented by various bodies including the government agencies, schools, college and universities and also by non-government organization. It was hoped that through entrepreneurship education, skills and knowledge are imparted to the community, particularly among the younger generation that would ignite their interest to become self-employed, open up their own business and grab opportunities all around them.

In line with this call, a local non-government organization (NGO) in Sabah, Malaysia, the Sabah Techpreneur Association (SATA) with their vision, "A Techpreneur in Every Family" had created and implemented an entrepreneurship training program called "Pitchborneo". It caters as a platform for local start-up entrepreneurs to get training and business mentorship, pitch their ideas and obtain funding to realize the pitched ideas. This study is centered on this program to determine the effectiveness of the training programme and measure its impact on the innovativeness of the start-up entrepreneurs in ideation, idea development and idea presentation.

PROBLEM STATEMENT

Entrepreneurship education is a dynamic and social process whereby the person, as an individual and in a collective group, identifies opportunities for innovation and involved in the action to transform the ideas into practices and activities with well-defined target within their social, cultural and economic contexts (Kuratko, 2004; Fitriati et al., 2011). The current of practice has included a compulsory entrepreneurial education in the higher education curriculum. Additionally, universities and colleges also offer specific entrepreneurship courses or programmes for students with serious intents to start new businesses (Graevenitz, et al., 2010). Other than that, entrepreneurship education is also provided to individuals outside the academic institutions.

Pitchborneo for instant, is a specific entrepreneurial training program that was started in 2011, initially as 'Sabah Got Ideas' and rebranded to Pitchborneo in 2014. Ever since, more than 700 people have been trained under this program. In the past three years, the annual program was held in several major districts in Sabah and ending with a grand final whereby finalists from each districts compete for the fund.

The program is filled in most part with entrepreneurial training activities which ends with an entrepreneurial pitching whereby participants compete for a fund worth RM20,000 by pitching their best ideas in front of a panel of judges. The fund was awarded by the Ministry of Resources Development and Information Technology. The fund is in the terms of grants that can be used for the development of the business ideas towards a greater level of commercialisation, rebranding and market expansion. SATA is the responsible NGO to manage the fund allocation and disbursement.

In the earlier phase of implementation, during Sabah Got Idea 2011 and 2012, only six best ideas were chosen as winners in each year. By 2013 to 2015, the funding recipients were increased to ten each year. Hence, in the past five years, a total of 42 winners have received their start-up funding since the training program was initiated.

The Pitchborneo entrepreneurship training was designed specifically to mentor and guide start-up entrepreneurs to start their business venture. The three-day training program covers two essential part of training as follows:

(a) **Section A – The Introduction**
(i) Pitchborneo and its objectives
(ii) Finding out current status and goals of participants

(b) **Section B – Training/Workshop**
(i) Business Model Canvas (BMC)
(ii) Effective Slide Presentation
(iii) Business Mentorship for Idea Refinement
(iv) Business Pitch

As one of the rising entrepreneurial training program in Sabah, Malaysia, it becomes imperative that the effectiveness of this training program and its impact on the participants' ability for entrepreneurial innovativeness, particularly in idea generation, development and output is necessary. Therefore, this study explores important aspects of the training program and relate them to its impact on enhancing innovativeness among the start-up entrepreneurs who participated in this program.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The purpose of this study is to examine the effectiveness of the Pitchborneo training program in terms of content, delivery, mentoring and coaching and training needs fulfilment, and to determine the impact of the training program on the start-up entrepreneurs' innovativeness in idea generation, development and presentation. The specific research objectives are as follow:

(a) To determine the level of effectiveness of the Pitchborneo training program based on content, delivery, mentoring and coaching, and training needs fulfilment;

(b) To determine the level of entrepreneurial innovativeness in terms of idea generation, development and presentation;
(c) To compare entrepreneurial innovativeness of the start-up entrepreneurs based on their demographics (age, gender, highest academic qualification, length of business experience); and
(d) To determine whether the content, delivery, mentoring and coaching, and training needs fulfilment of the training program can enhance the entrepreneurial innovativeness among the Pitchborneo start-up entrepreneurs.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The research questions that are to be answered in the course of this study are presented as follows:

(a) What is the level of effectiveness of the Pitchborneo training program based on content, delivery, mentoring and coaching, and training needs fulfilment?
(b) What is the level of entrepreneurial innovativeness in terms of idea generation, development and presentation?
(c) Are there any significant differences in entrepreneurial innovativeness of the start-up entrepreneurs based on their demographics (age, gender, highest academic qualification, length of business experience)?
(d) Can the content, delivery, mentoring and coaching and training needs fulfilment of the training program enhance entrepreneurial innovativeness among the Pitchborneo start-up entrepreneurs?

RESEARCH HYPOTHESES

The research hypotheses presented below are in response to the third and fourth research objectives and research questions. The first cluster of research hypotheses determines whether there are significant differences in entrepreneurial innovativeness based on age, gender, highest academic qualification and length of business experience. These hypotheses are stated as follow:

H1: There is a significant difference in entrepreneurial innovativeness of the start-up entrepreneurs based on age
H2: There is a significant difference in entrepreneurial innovativeness of the start-up entrepreneurs based on gender
H3: There is a significant difference in entrepreneurial innovativeness of the start-up entrepreneurs based on highest academic qualification
H4: There is a significant difference in entrepreneurial innovativeness of the start-up entrepreneurs based on length of business experience

The second cluster of research hypotheses are presented below. These hypotheses determine the impact of Pitchborneo training program and each of its dimensions on the entrepreneurial innovativeness of the Pitchborneo start-up entrepreneurs.

H5: There is a significant impact of the Pitchborneo training program on the entrepreneurial innovativeness among the Pitchborneo start-up entrepreneurs
H5a: Content of training has a significant influence in enhancing entrepreneurial innovativeness among the Pitchborneo start-up entrepreneurs.
H5b: Training delivery has a significant influence in enhancing entrepreneurial innovativeness among the Pitchborneo start- up entrepreneurs.
H5c: Coaching and mentoring has a significant influence in enhancing entrepreneurial innovativeness among the Pitchborneo start-up entrepreneurs.
H5d: Fulfilment in the training needs of the entrepreneurs has a significant influence in enhancing entrepreneurial innovativeness among the Pitchborneo start up entrepreneurs.

Definition of Terms

There are several terms used in this study that are operationally defined as follows:

Entrepreneurial Training Program

The entrepreneurial training program specifically refers to the three-day training programs that are held under Pitchborneo or Sabah Got Ideas program, organised by SATA. The training program comprises of training activities that lead to the pitching of ideas by the participants. Components that are evaluated under this training program include: content, delivery, mentoring and coaching, and training need fulfilment.

Content refers to the curriculum or module of teaching and learning that are covered during the duration of the training program. Delivery refers to the methods, techniques and styles of presenting the content to the participants. Mentoring and coaching refers to the provision of guidance in terms of skills and knowledge that would enable the participants to generate, develop and present their business ideas. Training needs refers to the degree to which the training program was able to fulfil the training needs and desire of the participants.

Pitchborneo

Pitchborneo is synonym to Sabah Got Ideas (the previous brand) which is a unique training program combined with business pitching that is managed by SATA. The program is held annually in several selected districts throughout the year, and ending with a grand finale to choose the winners who will get the RM20,000 funding from the Ministry of Resource Development and Information Technology.

Entrepreneurial Innovativeness

Entrepreneurial innovativeness refers to the ability of the participants to generate ideas, expand and develop these ideas and present them coherently and concisely to the panel of judges during pitching.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Entrepreneurship

In this section, entrepreneurship is defined and a brief review of the history and development of entrepreneurship in Malaysia is included to relate to the justification of having programs like Pitchborneo that provides entrepreneurial knowledge and skills to start-up entrepreneurs.

Definition of Entrepreneurship

There is no single definition of the term 'entrepreneurship' as it depends on the focus of the one defining it and the perspective that one looks at it. In short, entrepreneurship is a multi-dimensional concept (Bula, 2012). However, the definitions provided by some authors as indicated in this section provide understanding of this term from different perspectives.

Entrepreneurship is a concept that is linked to starting or opening a business. Rwamitoga (2011) defined entrepreneurship a "a way of thinking, reasoning and acting that results in the creation, realisation and renewal of value for an individual, group, organization and society whereby at the heart of this process are the creation and/or recognition of opportunities followed by the will and initiative to seize these opportunities." Kuratko (2004) explained entrepreneurship as the creation of new ventures and dealing with many uncertainties in many ways. Kuratko and Hodgetts (2004) added that it is a process of innovation and creation with four dimensional elements comprising of individual, organization, environmental factors and process, with support from the government,

education and constitutions. Hence, it can be concluded that entrepreneurship is very much related to opportunity that are taken action with innovation and creativity despite challenges and uncertainties around it.

History and Development of Entrepreneurship in Malaysia

The entrepreneurial development in Malaysia is closely related to the growth and development of the small and medium enterprises. Entrepreneurship in fact, has been existence among the community in Malaysia even before independence during the Malacca Sultanate in the years between 1400 and 1500 (Zafar, Abdul Jumaat & Alon, 2005). Entrepreneurship has been regarded as an important factor of development in a society (Abu-Safian, 2012) and in economic development (Hebert & Link, 2011) including Malaysia (Mohamed et al., 2012). As a developing country, Malaysia has also placed importance on entrepreneurship to act as the engine for economic growth as well as job creation (Mazlina & Maitilee, 2015).

One of the significant developments of entrepreneurship in Malaysia is the promotion and inclusion of entrepreneurship education and training in educational institutions as well as among the general community. The Malaysian government also encouraged more Malaysians to be involved in entrepreneurship through various measures. In the 2012 National Budget, the government allocated RM100 millions for soft loans to help entrepreneurs to purchase machines, raw materials and other basic materials to start business (Mazlina & Maitilee, 2015). The higher learning institutions were also providing more entrepreneurship education to ensure that graduates are open to the prospect of becoming entrepreneurs. This implies the importance and significance of entrepreneurship in Malaysia.

Entrepreneurial Ideas

Ashouri, Boroumand and Darzi (2013) explained entrepreneurship as the consecutive process of idea creation, opportunity discovery among the created ideas and idea exploitation. Shane (2003) stated that the entrepreneurship process comprises of capability to identify opportunity, collect resources, organize them and adapt strategy that enables the opportunity to be exploited. Therefore, entrepreneurship is about having business ideas based on the opportunities that are available and identified.

Definition of Entrepreneurial Ideas

Entrepreneurial ideas are business ideas that are formed, created and explored with the intention to make money. The idea is the first milestone of starting a business. However, a business idea may have the potential to make money but is has no commercial value at first. Therefore, it needs to be evaluated in terms of innovativeness and feasibility in order to determine the chances of the idea in the market. A business idea that is promising must be relevant, innovative, unique, clear focus and profitable in the long run (My Top Business Ideas, 2017).

To understand the concept of entrepreneurial idea, it is necessary to understand the concept of business opportunity. It is basically a proven concept that generates on-going income. In other words, it originates from a business idea that has been researched upon, refined and packaged into a promising venture that is ready to launch. Hence, business ideas are basically ideas that may pop up in one's mind on a daily basis or from time to time but not all are feasible or profitable. These need to be researched to determine real business opportunities that meet several criteria such as:

- It has high gross margins
- It has the potential to break-even cash flow within 12 – 36 months

- The start-up capital investment is realistic and within the range that one can provide
- The entrepreneur has the strength and ability to drive the business to success
- The entrepreneur's level of enthusiasm for the business is high
- It has the potential for residual income
- It has the potential to keep on improving with time
- It has a low level of liability risk

The explanation of business ideas and business opportunity describes what entrepreneurial ideas are. Basically, entrepreneurial ideas are business ideas that are transformed into business opportunity that the entrepreneur uses to make profit either in existing business firm or in a new business venture.

Sources of Entrepreneurial Ideas

There are many avenues and sources of entrepreneurial ideas. The Practical Business Ideas website presented seven sources of business ideas for entrepreneurs (The Practical Business Ideas, 2017):

- **Hobbies**: some entrepreneurs convert their hobbies into money making opportunities. Some examples of hobbies that make money are like sports, cooking, piano, playing, photography, etc.
- **Experience**: business ideas may spin off from one's experience.
- **The Media**: the mass media is also a great platform for the generation and sources of business ideas. The commercial advertisements in mass media can provide information on what is considered as potential opportunity in the market.
- **Exhibitions**: in many exhibitions, there are plentiful of new products and re-branding ideas of existing products that can be used on one's own business. Talking with sales representatives, manufacturers and end users at the exhibition may also create ideas and opportunities.
- **Surveys**: formal and informal survey provides information to what the customer wants. This can generate ideas to include improvements and changes of existing products and services that most people would like to see.
- **Complaints**: these are consumers' feedback on what is lacking from existing products and services. By analysing complaints, entrepreneurs can determine how to make improvement on the products and services.
- **Brainstorming**: this involves creative thinking to generate business ideas to solve problems. By using creative problem-solving and generating new ideas, solutions are achieved which could become ideas for new business start-ups.

Innovativeness

Innovation refers to a specific mechanism that resulted in the birth of an idea. According to Robinson et al. (1991), innovation is an ability to sense opportunities and exploit them in a creative manner. Innovation is defined as "an entire process taking place since the birth of an idea to its realization (launching of product) through market research, prototype development and the early stages of production" (Rih & Guedira, 2014). It is regarded as the action of creating from out of nothing. Jorg and Hughes (2013: 222) explained innovation as "doing something new that did not exist before or doing something in a new way." Innovation capabilities are explained by four criteria: (i) ability to develop new products that meet market needs; (ii) ability to apply appropriate process technologies to produce these new products; (iii) ability to develop and adopt these new products and process technologies to satisfy future needs; and (iv) ability to respond to related technology activities and unexpected activities created by competitors (Abdul Qadiir & Nor Azila, 2015).

More specifically, innovativeness represents an inclination to advocate new ideas, newness and masterly processes through which firms can leave from past practices and technologies (Boso et al., 2012). It is considered as the most critical characteristic of entrepreneurial behaviour (Gozukara & Colakoglu, 2016). According to Drucker (1985), innovativeness is a specific tool of entrepreneurs to exploit change. In other words, innovativeness relates to the ability of exploiting business opportunities.

De Jong and Hartog (2010) proposed an innovativeness framework that consists of two major stages: the initiation stage and the implementation stage. In the initiation stage, there are two stages – opportunity exploration and idea generation. In the implementation stage, there are idea promotion and idea implementation. Table 2.1 presents the explanation of these stages. These stages can be applied to the Pitchborneo training program whereby the training is provided to encourage the entrepreneurs to explore and generate their ideas and then promote or develop them. However, the implementation of the idea in the Pitchborneo program is a conceptual basis presented during the pitch to a panel of jury who acts as the evaluator of their entrepreneurial ideas.

Table 2.1: Innovativeness Framework

Stages	Description
Initiation Stage (Opportunity Exploration)	The process of innovation happens when the entrepreneur find new opportunities (Krueger, 2000). Parnes, Noller and Biondi (1977) explained that the emergence of something new begins with someone identifying opportunities.
Initiation Stage (Idea Generation)	This is about conceptualizing improvement methods and solutions to be identified. Idea generation starts when there is reorganization and combination of information and existing ideas of solving problems and/or improving performance (Rothenberg, 1996).
Implementation Stage (Idea Promotion)	At this stage, there is a convergent innovative work behaviour which includes championing (idea promotion) and application (idea implementation) efforts (Mumford, 2000).
Implementation Stage (Idea Application)	The realization of the potential ideas, solutions and innovations involve resource mobilisation, persuasion, negotiation and risk-taking situation (De Jong & Hartog, 2010).

Adapted from: Nor Hazana, Lee, Eta & Alina (2014)

Underlying Theories on Entrepreneurial Education and Training

There are many theories that can be used to explain entrepreneurial education and training and how it produce results or outcomes like in the case of Pitchborneo training that resulted in enhanced entrepreneurial innovativeness among the start-up entrepreneurs. To understand how Pitchborneo program contributes towards entrepreneurial innovativeness, two theories are presented in this study. The first one relates to the training strategies, methods and techniques used in Pitchborneo program, the experiential learning theory which emphasizes on the transformation of experience as a crucial element in the learning process (Kolb, 1984). This theory identifies learners as playing an active role in gaining experience from their activities as well as dwelling in reflective practices to understand the processes and outcomes. The second theory, the Social Exchange Theory presented an argument to justify why the entrepreneurs would respond well to the training program.

Experiential Learning Theory

Experiential learning is defined as a sequence of events which need active involvement by the learners at various points (Walter & Marks, 1981). Kolb and Kolb (2008) explained that there are two dialectically related modes of grasping experience – concrete experience and abstract experience, and two dialectically related modes of transforming experience – reflective observation and active experimentation. Experiential learning is a process of constructing knowledge that involves a creative interaction among these learning modes. Therefore, learning is about experiencing, reflecting, thinking and acting – in a recursive provess that is responsive to the learning situation and what is being learned. Concrete experiences are basis for observations and reflections. These reflections are then assimilated and refined into abstract concepts to draw new implications that can be actively tested and used for creating new experiences.

Baum and Bird (2010) suggest that "practical intelligence" that came out from experience, positively interacts with business growth, particularly during the early stage of business creation. Krueger (2007) stated that is not the experience that is important but more so, the lessons learned from it. Therefore, the sense-making and interpretation of the experience lead to learning (Sardana & Scott-Kemmis, 2010). Therefore, in Pitchborneo training, experiential learning approaches and principles are adhered to by providing many opportunities for reflection and making sense of what they have learned.

Social Exchange Theory

In the Pitchborneo training program, social interaction is an important element of transfer of knowledge. Therefore, the Social Exchange Theory (SET) is a relevant theory to understand how knowledge is transferred from the training program to enhance entrepreneurial innovativeness among the Pitchborneo start-up entrepreneurs. This theory relates to workplace behaviour and how people in that environment interact with each other (Biron & Boon, 2013). In the organizational context, the social learning theory explains that when employees are given values by empowerment and training, they feel a sense of consideration and they are likely to repay the organization by showing engaged behaviour (Muhammad Saqib, Masoodul, Saad, Sadia & Muhammad Ali, 2014). This engaged behaviour motivates them to perform more than what their duties require as they become more creative and innovative as a result of the empowerment or training (Saks, 2006).

According to this theory, individual voluntary actions occur when there are some expected returns from what they have contributed (Idris, Fauziah, Normala & Mohd Zailani, 2016). In the Pitchborneo program, the training is geared towards providing the entrepreneurs with adequate knowledge and skills about idea generation, development and presenting whereby at the end of the training, they are required to present their ideas in a 5-minute business pitch competition to win an entrepreneurial grant worth RM20,000. Therefore, Social Exchange Theory may explain the relationship between the training program and their enhanced entrepreneurial innovativeness.

The Entrepreneurial Pitch

Capital is an important resource for entrepreneurship venture. Assess to financial resources for new venture to sustain its activities and allow growth beyond survival (Pollack et al., 2012). Pitching has become quite popular in the last decades as a communication means for entrepreneurs to inform potential investors in the hope of getting financial resources for their ventures (Mason & Harrison, 2003).

Definition of Pitch

The pitch or pitching is an alternative to giving a business plan to the investor. It is a verbal presentation of the business plan in a short duration of time – 30 minutes or less. Pitching is also supported with visual presentation to convince investors to venture into their product, service or business. Entrepreneurs present their ventures to investors through a short speech, in order to convince them that the venture has credibility and profitable (Armandi, 2015).

Pitchborneo

Pitchborneo is an annual event, organised by the Sabah Techpreneur Association (SATA) since 2011, initially known as 'Sabah Got Ideas'. The program is financed by the Ministry of Resources Development and Information Technology and serves as a disbursement vehicle of start-up business grants amounting up to RM200,000 to entrepreneurs in Sabah, Malaysia. The Entrepreneurial Pitch is the highlight of a training program (two days at District level and three days at State Final) that assists the entrepreneurs in developing and refining their ideas via a unique training program and presenting their pitch effectively in front of a judging panel.

The Entrepreneurial Pitch in the Pitchborneo program is a 5-minute business presentation using speech, slide presentation and/or demonstration to convince the panel of judges to obtain a grant worth RM20,000. There are two levels of pitching. The first one is at the district level whereby the entrepreneur sign up for the two-day program, get involved in the training activities provided and then pitch their ideas to win the ticket to the grand pitching finale. At the finale, a three-day program is held with more training activities to prepare the contestants for pitching their business ideas convincingly to the panel of judges.

Entrepreneurial Training Program in Pitchborneo

Entrepreneurship education relates to the dissemination of knowledge, skills and information which are needed to pursue an opportunity as well as to equip the individual with analytical ability and knowledge of entrepreneurial process so that they have better entrepreneurial judgment (McMullen & Shepherd, 2006). By learning entrepreneurial skills and competencies, these lead to new feasible venture by the learners (Hussain & Norashidah, 2015).

The entrepreneurial training program in Pitchborneo at District and State levels are quite similar with the same intention to provide skills and knowledge in presenting their business ideas convincingly in a short pitch to the panel of judge. The training program provides various formal and informal encounters with entrepreneurship skills and knowledge. There is a formal schedule that the entrepreneurs need to follow whereby the schedule comprises of introduction, brainstorming, coaching and mentoring, sharing, and mock pitching. The informal side of the training program comes from the entrepreneurs' own effort to talk to other entrepreneurs – either the fellow entrepreneurs or 'senior' entrepreneurs whom are past participants or members of SATA assigned to help in mentoring and coaching.

Evaluation of Entrepreneurial Training Programme

Training evaluation is a systematic proves of data collection with the purpose of determining the effectiveness and/or efficiency of training programs, and to make decisions about the training (Brown & Sitzman, 2011). Training effectiveness itself is a broad subject and commonly discussed and studied in most human resources development field. Training effectiveness is defined as "the systematic acquisition of skills, rules, concepts or attitudes that results in improved performance" (Goldstein, 1986:3). Noe (2009: 170) explained

training effectiveness as the benefit that the company and trainees received from training. Training evaluation is important to training researchers and practitioners (Alliger, Tannenbaum, Bennet, Traver, & Shotland, 1997).

Effectiveness Factors of Training Program

Some theoretical models of training effectiveness proposed similar or different variables relating to training organizational characteristics, individual characteristics and training program characteristics to determine effectiveness (Holton, 2005). Most often, factors like knowledge content, trainer or facilitator's competencies, training delivery and fulfilment of training needs are assessed to determine training effectiveness.

Training Content

The content refers to the knowledge imbedded in the training program that are disseminated to the participants. Holton et al. (1997) stated that content validity of the training explains the effectiveness of the training program. Content validity is the degree to which the participants feel that the training content reflect their job requirement. It represents the knowledge, skills and ability needed to do a specific task and are provided to the participants in the training program (Goldstein & Ford, 2002). When content validity is lacking, there is low transfer of learning from the training program (Lim & Johnson, 2002). Therefore, appropriate training content leads to improved performance of the participants (Berge, 2008).

Training Delivery

A training program is designed with a training strategy to ensure its success. The training strategy is a mechanism that establishes what competencies that the participants require in the future and a means to attain it (Wexley & Latham, 2002). The training strategies must be based on the individual learners' perspectives. Hwang (2003) suggests that it should encompass assistance to the participant on how to learn. Learning how to learn refers to the ability to reflect on the learning process in which they are engaged. Therefore, training must be delivered in such a way that it is able to meet the objectives of the training program.

Training Facilitation

Training facilitation refers to the competencies of the facilitator, trainer, coach or mentor who are involved on delivering the program. The trainer or facilitators must have the skills, knowledge and professionalism to conduct the training (Analoui, 1994). Training is not merely the transference of knowledge. The trainer must be able to organize knowledge, present it properly in a variety of format to the audience who have different learning styles and preferences (Moss, 1997). According to Lieb (2001), there are four critical elements that the trainer must addressed during training, which are:

- **Motivation:** this refers to the set of feeling or tone for the lessons which are set at the appropriate level of concern and difficulty. Ishler et al. (1998) stated that the facilitator must show a high level of presence indicated in the physical movement, body language, lesson pace and voice quality that is visual and auditory dynamic.
- **Reinforcement:** trainer needs to encourage the correct modes of behaviour and performance from the participants.
- **Transference:** the trainer is able to use association, similarity, degree of original learning and critical attribute element in the trading program.

Olson and Pachnowski (1998) suggest trainers to be competent in creating a comfortable learning environment as well as providing feedback. Caudron (2001) added that trainer should use collaborative interaction to plan and organize learning experiences, foster a climate for learning and

encourage a cooperative communication style as well as recognizing that people's feeling are critical to foster relationships in any learning experience. Additionally, trainer must be competent in communication and problem solving (Gauld & Miller, 2004).

Fulfilment of Training Needs

Training is considered to be effective when there is transfer of training. In other words, it is able to fulfil the training needs of the participants. Knowles (2009) stated that training is effective when the desired objectives are attained.

Models of Training Program Evaluation

There are many models used for training evaluation (Kirkpatrick, 1976; Phillips, 1997; Kaufman & Keller, 1994; Holton, 1996). In general, these models can be categorised as "goal-based" approaches and "system-based" approaches. The most popular model using the goal-oriented approach is Kirkpatrick model while the system-based approach is provided by the Context, Input, Process, Product (CIPP) Model (Worthen, Sanders, & Fitzpatrick, 1997); Training Validation System (TVS) Approach (Fitz-Enz, 1994); and Input, Process, Output, Outcome (IPO) Model (Bushnell, 1990). Rehmat, Aaltio, Agha and Khan (2015), provides a comparison between Kirkpatrick model and TVS, IPO and CIPP models which is represented in Table 2.2 below.

Table 2.2: Training Evaluation Model

Model	Description
Kirkpatrick (1959)	1. **Reaction**: to obtain data on reactions of the participants at the end of the training program 2. **Learning**: to determine whether the learning objectives of the program are met 3. **Behaviour**: to determine whether job performance change as a result of the training 4. **Results**: to assess the costs vs. benefits of the training program (reduced costs, improved quality of work, increased quantity of work)
CIPP Model (1987)	1. **Context:** gather information about the situation to decide on education needs and to establish program objectives. 2. **Input:** identify educational strategies most likely to attain the desired result. 3. **Process:** assess the implementation of the educational program**.** 4. **Product:** gather information regarding the result of the educational intervention to interpret its worth and merits.
IPO Model (1990)	1. **Input:** evaluates the system performance indicators (trainee qualifications, availability of materials, appropriateness of training, etc.) 2. **Process:** embraces planning, design, development and delivery of training programs. 3. **Output:** gathering data resulting from the training interventions. 4. **Outcomes:** the longer-term results related to improvement in the organization's bottom line (profitability, competitiveness, etc.)
TVS Model (1994)	1. **Situation:** collecting pre-training data to determine the current levels of performance within the organization and defining the level of desirable future performance. 2. **Intervention:** identifying the reason for the existence of gap between the present and desirable performance to determine if training is the solution to deal with the problem 3. **Impact**: evaluation the differences between pre- and post-training data. 4. **Value:** measure the differences in quality, productivity, service or sales, all of which can be expressed in monetary values

Source: Rehmat et al. (2015)

The most popular and recognised model of training model is Kirkpatrick training evaluation model (Saks & Burke, 2012). However, it is too simplistic and does not cover the evaluation done in this current study. In this study, some aspects of Kirkpatrick's evaluation model are referred to especially relating to the learning and behaviour aspects of training. Some aspects of the CIPP model is also adopted as this study determines the context, input, process and product of the training as well. In the IPO model, the aspect of Input and in TVS Model, the aspect of Situation relate to the evaluation of coaching and mentoring qualities of the facilitators in Pitchborneo program. Hence, based on these models, the Pitchborneo training program is assessed within the boundaries of theoretical model relating to training effectiveness.

The Research Framework

The research framework in Figure 2.1 shows the research variables that are of interest in this current study. The dependent variables refer to the factors of training effectiveness while the independent variables refer to the innovativeness capability of the respondents in idea generation and development. Demographic characteristics (age, gender, highest academic qualification, length of business experience) are related to the innovativeness capability in idea generation and development.

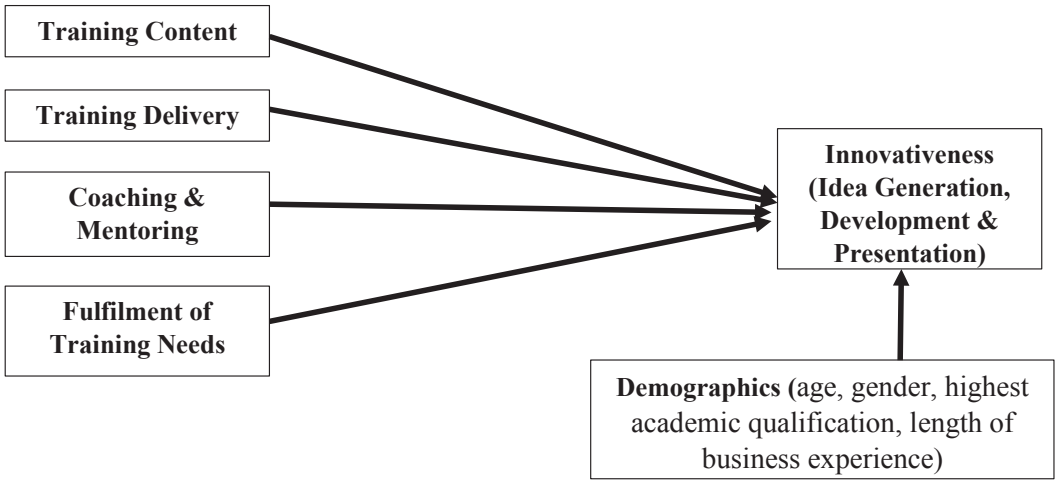

Figure 2.1: The Research Framework

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The research design of this study is descriptive that explores the perception of participants in the Pitchborneo program about its effectiveness to ensure innovative capabilities for idea generation and development. Descriptive research is the study of characteristics of the population under study or the phenomena of interest. It answers the questions or who, what, where, when and how (Babbie, 1989). This research is also quantitative using a survey method whereby questionnaire is the main research instrument to gather information that was distributed to targeted respondents via WhatsApp. Leedy and Omrod (2005) stated that in a survey research, the utmost goal is to learn about the larger population by surveying a sample of the population.

Population and Sampling Method

The population is defined by Castillio (2009) as the large collection of individuals or objects that becomes the main focus on a scientific query. This study identifies the population of study as entrepreneurs who participated in any of the Pitchborneo training program

since its inception in 2011 at either the district or finale levels. It is estimated that there are about 700. However, the numbers of active and traceable participants are about 400. Krejcie and Morgan (1970) stated that for a population with a total of 400, the adequate sample size is 196. However, in this study, the sample size is set at 200 to provide greater reliability of the research result. These respondents are selected randomly from a list of participants with active contact number and available via WhatsApp. The questionnaire is transformed into an online questionnaire with a unique URL that the respondent can click to browse in their WhatsApp and answer the questions by ticking in the selected box response. Their responses are automatically tabulated and stored in Google Drive under a specified Gmail account. This method is fast and able to reach out to the respondents regardless of geographical limitations.

Research Instruments

The main research instrument is a self-administered questionnaire. The items in the questionnaire are developed based on the evaluative measurement of training effectiveness proposed by the Kirkpatrtick model (Level 2: Learning and Level 3: Behaviour), the CIPP Model (Context, Input, Process and Product) and the IPO Model (Input and Process). The questionnaire is divided into three sections (Appendix 1). Table 3.1 summarizes the content of the questionnaire.

Table 3.1: Content of the Questionnaire

Section	No. of Item	Description	Response Scales
A (Personal Details of the Respondent)	5	Obtain details such as gender, age, race, highest academic qualification and length of business experience	Multiple choice answers are provided
B (Effectiveness of Pitchborneo Training Program)	27	Divided into four sub-sections: Training Content: 8 items Training Delivery: 6 items Coaching and Mentoring: 8 items Training Needs Fulfilment: 5 items	5-point Likert scale is used: "1" for "strongly disagree" to "5" for "strongly agree"
C (Innovativeness)	3	Determines the ability of the training to improve innovativeness in terms of finding new ideas, developing new ideas and presenting new ideas.	5-point Likert scale is used: "1" for "strongly disagree" to "5" for "strongly agree"

Pilot Study

A pilot study was conducted to determine the reliability of the scales used in the study. The reliability analysis uses Cronbach's Alpha to determine the level of internal consistency. Nunnaly (1978) stated that the Cronbach's Alpha must be more than 0.700 to ensure acceptable reliability. Table 3.2 presents the result of the pilot study which was participated by 30 respondents. Only two sections (Section B and C) that use the Likert scale were analysed for reliability. Finding shows that all values of Cronbach's Alpha were more than 0.700, thus indicting good internal consistency. The research instrument has good reliability and can be used for this study.

Table 3.2: The Result of the Reliability Analysis for Pilot Study

Section	No. of Item	Cronbach's Alpha	Interpretation
B (Effectiveness of Pitchborneo Training Program)	27	.943	High, acceptable
Training Content	8	.869	High, acceptable
Training Delivery	6	.918	High, acceptable
Coaching and Mentoring	8	.839	High, acceptable
Fulfilment of Training Needs	5	.919	High, acceptable
C (Innovativeness)	3	.816	High, acceptable
Overall	30	.948	High, acceptable

Data Collection Procedures

Data for this study was collected via online and through a social media channel. Prior to data collection, a list of actively traceable past participants of Pitchborneo was developed. Their active and traceable status was determined by calling each of the name and contact number on the list. Some numbers had to be changed based on their recommendations or information from other participants. It was also determined that they have access to WhatsApp as the URL for the questionnaire form is sent via WhatsApp. The respondent is given a brief instruction on how to access the form, answer the questionnaire and submit the form. The relevant Gmail is constantly checked to determine that a minimum of 200 respondents are collected. Data for analysis is harvested from Google Drive.

Data Analysis Procedures

Data for this study was analysed using IBM SPSS 23.0. This is a statistical package for social science, version 23.0 developed by IBM. Two types of statistical analyses were done. Descriptive statistical analysis determines the central tendency by measuring the frequency, percentage, means and standard deviation. The mean value is used to determine the level of training effectiveness and innovativeness. Table 3.3 presents the interpretation of mean values and level of perception.

Table 3.3: Interpretation of Mean Values (Based on 5-Point Likert Scale)

Mean Value	Interpretation
1.000 – 2.399	Low
2.400 – 3.790	Moderate
3.800 – 5.000	High

Inferential statistical analysis makes a generalization of the population from which the samples are drawn (DeCaro, 2003). In this study, comparison of innovativeness based on gender is done using independent sample t-test while comparison based on gender, highest academic qualification, and length of business experience is done using ANOVA. One Way ANOVA or One Way Analysis of Variance provides a statistical test of whether or not the means of several groups are all equal, and therefore generalizes t-test to more than two groups (Levin and James, 1991). Simple regression analysis is performed to determine the impact of Pitchborneo training on innovativeness of the respondents. The inferential statistics analyses are also used to test the research hypotheses as summarized in Table 3.4.

Table 3.4: Interpretation of Hypotheses Testing

No	Statement	Test Used	Interpretation
H_1	There is a significant difference in entrepreneurial innovativeness of the start-up entrepreneurs based on age	One Way ANOVA	If significant value is less than 0.05, **ACCEPT** hypothesis
H_2	There is a significant difference in entrepreneurial innovativeness of the start-up entrepreneurs based on gender	Independent Sample t-test	If significant value is less than 0.05, **ACCEPT** hypothesis
H_3	There is a significant difference in entrepreneurial innovativeness of the start-up entrepreneurs based on highest academic qualification	One Way ANOVA	If significant value is less than 0.05, **ACCEPT** hypothesis
H_4	There is a significant difference in entrepreneurial innovativeness of the start-up entrepreneurs based on length of business experience	One Way ANOVA	If significant value is less than 0.05, **ACCEPT** hypothesis
H_5	There is a significant impact of the Pitchborneo training program on the entrepreneurial innovativeness among the Pitchborneo start-up entrepreneurs	Simple Regression	If significant value is less than 0.05, **ACCEPT** hypothesis
H_{5a}	Content of training has a significant influence in enhancing entrepreneurial innovativeness among the Pitchborneo start-up entrepreneurs	Simple Regression	If significant value is less than 0.05, **ACCEPT** hypothesis
H_{5b}	Training delivery has a significant influence in enhancing entrepreneurial innovativeness among the Pitchborneo start- up entrepreneurs	Simple Regression	If significant value is less than 0.05, **ACCEPT** hypothesis
H_{5c}	Coaching and mentoring has a significant influence in enhancing entrepreneurial innovativeness among the Pitchborneo start-up entrepreneurs	Simple Regression	If significant value is less than 0.05, **ACCEPT** hypothesis
H_{5d}	Fulfilment in the training needs of the entrepreneurs has a significant influence in enhancing entrepreneurial innovativeness among the Pitchborneo start up entrepreneurs	Simple Regression	If significant value is less than 0.05, **ACCEPT** hypothesis

RESEARCH FINDINGS

Reliability of the Research Findings

Reliability test with Cronbach's Alpha was done to determine the internal consistency of the research findings. Table 1 presents the result of reliability test for the actual study. The result shows that all values of Cronbach's Alpha are more than 0.700, indicating high internal consistency and acceptable reliability.

Table 4.1: The Result of the Reliability Analysis of the Actual Study

Section	No. of Item	Cronbach's Alpha	Interpretation
B (Effectiveness of Pitchborneo Training Program)	27	.955	High, acceptable
Training Content	8	.897	High, acceptable
Training Delivery	6	.891	High, acceptable
Coaching and Mentoring	8	.854	High, acceptable
Fulfilment of Training Needs	5	.869	High, acceptable
C (Innovativeness)	3	.710	High, acceptable
Overall	30	.957	High, acceptable

Demographic Profiles of the Respondents

Table 4.2 shows the profiles of respondents based on gender, age, race, highest academic qualification and length of business experiences.

Table 4.2: Demographic Profiles of the Respondents

	Demographic Characteristics	Total (N)	Percentage (%)
1.	Gender		
	a. Male	76	38.0
	b. Female	124	62.0
2.	Age		
	a. Below 25 years old	7	3.5
	b. 25 – 35 years old	111	55.5
	c. 36 – 45 years old	57	28.5
	d. More than 45 years old	25	12.5
3.	Race		
	a. Malay	17	8.5
	b. Kadazandusun	72	36.0
	c. Bajau	23	11.5
	d. Murut	17	8.5
	e. Bugis	9	4.5
	f. Berunai	18	9.0
	g. Others	44	22.0
4.	Highest Academic Qualification		
	a. SRP/PMR/PT3	2	1.0
	b. SPM/Certificate	36	18.0
	c. STPM/Diploma	14	7.0
	d. Bachelor	135	67.5
	e. Master	13	6.5
5.	Length of Business Experience		
	a. None	24	12.0
	b. Less than 3 years	72	36.0
	c. 3 – 5 years	81	40.5
	d. 6 – 10 years	8	4.0
	e. More than 10 years	15	7.5

Figure 4.1 shows the breakdown of respondents based on gender. The findings shows that majority of the respondents are female with 124 or 62.0% while the male respondents totalled 76 or 38.0%.

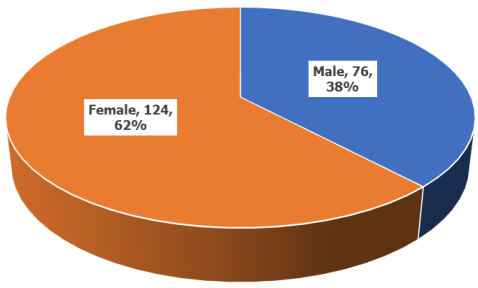

Figure 4.1: Gender of the Respondents

The description of the respondents based on age is shown in Figure 4.2. Majority of the respondents with 111 or 55% of them are within the age of 25 to 35 years old. There are only seven or 3% of the respondents aged less than 25 years old, while 57 or 29% are between 36 and 45 years old. A total of 25 or 13% of the respondents are more than 45 years old.

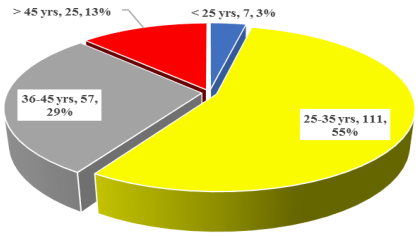

Figure 4.2: Age Range of the Respondents

In Figure 4.3, the race of the respondents is tabulated. It shows that those from Kadazandusun ethnic group were the majority with 72 or 36.0%. There were 17 or 8.5% Malays, 23 or 11.5% Bajau, 17 or 8.5% Murut, 9 or 4.5% Bugis, 18 or 9.0% Berunai and 44 or 22.0% of other ethnic groups.

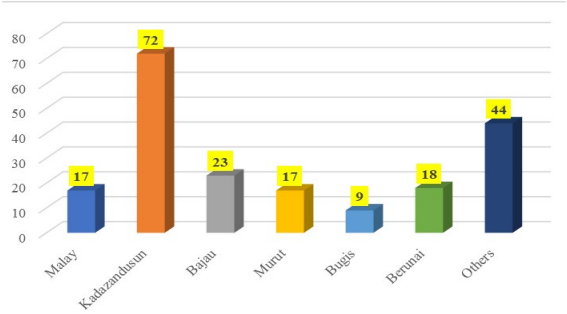

Figure 4.3: Race of the Respondents

Figure 4.4 shows that most of the respondents have Bachelor degree with 135 or 67.5%. There were only two respondents or 1.0% with SRP/PMR/PT3 and 36 or 18.0% with SPM/Certificate. A total of 14 or 7.0% have STPM/ Diploma while 13 or 6.5% have Master degree.

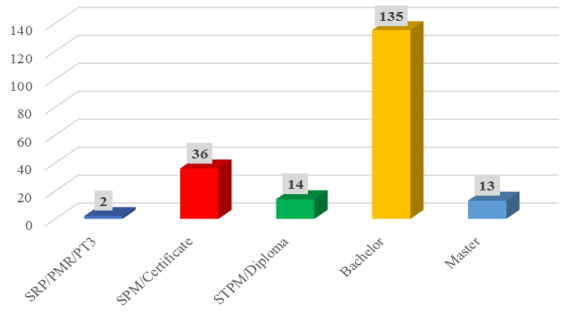

Figure 4.4: Highest Academic Qualification of the Respondents

Figure 4.5 shows the length of business experience. A total of 24 or 12.0% claimed that they have no business experience while 72 or 36.0% have less than three years of experience. There were 81 or 40.5% with experience between three and five years while 8 respondents or 4.0% have between six and ten years. A total of 15 respondents or 7.5% have more than 10 years of experience.

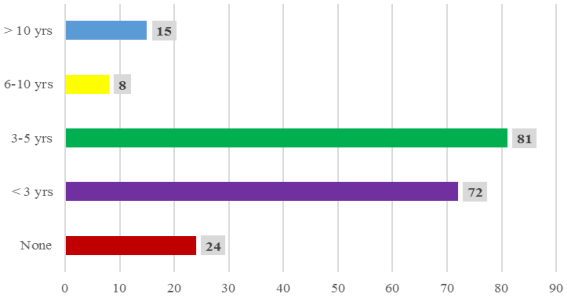

Figure 4.5: Length of Business Experience of the Respondents

2.1 Perception on Pitchborneo Training Program Effectiveness

The Pitchborneo training program effectiveness was determined based on training content, training delivery, coaching and mentoring, and fulfilment of training needs.

2.1.1 Perception on Training Content

Table 4.3 presents the responses pertaining to the content of Pitchborneo training program. The result shows that 85.0% agree that the business model canvas helps to clarify idea. The mean score of 3.975 indicates high level of agreement. It is also shown that 87.5% agree that the effective slide presentation helps to visualize the business idea. The mean of 4.065 is high. There were 87.5% who agreed that business mentorship discussion structured their business ideas clearly, with a mean score of 4.10 which is high. Their responses also showed that 78.5% agreed about entrepreneurial sharing of past winners improving their business idea. The mean score of 3.955 also indicates high level of agreement. About 65.0% agreed that personal business pitch while 67.5% agreed that other

participants' business pitch strengthen their ideas. Respectively, the mean scores were 3.695 and 3.685 which are high. In addition, 66.5% agreed that ideas sharing with other participants clarify how to win and 76.0% agreed that pitching idea in front of the panel enlighten them about the potentials of their idea. The mean score of 3.705 and 3.855 respectively were high. In general, it was found that the respondents' perception about training content was high.

Table 4.3: Descriptive Analysis Result on Training Content

Item	Disagree	Not Sure	Agree	Mean	Level
1. Business Model Canvas clarify idea	10 5.0%)	20 (10.0%)	170 (85.0%)	3.975	High
2. Effective slide presentation visualize the business	6 (3.0%)	19 (9.5%)	175 (87.5%)	4.065	High
3. Business mentorship discussion structured business ideas clearly	6 (3.0%)	20 (10.0%)	174 (87.0%)	4.100	High
4. Entrepreneurial sharing of past winners improve business idea	7 (3.5%)	36 (18.0%)	157 (78.5%)	3.955	High
5. Personal business pitch strengthen idea	21 (10.5%)	49 (24.5%)	130 (65.0%)	3.695	High
6. Other participants' business pitch strengthen idea	20 (10.0%)	45 (22.5%)	135 (67.5%)	3.685	High
7. Ideas sharing with other participants clarify how to win	14 (7.0%)	53 (26.5%)	133 (66.5%)	3.705	High
8. Pitching idea in front of the panel enlighten the idea potentials	6 (3.0%)	42 (21.0%)	152 (76.0%)	3.855	High

Perception on Training Delivery

Table 4.4 presents the total, percentage and mean values to indicate the perception of the respondents on training delivery. The result shows that all mean scores are high. There were 83.0% of the respondents who agreed that group activities develop original idea with mean of 3.965. There were also 83.5% of the respondents who agreed that opportunity to interact freely with others develop idea. The mean score was 4.005. It is also shown that 81.5% agreed that opportunity to present ideas repeatedly build confidence to pitch. The mean score was 3.975. Additionally, 82.0% agreed that flexibility to work individually or small group works well for them. The mean score was 3.980. Also, use of actual evidence from past participants' success and failure stories provide clear guidance gained 79.0% agreement from the respondents with mean score of 3.930. Lastly, there were 78.5% who agreed that delivery of training program was effective to reach personal goals. The mean score was 3.965. Hence, in general, it can also be concluded that the respondents have high level of perception about the training delivery.

Table 4.4: Descriptive Analysis Result on Training Delivery

Item	Disagree	Not Sure	Agree	Mean	Level
1. Group activities develop original idea	11 (5.5%)	23 (11.5%)	166 (83.0%)	3.965	High
2. Opportunity to interact freely with others develop idea	9 (4.5%)	24 (12.0%)	167 (83.5%)	4.005	High
3. Opportunity to present ideas repeatedly build confidence to pitch	6 (3.0%)	31 (15.5%)	163 (81.5%)	3.975	High
4. Flexibility to work individually or small group works well	5 (2.5%)	31 (15.5%)	164 (82.0%)	3.980	High
5. Use of actual evidence from past participants' success and failure stories provide clear guidance	6 (3.0%)	36 (18.0%)	158 (79.0%)	3.930	High
6. Delivery of training program effective to reach personal goals	8 (4.0%)	35 (17.5%)	157 (78.5%)	3.965	High

Perception on Coaching and Mentoring

The perception on coaching and mentoring is provided in Table 4.5. It is shown that 85.5% agreed that the coaches and mentors have quality, 87.5% agreed that the coaches and mentors are experience, 87.5% agreed that the coaches and mentors understand specific needs, and 81.0% agreed that the coaches and mentors were helpful. The mean scores were all high, with 4.050, 4.100, 4.095 and 3.960 respectively. Findings also showed that 84.0% agreed that coaches and mentors provide good advice and guidance while 75.5% agreed that coaches and mentors enhance the participants' original ideas. There were 85.5% who agreed that the coaches and mentors force their own opinion on them. The mean scores of 3.955, 3.955 and 4.080 indicate high level of perception on these items. Lastly, it was found that only 69.5% agreed that coaching and mentoring provided in Pitchborneo were overall satisfactory. The mean score is still high at 3.790. Overall, the respondents perceived positively about the coaching and mentoring in Pitchborneo.

Table 4.5: Descriptive Analysis Result on Coaching and Mentoring

Item	Disagree	Not Sure	Agree	Mean	Level
1. Quality coaches and mentors	5 (2.5%)	24 (12.0%)	171 (85.5%)	4.050	High
2. Experienced coaches and mentors	7 (3.5%)	18 (9.0%)	175 (87.5%)	4.100	High
3. Coaches and mentors understand specific needs	4 (2.0%)	21 (10.5%)	175 (87.5%)	4.095	High
4. Coaches and mentors were helpful	9 (4.5%)	29 (14.5%)	162 (81.0%)	3.960	High
5. Coaches and mentors provide good advice and guidance	8 (4.0%)	24 (12.0%)	168 (84.0%)	3.955	High
6. Coaches and mentors enhance original ideas	12 (6.0%)	37 (18.5%)	151 (75.5%)	3.855	High
7. Coaches and mentors forces their own opinion	13 (6.5%)	16 (8.0%)	171 (85.5%)	4.080	High
8. Coaching and mentoring were overall satisfactory	20 (10.0%)	42 (21.0%)	138 (69.0%)	3.790	High

Perception on Fulfilment of Training Needs

Table 4.6 presents the perception of the respondents about fulfilment of training needs. Findings showed that 72.0% of the respondents agreed that Pitchborneo matches their training needs. The mean score is high at 3.850. It is also shown that 61.5% agreed that Pitchborneo fulfil their need to know about pitching, 73.0% agreed that Pitchborneo fulfil their needs to know about effective presentation and 87.0% agreed that Pitchborneo fulfil their needs to know about business model canvas. The mean scores for these items were high at 3.720, 3.900 and 4.050 respectively. Additionally, 85.5% also agreed that Pitchborneo clarifies what to do with their business ideas. The mean score indicates high perception at 3.990. Hence, it can be concluded that the respondents showed positive perception about the fulfilment of their training needs.

Table 4.6: Descriptive Analysis Result on Fulfilment of Training Needs

Item	Disagree	Not Sure	Agree	Mean	Level
1. Pitchborneo matches training needs	10 (5.0%)	46 (23.0%)	144 (72.0%)	3.850	High
2. Pitchborneo fulfil what is needed to know about pitching	13 (6.5%)	64 32.0%)	123 (61.5%)	3.720	High
3. Pitchborneo fulfil what is needed to know about effective slide presentation	13 (6.5%)	41 (20.5%)	146 (73.0%)	3.900	High
4. Pitchborneo fulfil what is needed to know about business model canvas	12 (6.0%)	14 (7.0%)	174 (87,0%)	4.050	High
5. Pitchborneo clarifies what to do with business ideas	12 (6.0%)	17 (8.5%)	171 (85.5%)	3.990	High

Perception on Overall Training Effectiveness

Table 4.7 presents the mean scores of each of the dimensions and overall for Pitchborneo training program effectiveness evaluation. The result shows that all mean scores are high, thus implying that the respondents perceived positively about Pitchborneo training program in aspects relating to training content, delivery, coaching and mentoring and fulfilment of training needs. In comparison, coaching and mentoring is perceived with the highest mean score of 3.986 followed by training delivery with a mean score of 3.970 and fulfilment of training needs with a mean score of 3.902. Training content is perceived the lowest with mean score of 3.879. Overall, the perception is high at 3.772, indicating favourable perception from the respondents. It is concluded that Pitchborneo training program is perceived strongly by the respondents.

Table 4.7: Descriptive Analysis Result on Dimensions of Pitchborneo Training Program Effectiveness

Dimension	Mean	Standard Deviation	Level
Training Content	3.879	.5808	High
Training Delivery	3.970	.5754	High
Coaching and Mentoring	3.986	.5343	High
Fulfilment of Training Needs	3.902	.6460	High
Overall	3.772	.4945	High

Level of Entrepreneurial Innovativeness

Table 4.8 presents the descriptive analaysis result on entrepreneurial innovativeness. The result showed that 78.0% agreed that they were able to find ideas for business but 6.5% disagreed amd 16.5% were not sure. The level was high indicated by a mean value of 3.870. There were 89.0% respondents who agree, 5% disagree and 8.5% not sure that they were able to develop their original ideas for business. The mean score of 4.145 implied high level of agreement. In terms of presenting business ideas, only 67% agreed while 4.5% disagreed and 28.5% not sure. However, the mean score showed high level of perception. Overall, the mean score for entrepreneurial innovativeness is high at 3.957

Table 4.8: Descriptive Analysis Result on Innovativeness

Item	Disagree	Not Sure	Agree	Mean	Level
1. Find ideas for business in Pitchborneo	11 (6.5%)	33 (16.5%)	156 (78.0%)	3.870	High
2. Develop original ideas for business in Pitchborneo	5 (2.5%)	17 (8.5%)	178 (89.0%)	4.145	High
3. Present business ideas for business in Pitchborneo	9 (4.5%)	57 (28.5%)	134 (67.0%)	3.825	High
Overall Innovativeness				3.947	High

Comparison of Entrepreneurial Innovativeness Based on Demographics

In this study, the entrepreneurial innovativeness of the respondents was compared based on demographics. Four demographic characteristics were used which are: age, gender, highest academic qualification and length of business experience. The results are presented as follows:

Comparison Based on Age

The comparison of entrepreneurial innovativeness based on age was done using One Way ANOVA to test the following hypothesis.
H_1: There is a significant difference in entrepreneurial innovativeness of the start-up entrepreneurs based on age

The result shown in Table 4.9 is the analysis result with One Way ANOVA to determine difference in entrepreneurial innovativeness based on age. The F value is 1.193 and the p value is .313, indicating that the significance is more than 0.05. Therefore, the research hypothesis, H_1 is rejected. It shows that there is no significant difference in entrepreneurial innovativeness among the respondents based on age.

Table 4.9: Result of ANOVA – Comparison of Entrepreneurial Innovativeness Based on Age

Age	N	Mean	Std. Dev.	F	Sig., p
Below 25 years old	7	3.571	.418		
25 – 35 years old	111	3.970	.580	1.193	.313
36 – 45 years old	57	3.912	.622		
More than 45 years old	25	4.027	.645		

Comparison Based on Gender

The comparison of entrepreneurial innovativeness based on gender was done using independent sample t-test with the following hypothesis.

H_2: There is a significant difference in entrepreneurial innovativeness of the start-up entrepreneurs based on gender

The result shown in Table 4.10 is the analysis result with independent sample t-test to determine difference in entrepreneurial innovativeness based on gender. The T value is .175 with a p value of .861 which is more than 0.05. Therefore, the research hypothesis, H_2 is rejected. It shows that there is no significant difference in entrepreneurial innovativeness among the respondents based on gender.

Table 4.10: Result of t-test – Comparison of Entrepreneurial Innovativeness Based on Gender

Gender	N	Mean	Std. Dev.	T	Sig., p
Male	76	3.956	.569	.175	.861
Female	124	3.941	.616		

Comparison Based on Highest Academic Qualification

The comparison of entrepreneurial innovativeness based on highest academic qualification was done using One Way ANOVA to test the following hypothesis.

H_3: There is a significant difference in entrepreneurial innovativeness of the start-up entrepreneurs based on highest academic qualification

The result shown in Table 4.11 is the analysis result with One Way ANOVA to determine difference in entrepreneurial innovativeness based on highest academic qualification. The F values is .730 with p value of .573 which is more than 0.05. Therefore, the research hypothesis, H_3 is rejected. It shows that there is no significant difference in entrepreneurial innovativeness among the respondents based on highest academic qualification.

Table 4.11: Result of ANOVA – Comparison of Entrepreneurial Innovativeness Based on Highest Academic Qualification

Highest Academic Qualification	N	Mean	Std. Dev.	F	Sig., p
SRP/PMR/PT3	2	4.500	.707		
SPM/Certificate	36	3.935	.621		
STPM/Diploma	14	4.071	.730	.730	.573
Bachelor	135	3.941	.552		
Master	13	3.821	.823		

Comparison Based on Length of Business Experience

The comparison of entrepreneurial innovativeness based on length of business experience was done using One Way ANOVA to test the following hypothesis.

H_4: There is a significant difference in entrepreneurial innovativeness of the start-up entrepreneurs based on length of business experience

The result shown in Table 4.12 is the analysis result with One Way ANOVA to determine difference in entrepreneurial innovativeness based on length of business experience. The F values is .443 with p value of .778 which is more than 0.05. Therefore, the research hypothesis, H_4 is rejected. It shows that there is no significant difference in entrepreneurial innovativeness among the respondents based on length of business experience.

Table 4.12: Result of ANOVA – Comparison of Entrepreneurial Innovativeness Based on Length of Business Experience

Length of Business Experience	N	Mean	Std. Dev.	F	Sig., p
None	24	3.917	.608		
Less than 3 years	72	4.014	.604		
3 – 5 years	81	3.910	.608	.443	.778
6 – 10 years	8	4.000	.642		
More than 10 years	15	3.844	.502		

Impact of Pitchborneo Training Program on Entrepreneurial Innovativeness

This section presents the regression analyses result to determine the impact of overall Pitchborneo training program and each dimensions of the training program on entrepreneurial innovativeness.

Impact of Overall Pitchborneo Training Program on Entrepreneurial Innovativeness

The impact of overall Pitchborneo Training Program on entrepreneurial innovativeness was assessed using simple regression analysis to test the following hypothesis.

H_5: There is a significant impact of the Pitchborneo training program on the entrepreneurial innovativeness of the start-up entrepreneurs

The result shown in Table 4.13 is the analysis result with simple regression analysis to determine the impact of Pitchborneo training program on entrepreneurial innovativeness. The t values is 15.115 with p value of .000 which is less than 0.05. Therefore, the research hypothesis, H_5 is accepted. It shows that there is a significant impact of the Pitchborneo training program on the entrepreneurial innovativeness. The R square value is .536, indicating that Pitchborneo training program can explain 53.6% of variance in entrepreneurial innovativeness.

Table 4.13: Result of Simple Regression – Impact of Overall Pitchborneo Training Program on Entrepreneurial Innovativeness

Model	B	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	R Square	Adjusted R Square
		Std. Error	Beta					
1	(Constant)	.613	.222		2.753	.006	.536	.533
	Overall Pitchborneo Training Program	.884	.058	.732	15.115	.000		

2.1.2 Impact of Pitchborneo Training Content on Entrepreneurial Innovativeness

The impact of Pitchborneo Training Content on entrepreneurial innovativeness was assessed using Simple Regression Analysis to test the following hypothesis.

H_{5a}: Content of training has a significant influence in enhancing entrepreneurial innovativeness among the Pitchborneo start-up entrepreneurs.

The result shown in Table 4.14 is the analysis result with simple regression analysis to determine the impact of Pitchborneo training content on entrepreneurial innovativeness. The t values is 9.819 with p value of .000 which is less than 0.05. Therefore, the research hypothesis, H_{5a} is accepted. It shows that there is a significant impact of the Pitchborneo training content on the entrepreneurial innovativeness. The R square value is .324, indicating that Pitchborneo training content can explain 32.4% of variance in entrepreneurial innovativeness.

Table 4.14: Result of Simple Regression – Impact of Pitchborneo Training Content on Entrepreneurial Innovativeness

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients			R Square	Adjusted R Square
	B	Std. Error	Beta		t	Sig.		
1	(Constant)	1.664	.235		7.079	.000	.327	.324
	Content	.588	.060	.572	9.819	.000		

2.1.3 Impact of Pitchborneo Training Delivery on Entrepreneurial Innovativeness

The impact of Pitchborneo Training Delivery on entrepreneurial innovativeness was assessed using simple regression analysis to test the following hypothesis.

H_{5b}: Training delivery has a significant influence in enhancing entrepreneurial innovativeness among the Pitchborneo start- up entrepreneurs.

The result shown in Table 4.15 is the analysis result with simple regression analysis to determine the impact of Pitchborneo training delivery on entrepreneurial innovativeness. The t values is 12.250 with p value of .000 which is less than 0.05. Therefore, the research hypothesis, H_{5b} is accepted. It shows that there is a significant impact of the Pitchborneo training delivery on the entrepreneurial innovativeness. The R square value is .431, indicating that Pitchborneo training delivery can explain 43.1% of variance in entrepreneurial innovativeness.

Table 4.15: Result of Simple Regression – Impact of Pitchborneo Training Delivery on Entrepreneurial Innovativeness

Model	B	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	R Square	Adjusted R Square
		Std. Error	Beta					
1	(Constant)	1.241	.233		5.559	.000	.431	.428
	Delivery	.682	.056	.657	12.250	.000		

Impact of Pitchborneo Training Mentoring and Coaching on Entrepreneurial Innovativeness

The impact of Pitchborneo Training Content on entrepreneurial mentoring and coaching was assessed using simple regression analysis to test the following hypothesis.

H_{5c}: Coaching and mentoring has a significant influence in enhancing entrepreneurial innovativeness among the Pitchborneo start-up entrepreneurs.

The result shown in Table 4.16 is the analysis result with simple regression analysis to determine the impact of Pitchborneo training coaching and mentoring on entrepreneurial innovativeness. The t values is 11.144 with p value of .000 which is less than 0.05. Therefore, the research hypothesis, H_{5c} is accepted. It shows that there is a significant impact of the Pitchborneo training mentoring and coaching on the entrepreneurial innovativeness. The R square value is .385, indicating that Pitchborneo training mentoring and coaching can explain 38.5% of variance in entrepreneurial innovativeness.

Table 4.16: Result of Simple Regression – Impact of Pitchborneo Training Mentoring and Coaching on Entrepreneurial Innovativeness

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients			R Square	Adjusted R Square
	B	Std. Error	Beta		t	Sig.		
1	(Constant)	1.181	.250		4.716	.000	.385	.382
	Mentoring and Coaching	.694	.062	.621	11.144	.000		

Impact of Pitchborneo Training Fulfilment of Training Needs on Entrepreneurial Innovativeness

The impact of Pitchborneo Training Content on entrepreneurial fulfilment of traiing needs was assessed using simple regression analysis to test the following hypothesis.

H_{5d}: Fulfilment in the training needs of the entrepreneurs has a significant influence in enhancing entrepreneurial innovativeness among the Pitchborneo start up entrepreneurs.

The result shown in Table 4.17 is the analysis result with simple regression analysis to determine the impact of Pitchborneo training fulfilment of training needs on entrepreneurial innovativeness. The t values is 16.151 with p value of .000 which is less than 0.05. Therefore, the research hypothesis, H_{5d} is accepted. It shows that there is a significant impact of the Pitchborneo training fulfilment of training needs on the entrepreneurial innovativeness. The R square value is .568, indicating that Pitchborneo training fulfilment of training needs can explain 56.8% of variance in entrepreneurial innovativeness.

Table 4.17: Result of Simple Regression – Impact of Pitchborneo Training Fulfilment of Training Needs on Entrepreneurial Innovativeness

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients			R Square	Adjusted R Square
	B	Std. Error	Beta		t	Sig.		
1	(Constant)	1.227	.171		7.185	.000	.568	.566
	Fulfilment of training needs	.697	.043	.754	16.151	.000		

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Summary of Research Findings

This study was carried out to answer the following research questions:

(a) What is the level of effectiveness of the Pitchborneo training program based on content, delivery, mentoring and coaching, and training needs fulfilment?

(b) What is the level of entrepreneurial innovativeness in terms of idea generation, development and presentation?

(c) Are there any significant differences in entrepreneurial innovativeness of the start-up entrepreneurs based on their demographics (age, gender, highest academic qualification, length of business experience)?

(d) Can the content, delivery, mentoring and coaching and training needs fulfilment of the training program enhance entrepreneurial innovativeness among the Pitchborneo start-up entrepreneurs?

In answer to these research questions, the followings are a summary of the result of data analysis from 200 respondents.

Level of Pitchborneo Training Program Effectiveness

The level of Pitchborneo training program effectiveness was determined based on training content, training delivery, coaching and mentoring, and fulfilment of training needs. Based on the results presented in the previous chapter, it is found that the respondents have high level of perception about the training content (mean = 3.879), training delivery (mean = 3.970), coaching and mentoring (mean = 3.986), and fulfilment of training needs (mean = 3.902) as well as overall training program (mean = 3.772). Training delivery was perceived the highest, followed coaching and mentoring, and fulfilment of training needs. Training content was ranked the lowest compared to the other aspects of training.

Level of Entrepreneurial Innovativeness

The level of entrepreneurial innovativeness was also found to be high (mean = 3.947). Development of business ideas was perceived the highest (mean = 4.145), followed by generation of business ideas (mean = 3.870). Presentation of business ideas was perceived high but ranked the lowest among these three attributes (mean = 3.825)

Differences in Entrepreneurial Innovativeness Based on Demographics

This study found that there is no significant differences in entrepreneurial innovativeness based on demographics (age, gender, highest academic qualification and length of business experience). The comparative tests showed that the research hypotheses: H_1 ($F = 1.193$, $p = .313$), H_2 ($T = .175$, $p = .861$), H_3 ($F = .730$, $p = .573$) and H_4 ($F = .443$, $p = .778$) were all rejected.

Impact of Pitchborneo Training Program on Entrepreneurial Innovativeness

Data analysis showed that Pitchborneo training program showed a significant, positive impact on entrepreneurial innovativeness ($\beta = .884$, $t = 15.115$, $p = .000$, $R^2 = .536$) whereby Pitchborneo training program can explain 53.6% variance in entrepreneurial innovativeness. The research hypothesis, H_5 is accepted.

Result also showed that Pitchborneo training content has a significant, positive impact on entrepreneurial innovativeness ($\beta = .572$, $t = 9.819$, $p = .000$, $R^2 = .327$). Pitchborneo training content can explain 32.7% variance in entrepreneurial innovativeness. The research hypothesis, H_{5a} is accepted. In terms of training delivery, the result showed significant, positive impact on entrepreneurial innovativeness ($\beta = .657$, $t = 12.250$, $p = .000$, $R^2 = .431$). Pitchborneo training delivery can explain 43.1% variance in entrepreneurial innovativeness. For mentoring and coaching, it is shown to have a significant, positive impact on entrepreneurial innovativeness ($\beta = .621$, $t = 11.144$, $p = .000$, $R^2 = .382$). Therefore, the research hypothesis, H_{5c} is accepted. Mentoring and coaching can explain 38.5% variance in entrepreneurial innovativeness. Lastly, fulfilment of training needs also have a significant and positive impact on entrepreneurial innovativeness ($\beta = .754$, $t = 16.151$, $p = .000$, $R^2 = .568$). Therefore, the research hypothesis, H_{5d} is accepted. Fulfilment of training needs can explain 56.8% variance in entrepreneurial innovativeness.

Discussion of Research Findings

Pitchborneo Training Program Effectiveness

This study found that the respondents perceived the Pitchborneo Training Program as effective in terms of content, delivery, coaching and mentoring, and fulfilment of training needs. Based on Kirkpatrick's model of training evaluation, this study found that the

training program was able to provide learning and change the behaviour of the respondents. Using the CIPP model, this training showed effectiveness in terms of input, process and product. The IPO model also showed that in terms of input, process, output and outcomes, Pitchborneo training has delivered the intended effectiveness (Rehmat et al. 2015).

This study has shown that participants regarded the training delivery to be effective. The varied approaches, methods and techniques used in this training program met the expectation of the respondents. Thus, it can be concluded that the training program has the strategy which provided the competencies that the participants needed (Wexley & Latham, 2002). The respondents perceived highly on the aspect of opportunity for interaction with others during the training, flexibility to work either individually or in small group, opportunity to present ideas in mock pitching repeatedly, and the use of group activities. Past winners' sharing of success and failure stories were also regarded highly in this study. Hence, this suggests that the strategies applied in this training program can be continued in future training programs.

In this study, coaching and mentoring was ranked second in terms of respondents' perception of the training program. There is a high consensus that the training program has provided quality, experienced, understanding and helpful coaches and mentors. These coaches and mentors were also able to provide good advice and guidance but they tend to force their own ideas to the participants. This finding concludes that Pitchborneo training program was able to provide competent trainers and facilitators to conduct the program for the benefit of the participants.

The result also showed that Pitchborneo training program was able to fulfil the participants' training needs. The respondents highly appreciated the use of business model canvas, the pitching and the guidance on slide presentation. Hence, the training needs of the participants were answered and were aligned to the training objectives itself.

Training delivery was ranked last among the aspects of training in this study. Nevertheless, the mean score indicated high perception. Higher perceptions were given to items like use of business model canvas, effective slide presentation, business mentorship discussion and entrepreneurial sharing by past winners. However, there were lower perceptions on the use of personal pitch, listening to other participants' pitch and the pitching itself. This could be due to the fact that pitching is a stressful event that could lead to anxiety and distress, making some people unable to absorb information and knowledge (Armandi, 2015; Pollack et al., 2012).

Entrepreneurial Innovativeness

Entrepreneurial innovativeness is very important in entrepreneurial ventures. In this study, the respondents perceived that their entrepreneurial innovativeness was high due to Pitchborneo. They agreed that Pitchborneo helped in the generation, development and presentation of ideas. The program was most helpful in idea development which was the main aim of the Pitchborneo training program. Entrepreneurship is about idea creation and discovery of ideas that lead to idea exploitation and resulting in business opportunity that has the potentials of returns (Ashouri et al., 2013; Shane, 2003). Therefore, this program was able to improve entrepreneurship knowledge and skills among the participants which can be used in future endeavours. Nevertheless, this study also noted that the presentation of idea was ranked the lowest among the three aspects of innovativeness. Presenting idea via pitching is something new and requires the person to be competent in a number of things such as time management, communication, use of visual aids, etc. (Armandi, 2015; Pollack et al., 2012; Mason & Harrison, 2003). It maybe that the duration of a three day training

program is not enough to impart knowledge on pitching skills.

Comparison of Entrepreneurial Innovativeness Based on Demographics

The comparison of entrepreneurial innovativeness based on demographics showed that there are no significant differences based on age, gender, highest academic qualification and length of business experience. Therefore, this concludes that Pitchborneo training program has been generalized to meet the common needs of the participants regardless of their demographic background.

Impact of Pitchborneo Training Program on Entrepreneurial Innovativeness

This study found that the Pitchborneo training program has a significant, positive and strong impact on entrepreneurial innovativeness. In this study, fulfilment of training needs gave the greatest impact on entrepreneurial innovativeness followed by delivery and mentoring and coaching while training content has the lowest impact. As explained by Rwamitoga (2011), entrepreneurship requires cognitive ability as the entrepreneur need to think, reason and act on ideas to turn it into an opportunity with value that can be taken advantage on. Ideas are everywhere but the real challenge is to make it into an entrepreneurial idea – a business opportunity that has the profitability and feasibility features (My Top Business Ideas, 2017; The Practical Business Ideas, 2017). Therefore, by providing entrepreneurial training program like Pitchborneo, this has significantly contributed to their entrepreneurial skills specifically in clarifying and developing their business ideas. Every element of the training program – its content, delivery, mentoring and coaching, and fulfilment of training needs – gave significant and positive impacts on the entrepreneurs' innovativeness to generate, develop and present ideas.

Implications of Research Findings

This study concludes that participants of Pitchborneo regards highly the training program provided to them. The training management team who created, organized and continuously improved the program over the years were able to align their training needs with the objectives of the training program. Therefore, this program can be considered as a successful means of disseminating knowledge and skills on entrepreneurship especially in defining their business opportunities via various teaching and learning approaches. It can be concluded that the training program used strategies aligned to the needs in adult learning and effectively provided the content, delivery, coaching and mentoring that were satisfactory to them. Nevertheless, the evaluation of the training program hinted some aspects that can be improved particularly, the training contents and delivery. The SATA management team needs to regularly conduct training needs assessment to determine their needs, and assess the learning styles of the participants so that appropriate training content and delivery are used. In addition, the implicit weakness in the Pitchborneo training program is the pitching itself. The assessment led to insights that there need to be more focus on preparing the participants for pitching either by giving more time for it, modifying and giving a varied approach to improve pitching and exploring skills and knowledge relating to pitching such as visual aids preparation and presentation skills, interpersonal communication skills, responding to questions, stress management and so on. These may contribute to a higher perception on their ability to be innovative in this aspect.

Most importantly, this study noted that the Pitchborneo training program contributed significantly towards innovativeness of the participants. Hence, it validates and justify the need to continue with this program as findings have empirically shown that the program was

able to increase entrepreneurs' innovativeness in terms of idea generation, development and presentation. This program also contributes to the reputation of the pitching competition in Pitchborneo as a means of encouraging more informed, skilful and knowledgeable entrepreneurs to embark into entrepreneurial ventures. The program, Pitchborneo shows great potentials as a model of entrepreneurial training program to serve as an example of best practice and becoming a benchmark to other organizations, including higher learning institutions to adopt such programs.

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