

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ENTREPRENEURSHIP EDUCATION AND STUDENTS' ENTREPRENEURIAL INTENTIONS IN OGUN STATE-OWNED UNIVERSITIES, NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT: *The alarming rate of unemployment in Nigeria has become a major national problem. To abate this problem, the Federal Ministry of Education made Entrepreneurship Education compulsory for all students of higher institutions in the country. This study therefore investigates the relationship between students' exposure to Entrepreneurship Education and their career entrepreneurial intentions in Ogun State-owned universities. Six hypotheses were generated for the study. The population comprises all final year undergraduates, with a sample of six hundred and nine. Three research instruments were used. The data collected were analysed using descriptive statistics, Pearson Product-Moment Correlation Coefficient, T-test and ANOVA. Findings revealed that Entrepreneurship Education significantly influences students' Entrepreneurial intentions. It was recommended among others that Entrepreneurship Education should be practical-oriented so as to have greater participations in classroom interactions which would further enhance motivation.*

Keywords: Entrepreneur, Entrepreneurship, Entrepreneurial Intentions, Entrepreneurship Education, Motivation.

INTRODUCTION

With the alarming rate of unemployment in Nigeria, self-employment and small enterprise initiatives are presently high on the country's national agenda, with the hope that they will provide alternative channels of employment. Annually, tertiary institutions in the country produce middle / high level manpower that join the labour market in search of almost non-existing jobs. The challenge is not only tackling the already sizeable unemployed graduates, but also absorbing the new entrants into the labour market. Underlying this situation is the fact that the training which tertiary students received has not been fully successful in equipping them with the desirable skills and competencies required for job creation and self-employment (Madumere-Obike, 2006, Amaewhule, 2007 and Nwangwu, 2007).

The historical trend of higher education in Nigeria, with the establishment of Yaba Higher College in 1934, to date reveals that the number of established tertiary institutions in the country has experienced a tremendous growth. For example, polytechnics grew from one in 1934 to sixty in 2007. There was only one university as at 1948, As at 2008, there were one hundred and twenty nine (129) universities, sixty four (64) degree awarding colleges and more are being proposed. Between 1958 and 2008, colleges of education have also grown from one

to one hundred and twenty (120) (Ajao, 2008). Many tertiary institutions have since been added to the numbers mentioned above.

It has been observed that existing curricula in most of our tertiary institutions were developed by the colonial masters. These curricula were narrow and stereotypically lopsided considering only the needs of the colonial masters. Consequently, many of the curricula in Nigeria educational system, particularly at the tertiary level, are not geared toward effective national sustainable development. Many graduates of such programmes are not easily employed or self-employed and in most cases have to wait for many years after graduation to secure jobs. Hence, the rate of unemployment among university and polytechnic graduates in Nigeria was as high as 71.4 % (Yoloye, 2008).

Entrepreneurship education implies all forms of knowledge delivery that seeks to empower the individual to create real wealth in the economic sector, thereby advancing the cause of development of the nation as a whole. Bassey and Archibong (2005) noted that the goal of entrepreneurship education is intended to empower our graduates irrespective of their areas of specialization with skills that will enable them to engage in income yielding venture. It is a reorientation from being job seekers to job creators.

Cotton, O’Gorman and Stampfi (2002) stated that the rationale for the inclusion of entrepreneurship curricula in universities is to help graduates to acquire increased understanding of entrepreneurship, equip them with entrepreneurial approach to the world of work and prepare them to act as entrepreneurs and managers of new businesses. The objectives of entrepreneurship education succinctly presented by the European Union (2002) include: “raising students’ awareness of self-employment as a career option, promoting the development of personal qualities that are relevant to entrepreneurship, such as creativity, risk taking and responsibility; and providing the technical and business skills that are needed in order to start a new venture”. It can be deduced that the exposure of university students to entrepreneurial education will gear-up entrepreneurial drive in students and if properly packaged, can be a significant factor in reducing the chronic unemployment syndrome among graduate, it is a considered opinion that national entrepreneurship development would be very important to achieving a nationwide economic development.

It is obvious that the type of education being offered in most of our tertiary institutions produce graduates that are grossly unfit to meet the demands of the present world of work. Unemployment of graduates from Nigerian tertiary institutions has become a major concern for the nation. The time lag between graduation and employment dates continue to lengthen causing frustration for the concerned graduates. However, one viable option is to be employed by self. Tertiary institutions have embraced entrepreneurship education programme with the hope that it will equip their products with skills necessary to start their own businesses. This is sequel to the directives by Federal Government of Nigeria to all tertiary institutions, to offer entrepreneurship education courses so as to enhance the skills’ acquisition of tertiary education graduates for self-employment.

Intention is seen as the best predictor of entrepreneurial behaviour, starting a business is not an event, it is a process which may take many years to evolve and come to fruition. Intentionality is, thus, grounded on cognitive psychology that attempts to explain or predict human behaviour. It is seen that behavioural intention results from attitudes and becomes an immediate

determinant of behaviour. Entrepreneurial intention is a major determinant of the action of new venture creation moderated by exogenous variables such as; family background, position in one's family, parents' occupation, education and training (Bird and Jelinek, 1988). Intention is a key concept when it comes to understanding the reason for individual's careers (Franco, Haase and Lautenschlager, 2010). This is particularly true for explaining the decision to start up new venture, where the entrepreneurial intention has been considered a chief element.

Despite the fact that Federal Government of Nigeria made entrepreneurship education compulsory for all students since 2006/2007 academic session to reduce graduate unemployment, has there been decrease in the rate of graduate unemployment till date? In this context, this study examines whether entrepreneurship education raises the individual student's intentions to be an entrepreneur or whether it helps students to determine how well-suited they are for entrepreneurial venture after graduation. Therefore, the study examines the relationship between entrepreneurship education and students' entrepreneurial intentions.

To carry out the study, six (6) hypotheses were formulated.

Ho₁: Entrepreneurship skills will not significantly influence students' intentions to venture into an undertaking for self-engagement purpose.

Ho₂: Students' motivations for entrepreneurial venture will not significantly relate to their entrepreneurship education.

Ho₃: There is no significant relationship between parental employment status and students' entrepreneurial intentions.

Ho₄: There is no significant difference between male and female students' entrepreneurial intentions.

Ho₅: There is no significant difference in students' entrepreneurial intentions based on their academic discipline.

Ho₆: There is no significant difference in students' entrepreneurial intentions based on their age.

METHODOLOGY

Population

The target population for this study comprised all the final year undergraduates in Ogun State-owned Universities: Olabisi Onabanjo University (OOU) and Tai Solarin university of Education (TASUED). TASUED had 2616 final year students while OOU had 4766 students. This constitutes a grand total of seven thousand, three hundred and eighty two (7382) students. Multistage sampling techniques were adopted in selecting the sample for this study. The Faculties/ Colleges were stratified into four namely; Science, Social Science, Humanities and Education, then from each Faculty/College, 10% of the subjects were randomly selected in each department. This totaled six hundred and nine (609) for the sample.

Table 1: Proportional Sampling (10%) from the Faculties/Colleges/Departments

A

TASUED				OOU			
COLLEGE OF SOCIAL AND MANAGEMENT SCIENCES				FACULTY OF SOCIAL AND MANAGEMENT SCIENCES			
Departments		Total	10%	Departments		Total	10%
1	Economics	217	22	1.	Business Administration	158	16
2	Political Science	70	07	2.	Accounting & Banking finance	391	39
3	Sociological Studies	307	30	3.	Economics	261	26
4	Geo. & Environmental Mgt. Business Management	166	17	4.	Geography & Regional Planning	44	04
5		235	24	5.	Political Science	174	17
				6.	Sociology/Psychology	177	18
				7.	Mass Communication	102	10
TOTAL		995	100	TOTAL		1307	130

B

COLLEGE OF APPLIED EDUCATION AND VOCATIONAL TECHNOLOGY				FACULTY OF EDUCATION			
Departments		Total	10%	Departments		Total	10%
1	Educational Foundations & Instructional Technology	71	07	1.	Educational Foundations & Management	161	16
2	Educational Management	48	05	2.	Curriculum Studies & Instructional Tech.	300	30
3	Counseling Psychology	30	03	3.	Sports Science & Health Education	34	03
4	Library and Information Science	82	08				
5	Vocational & Technical Education	281	28				
TOTAL		512	51	TOTAL		495	49

C

COLLEGE HUMANITIES				FACULTY OF ARTS			
	Departments	Total	10%	Departments	Total	10%	
1	History & Diplomatic Studies	160	16	1. English & Performing Arts	134	13	
2	English	107	11	2. History & Diplomatic Studies	106	11	
3	French	14	01	3. Nigerian & Foreign Languages	21	02	
4	Yoruba	21	02	4. Philosophy	131	13	
5	Creative Arts	34	03	5. Religious Studies	17	02	
6	Religious Studies	24	02				
TOTAL		341	35	TOTAL		409	41

D

COLLEGE OF SCIENCE AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY				FACULTY OF SCIENCE			
	Departments	Total	10%	Departments	Total	10%	
1	Biological Studies	102	10	1. Plant & Applied Zoology	180	18	
2	Physics & Telecommunication	65	07	2. Mathematical/Computer	412	41	
3	Mathematics	49	05	3. Earth Sciences	110	11	
4	Computer Science	82	16	4. Geography & Reg. Plan	22	02	
5	Petroleum & Petro Chemical Sciences	281	21	5. Chemical Science	214	02	
6	Agricultural Production & Management Science	512	04	6. Microbiology	300	30	
7	Human Kinetics & Health Education	37	04	7. Physics	132	13	
TOTAL		659	67	TOTAL		1370	136

Source: Academic Planning, Quality Assurance and Research Unit TASUED and Academic Planning Unit OOU

Instrumentation

A self-developed questionnaire was used for gathering the data. The questionnaire was titled Entrepreneurship Education and Entrepreneurial Intentions Questionnaire (EEEIQ). The questionnaire comprising of the following four (4) sections.

1. Demographic:- Focusing on age, gender, academic discipline and parental employment status.
2. Three scales namely
 - a. Entrepreneurial Intention Scale
 - b. Motivation for Entrepreneurship Scale

c. Acquired Skills in Entrepreneurship Education Scale
All the 3 scales are based on 4-point Likert ratings.

FINDINGS

Hypothesis One: Entrepreneurship skills will not significantly influence students' intentions to venture into an undertaking for self-engagement purpose.

Table 2: Correlation of the relationship between entrepreneurship skills and students' entrepreneurial intentions.

		Entrepreneurship skills	Entrepreneurial intentions
Entrepreneurship skills	Pearson Correlation	1	.356**
	Sig.(2-tailed)		.000
	N	314	314
Entrepreneurial Intentions	Pearson Correlation	.356**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	314	314

Results in Table 2 revealed that there were significant and positive relationships between entrepreneurship skills and students intentions to venture ($r=.356$; $p<.01$). This implies that entrepreneurship skills do influence students' intentions to venture into undertaking self-engagement purpose. Therefore, hypothesis one is rejected.

Hypothesis Two: Students' motivations for entrepreneurial venture will not significantly relate to their entrepreneurial education.

Table 3: Correlation of the relationship between student's motivation for entrepreneurial venture intentions.

		Entrepreneurship skills	Entrepreneurial intentions
Students' Motivation	Pearson Correlation	1	.621**
	Sig.(2-tailed)		.000
	N	314	314
Entrepreneurial intentions	Pearson Correlation	.621***	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	314	314

Results in Table 3 revealed that there were significant and positive relationships between students' motivation for entrepreneurial venture and entrepreneurship intentions ($r=.621$; $p<.01$). This implies that students' motivation for entrepreneurial venture do relate to their entrepreneurship intention. Therefore, hypothesis two is rejected.

Hypothesis Three: There is no significant relationship between parental employment status and students' entrepreneurial intentions.

Table 4 Correlation of the relationship between parental occupational career and students entrepreneurial intentions.

		Entrepreneurship skills	Entrepreneurial intentions
Parental Occupational	Pearson Correlation	1	-.132*
	Sig.(2-tailed)		.020
	N	314	314
Entrepreneurial intentions	Pearson Correlation	-.132*	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.020	
	N	314	314

Result in Table 4 revealed that there was significant but negative relationships between parental occupational career and entrepreneurship intentions ($r = .132$; $P < .05$). This implies that parental occupational career have significant negative relationship with the students' entrepreneurial intention. Therefore, hypothesis three is rejected.

Hypothesis Four: There is no significant difference between male and female students' entrepreneurial intentions.

Table 5: Comparison of male and female students' entrepreneurial intentions

	N	X	Sd	Df	Tacl	Sig	Remark
Male students	158	33.019	5.15	312	1.936	.054	Not Significant ($p > 0.05$)
Female student	156	31.788	607				

Table 5 shows that the calculated value of 1.936 is not significant at 0.05 level of significant with 312 degree of freedom. This implies that there was no significant difference in the entrepreneurial intentions of male and female students. Therefore, hypothesis four is retained.

Hypothesis Five: There is no significant difference in students' entrepreneurial intentions based on their academic disciplines

Table 6: ANOVA Comparison of students entrepreneurial intentions based on their academic disciplines

	Sum of square	Df	Mean square	F	Sig.	P
Between Groups	224.986	3	74.995	2.375	.070	$p > 0.05$
Within Groups	9786.836	310	31.570			
Total	10011.822	313				

Table 6 presents the result of ANOVA test on students' entrepreneurial intentions based on their academic disciplines. The F value of 2.375 obtained in the test is not significant at 0.05 level of significance. It is therefore concluded that there is no significance difference in the entrepreneurial intentions of students based on their academic discipline. Therefore, hypothesis five is retained.

Hypothesis Six: There is no significant difference in students' entrepreneurial intentions based on their age

Table 7: Comparison of students' entrepreneurial intention based on their age group

	Sum of square	Df	Mean square	F	Sig.	P
Between Groups	212.011	3	70.670	2.236	.084	p>0.05
Within Groups	9799.810	310	31.612			
Total	10011.822	313				

Table 7 presents the result of ANOVA test on students' entrepreneurial intentions based on their age. The F value of 2.236 obtained in the test is not significant at 0.05 level of significance. It is therefore concluded that there is no significant difference in the entrepreneurial intentions of students based on their age group. Therefore, hypothesis six is retained.

DISCUSSION

The study focuses on the relationship between entrepreneurship education and students' entrepreneurial intentions. The findings of the study are discussed based on the based on tested hypotheses.

Hypothesis one indicates that entrepreneurship skills significantly influence students' intentions to venture into an undertaking for self-engagement purpose. This shows that entrepreneurship education positively influence the entrepreneurial intentions of the students'. The result suggests that most undergraduate students will prefer to work for themselves because while the number of university graduates joining the job market increases each year, there are gross inadequate job vacancies by the public and private sectors to absorb all youths seeking employment, consequently, most of these tertiary students even before and after leaving school see entrepreneurship as their only means of survival. The result corroborates the findings of Owusu-Anasah(2004)that entrepreneurship education programme influences students' career intentions. It indicates that the entrepreneurship education being offered at tertiary institutions met the students' needs of becoming an entrepreneur. The finding of this research proves that entrepreneurship education and entrepreneurial intention is positively linked. This result is also consistent and supported by previous researchers (Fayolle & Gailly, 2004; Lee, Chargrand Lim 2005; Matlay, 2008; Izedonmi & Okafor, 2010; Ooi, Selvarajah, & Meyer, 2011). This is because entrepreneurship education has equipped the students with necessary skills and knowledge by preparing them to deal with uncertainly in future by helping them to be entrepreneurs as they have the basic knowledge regarding management of firm, minimizing risk barriers (Izquierdo & Buelens, 2008; Ahmed et al. 2010; Zhou Tao Zhong & Wang 2012), leading to capability enhancement in managing business venture in future (Peterman & Kennedy, 2003; Izquierdo & Buelens, 2008) and improve their attitude towards entrepreneurship which, in turn increases their entrepreneurial intention (Dell, 2008; Tam, 2009).

Hypothesis two revealed that there was significant and positive relationship between students' motivation for entrepreneurial and entrepreneurship intentions. This shows that entrepreneurship education motivates students positively to venture into an undertaking for self-engagement purpose after graduation. This is consistent with the studies by Wilson, (2007) which established that entrepreneurship programmes significantly increases students' intentions toward entrepreneurship by motivating them to choose entrepreneurial careers.

Hypothesis three indicates that there is significant relationship between parental employment status and students entrepreneurial intentions. This indicates that the employment status of parents influences their entrepreneurial intentions. With regards to entrepreneurial family background, the result illustrate that there is significant relationship in the level of Entrepreneurial Intentions between students with an entrepreneurial family background and those whose families do not own business. This corroborates with a study by Westhead (1995) who established that being raised in a family that is entrepreneurial had a significant impact on an individuals' intentions to start their own business as there is a transfer of entrepreneurial skills

Hypothesis four states that students entrepreneurial intentions did not vary on the basis of students gender. This implies that gender did not have any significant influence on students' entrepreneurial intentions. This is as a result of gender equality, with the belief that the job that a man can do a woman can also do it. However, it is contrary to the findings by Ahmed et al. (2010), whose findings indicate that gender (males and females) preferences are different in relation to starting a business.

Hypothesis five revealed that there was no significant difference in the entrepreneurial intentions of students based on their academic discipline. This shows that actual educative process has neither favourable nor detrimental effect on entrepreneurial intentions. However, this is contrary to the study of Varea & Jimenez (2001) in their study (using Economic, Engineering and Technology disciplines) observed that Engineering and Economics student showed greater entrepreneurial intentions than other students because they have had through their courses and academic assignments greater exposure to the world of business.

The result of hypothesis six reveals that there is no significant difference in students entrepreneurial intentions based on their age. This implies that age has no linear relationship with entrepreneurship intentions. The finding is consistent with the report of previous works in the literature of students' intention about entrepreneurship. Earlier studies (Lee, Wong, Dec Foo & Leung 2011; Ozyilmaz; 2011; Franco et al; 2010; Kuckertz & Wanger, 2010; Linan & Chen, 2009; Tornikoski & Kautonen; 2009) using students samples reported of no statistical significant linear association between age and entrepreneurial intention.

CONCLUSIONS

Based on the findings of this study, it is evident that entrepreneurial education had significant influence on entrepreneurial intentions of Ogun state-owned universities to venture into an undertaking for self-engagement purpose. The entrepreneurial intentions in students taking entrepreneurship education are significantly related to their demographic variables such as gender and parental employment status. It is also revealed that entrepreneurship education exposed to the tertiary students creates in them entrepreneurship awareness and encourages them to demonstrate high level of commitment to entrepreneurship commitment as well as insulating a positive attitude towards business start-up.

RECOMMENDATIONS

This study has established the relevance of Entrepreneurship Education in reducing unemployment rate in the country. The following recommendations are therefore given to be positively considered.

The duration and intensity of the entrepreneurship education should be increased beyond a semester's course to realize a maximum impact on university students.

1. Government should establish student enterprise centres for the students at all levels of education to provide business advice, mentorship and other practical support towards the realization of the self-employment aspirations of the students.
2. Entrepreneurship education should be practical-oriented so as to sustain students' interest.
3. Government should give adequate attention to entrepreneurial development in the country through the provision of conducive economic environment.
4. Government should provide link between the graduates and micro finance bank and other funding institutions. Adequate monitoring should be given to the beneficiaries of financial assistance

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