

ENTREPRENEURSHIP EDUCATION AND ENTREPRENEURIAL INTENTION: THE PLACE OF TEACHING METHOD

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Abstract

As part of the strategy to curb the rising unemployment among Nigerian undergraduates, entrepreneurship subjects were made compulsory in the curriculum of all the Higher Educational Institutions (HEIs) in Nigeria. The idea is to trigger strong desire for enterprise creation rather than remaining job seekers among the undergraduates upon graduation. Accordingly, this paper seeks to determine effects of education on entrepreneurial intentions among university students and argue on the best teaching method. The model was empirically tested and was analyzed using the partial least square structural equation modelling technique on a sample of 312 higher institution students in Zamfara State. The finding shows that entrepreneurial intention is taken as a function of educational support. We conclude that the teaching method should be more of practical, apprenticeship than lecture method.

1.0. Introduction

Youth represents the most active workforce of any productive society. Therefore, it is abnormal if youth unemployment becomes high and alarming. In this situation, reversing such ugly trend is critical strategic choice for productivity and economic development of any society. In the case of Nigeria, youth unemployment is on a steady rise. For instance, the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) reports that youth unemployment rate in Nigeria averaged 21.73 percent from 2014 until 2017, reaching an all-time high of 33.10

percent in the third quarter of 2017 (NBS, 2017).

A matter of interest to note is that entrepreneurship is an agent for social and economic development (see: Koe, et al, 2012; Ezeh et al., 2020; Ezeh 2023; Ezeh and Abdulrahman, 2022; Ezeh and Juniadu, 2019). Thus, introducing entrepreneurship as part of curriculum in schools becomes a well-thought out plan to empower youths to create their own businesses and become economically independent. Thus, there has been a call by Nigerian Government and Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) to encourage undergraduates to embrace

entrepreneurship. For example, in 2004 the National Universities Commission (NUC) mandated all universities in Nigeria to introduce entrepreneurship education as part of course requirement before graduation (NUC, 2004). The goal of (NUC) is to enforce entrepreneurial mind-set among Nigerian undergraduates and also infuse necessary entrepreneurship knowledge and skills to them. Moreover, entrepreneurship education has been introduced to our primary school education, and all higher institution. Furthermore, a number of programmes and agencies are mounted to address the issue of youth unemployment in Nigeria. Arguably, this policy direction acknowledges the importance of entrepreneurship as a promoter of employment and economic development. Thus, entrepreneurship offers university graduates an opportunity and the mindset of becoming employers of labour rather than job seekers. Surprisingly, Sodipo (2014) observed that the Nigerian university graduates still roam about the street seeking for employment. Thus, in Spain, Liñán, et al., (2011) found that student's high preference to be an employee is associated with lower entrepreneurial intention. This state of being suggests the need to empirically determine the effect of entrepreneurial education on entrepreneurial intentions among undergraduates in Nigeria.

2.0. Literature Review

Generally, entrepreneurs are considered to be innovators who take risk with the view of positively changing their environment. Hence, contributions of entrepreneurs towards economic development cannot be overemphasized. Specifically, Job creation has been regarded as one of major contributions of entrepreneurs (Koe et al., 2012; Ezeh 2023; Ezeh and Abdulrahman, 2022; Ezeh and Juniadu, 2019). However, based on Maslow's (1943) hierarchy of needs, those who show positive

entrepreneurial attitude will regard entrepreneurship as a way of achieving self-actualization, while those who have negative attitude will regard entrepreneurship as a last resort. Arguably many Nigerian graduates who cannot find white collar job view entrepreneurship as a last resort. Also, Varamäki, et al., (2015) posit that higher education schooling has a negative impact on the development of entrepreneurial potential of individuals. Also, Fayolle and Gailly (2015) found positive effects of an Entrepreneurial Education Program on students whose previous entrepreneurial exposure is weak or inexistent, while it will not impact on those who have been exposed to entrepreneurship. But, Boulton and Turner, (2005) postulate that entrepreneurs are made and not born; thus, one can be trained to become an entrepreneur. Also, Turker and Selcuk, (2009), argue that the level of entrepreneurial intention is as a result of educational support. Nevertheless, Laukkanen, (2000) argue that there are other factors that contribute to entrepreneurial intention. On this note, there is a limit to what can be taught in entrepreneurship training programmes. And, Henry, et al., (2005) found that only some aspects of entrepreneurship can successfully be taught.

Educational support is an efficient way of obtaining necessary knowledge about entrepreneurship (Ezeh et al., 2020; Boulton and Turner, 2005; Turker and Selcuk, 2009; Koe et al., 2012; Papa, et al., 2018a). Thus, academic institutions have important roles in the encouragement of young people to choose an entrepreneurial career. According to Chukwuma, and Ogbeide (2017), there is a strong positive relationship between entrepreneurial education and entrepreneurial intention in Nigeria. Many studies have shown that entrepreneurial attributes is positively influenced by educational program (Ezeh et al., 2020; Athayde,

2009; Kor et al., 2007; Raposo, et al., 2008; Roy et al., 2017; Türker and Selçuk 2009). Thus, Varamäki, et al., (2015) found that active-based entrepreneurship education increases entrepreneurial potential, while lecture-based pedagogy decreased entrepreneurial potential. Contrarily, Yurtkoru et al., (2014) found that entrepreneurial education is not related to entrepreneurial intention. Arguably, the contradictory findings may be due to the teaching method adopted by a given institution. According to Morris, et al., (2013), Entrepreneurship education (EE) serves as a vehicle that present information about norms and relevant knowledge about entrepreneurship.

H1. Entrepreneurial intention of university students positively relates with perceived educational support.

3.0. Research Methodology

The scale used in the current study was adapted from different scholars and slightly modified to suit the context of the study. The educational support scale was adapted from Roy et al., 2017, and Yurtkoru et al., 2014. In the questionnaire, all responses were obtained on a 5-point Likert-type scale from (5) strongly agree to (1) strongly disagree. The study focused on the third-year students at Federal University Gusau, students in their Higher National Diploma (HND II) at Federal Polytechnic Kaura Namoda and students in their third year at College of Education Technical, all in Zamfara State. These were students who must have gone through entrepreneurship Studies and Skill training. This study made use of convenience sampling. Data were collected through the use of self-administered questionnaire in a survey.

Three hundred and fifty (350) pieces of questionnaires were distributed to the students in the class with the assistance of the lecturers, but only 312 pieces were good for analysis. Structural equation modelling was used to validate the model and test the effect of the IV on the DV. This is done with the aid of AMOS 23 software. Preliminary analysis was conducted with SPSS version 20, to clean the data for proper analysis. SEM is used when a researcher wants to assess the relationships between latent unobserved variables or constructs. It combines multiple statistics that evolved to help specify real-world network models and to fit observations to theory (Westland, 2015).

In process of evaluating the model fit, a lot of variables were removed from constructs because the regression weight is below .7 (Field, 2013). Thus, the remaining variables are: for educational support- 2PES- My entrepreneurship class provides the necessary knowledge about entrepreneurship; 4PES-I can start a new business because I attend entrepreneurship classes. For entrepreneurial intention- 2EI- I am determined to create a business in the future; 3EI- I have very seriously thought of starting a business. Model fit was evaluated as follows, incremental fit index (IFI) = 0.93, Tucker–Lewis index (TLI) = 0.57, comparative fit index (CFI) = 0.93 and root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA) = 0.318. The model estimated shows a good fit with the data, but not so wonderful, as all the fit indices outlined above fall relatively within the acceptable cut-off limits (Hu, and Bentler, 1999).

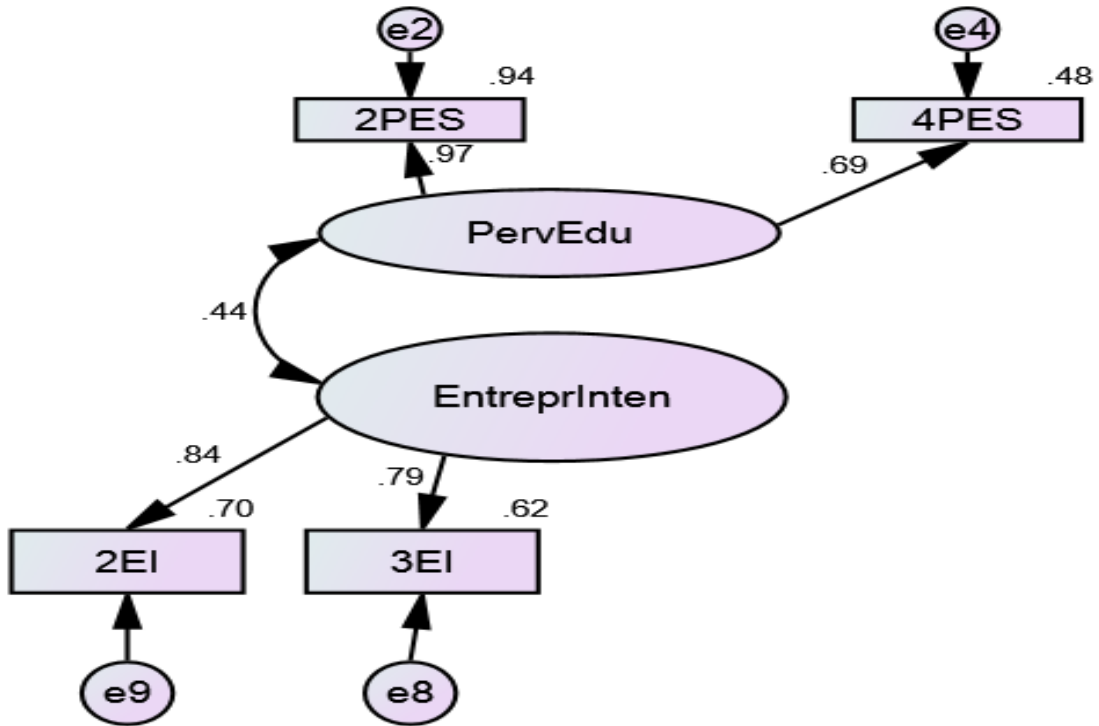


Fig 1: Measurement Model
 Note: PES= Perceived Education Support; EI= Entrepreneurial Intention

Descriptive Analysis

Majority of the respondents is male 73.1 percent. The religion of the respondents recorded about 81.4 percent Muslim, and 18.6 percent non-Muslims. This shows that the majority of respondents

are Muslims. 82.1 percent of respondents have parents who own a business, and 80.8 percent have business experience.

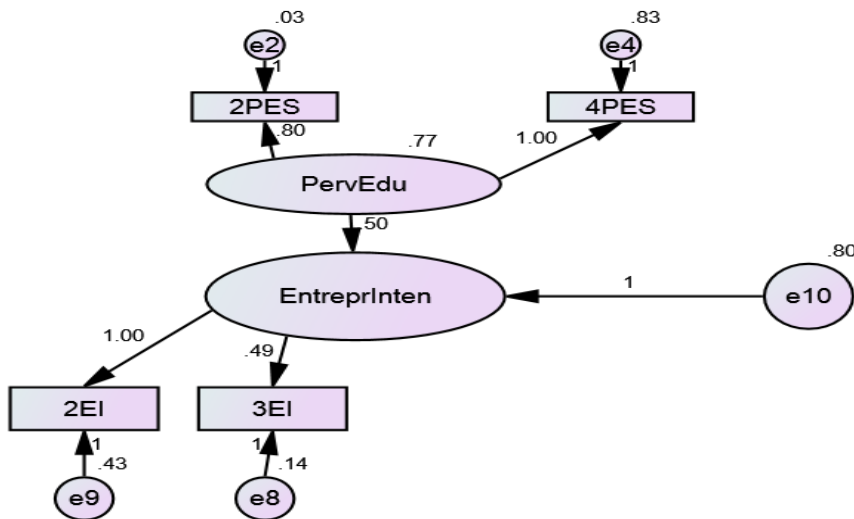


Fig 2: Path Analysis
 Note: PES= Perceived Education Support; EI= Entrepreneurial Intention

Testing of Hypothesis

The model fit for path analysis was equally conducted to test the viability and fitness of the path. The result shows thus, GFI 0.953, incremental fit index (IFI) = 0.930, Tucker–Lewis index (TLI) = 0.575, comparative fit index (CFI) = 0.929 and root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA) = 0.318. The model estimated shows a good fit (Hu,

and Bentler, 1999). Also, perceived educational support → Entrepreneurial intention path has path coefficient (beta 0.50), t-value of (3.6245), standard error (0.065), and the p-value is 0.00, therefore the hypothesis is accepted. Therefore, entrepreneurial education is an important predictor of entrepreneurial intention.

Table 1 Regression Weights: (Group number 1 - Default model)

			Estimate	S.E.	C.R.	P	Label
Entrepreneurship Intention	<---	Educational support	0.501	0.074	6.762	***	

5.0. Discussion

The purpose of this study is to determine the effects of entrepreneurship education on the entrepreneurial intention of undergraduate students in Nigeria. Entrepreneurship is the source of economic growth and employment creation; thus, it is important to know the place of education on students' entrepreneurial intention, especially in a developing economy. This study found that Perceived entrepreneurial education has significant impact on entrepreneurial intention. Thus, it is suggested that the ability of teacher to teach and encourage the students towards entrepreneurship, the greater the entrepreneurial intention. This study is similar with the study of Turker and selcuk (2009). Equally, Ramoni (2016) found that entrepreneurship education significantly helped to predict entrepreneurial intention among new graduates. Furthermore, this study is in line with the findings of (Athayde, 2009; Kor et al., 2007; Raposo, et al., 2008; Roy et al., 2017; Türker and Selçuk 2009). However, this finding contradicts Yurtkoru et al., (2014) study.

5.1. Conclusion and Recommendations

This study underscores the importance of entrepreneurship education in

improving entrepreneurial intention of undergraduates in Nigeria. Therefore, educational institutions should introduce and strengthen entrepreneurial education from an early age. That will assist in changing the attitude of undergraduates towards entrepreneurship. Teaching method should be more of practical, in form of apprenticeship than lecture method teaching. Entrepreneurship should be made a compulsory module at all levels and in all educational institutions. Successful entrepreneurs from various fields should be invited to give practical talks to students in all educational levels. Government agencies should make student entrepreneurship as one of their core missions. Also, the religious leaders should emphasis on dignity of labour in their various place of worship. As reflected from the study, it is evident that entrepreneurship education predicts undergraduates' entrepreneurial intention. This shows the need for government, universities and other stakeholders to ensure that the youth develops interest in starting their own venture. This can only happen if the youth are exposed to business. It is equally important for both the public and

private institutions to educate the society on the importance of entrepreneurship.

5.2. Limitation and recommendation for further study

This study is limited to Muslim state in northern Nigeria. This therefore, makes it difficult to generalize the findings. But, specifically, the current study can be used to infer to other core Muslim community. However, other scholars can study the core non-Muslim community in southern Nigeria. Equally, it is not our aim to test all possible exogenous factors affecting entrepreneurial intention. Therefore, the fact that portion of the variance in entrepreneurial intention remains unexplained is a signal that other relevant exogenous variables were omitted. Further research is therefore recommended to capture more factors and scope in studying entrepreneurial intention. This could be done by replicating this study in other areas and/or wider environment.

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Appendices

s/n	Items	SD	D	N	A	S A
PES	My entrepreneurship class encourages me to develop creative ideas for being an entrepreneur	1	2	3	4	5
PES	My entrepreneurship class provides the necessary knowledge about entrepreneurship	1	2	3	4	5
PES	My entrepreneurship class develops my entrepreneurial skills and abilities	1	2	3	4	5
PES	I can start a new business because I attend entrepreneurship classes	1	2	3	4	5
EI	I will make every effort to start and run my own business	1	2	3	4	5
EI	I am determined to create a business in the future	1	2	3	4	5
EI	I have very seriously thought of starting a business	1	2	3	4	5
EI	I have got the business intention to start a business some day	1	2	3	4	5