

An Investigation of the Level of Entrepreneurial Aspiration among Students in a Nigerian University

Adetayo, Janet Oyebola (PhD.)

Lecturer, Curriculum Studies and Instructional Technology Department, Faculty of Education, Olabisi Onabanjo University, P.M.B. 222, Ago-Iwoye
bolafemitayo@yahoo.com

Abstract

This study investigated the level of entrepreneurship aspiration among tertiary institution students in Ogun State. A total of 300 students selected through simple random sampling techniques from the Faculty of Education of Olabisi Onabanjo University participated in the study. Three research questions were raised and answered in the study. A researcher designed and validated questionnaire titled: Students Entrepreneurship Aspiration Scale was the only major instrument used for data collection. The frequency count, simple percentage and t-test of significance at 0.05 level of confidence were used for data analysis. Findings from the study revealed that majority of the students possessed low level of entrepreneurship aspiration. There was no significant gender difference in the students' level of entrepreneurship aspiration; and several reasons were given by the participants for the recorded low level of entrepreneurship aspiration. It was therefore recommended among others that effort should be made to create positive attitude to entrepreneurship, as well as the need for all stakeholders to encourage youths to set up businesses of their own.

Introduction

Gana (2001) defines entrepreneurship education as the willingness and ability of an individual to seek out investment opportunities in an environment and ability to establish and run an enterprise successfully based on the identified opportunity available to them. It is observed by Oyenuga (2011) citing Igbo (1995) that entrepreneurship involves risk-taking in human financial resources. In Bateman and Swell's (1999) view entrepreneurship is a manifestation of effective control of human intelligence, skill and financial resources to achieve great profit. Wikipedia, Higher School Career and Technical Education (2009) sees entrepreneurship education as a career opportunity for students who may never go to college and as a way to upgrade a young person's abilities to succeed as an employee as well as an entrepreneur.

Ashmore (2002) see entrepreneurship, as a vehicle to explain economic theory and to call American youth to the understanding that entrepreneur is a career option for everyone and also a way to emphasize the importance of mathematics, science, language arts and social studies. The view is further stressed by Urevbu (2001) that entrepreneurship education is a vehicle to develop academic skills and creative thinking under the free enterprise system. In the same vein, Uwameiye & Clark (2003) are of the view that entrepreneurship is a vehicle to empower adults to be self-sufficient, independent, and income-producing citizens.

Marilyn (2009) states that "one of the only ways this generation is going to achieve a life style that is different from that of their parents is through entrepreneurship". It is vital for students to be prepared to make different career paths in a world that is constantly changing. Dike (2009) reports that, youth unemployment appears to be shooting up the sky; because many of them lack "employability" skills that are often acquired from vocational schools. The Vanguard Newspaper of December 23, 2004 notes "youth unemployment moved from 4.3% in 1985 to 15.3% in 1986 to 7.0% in 1987 and jumped to 60% in 1997. The report shows that in 2003 primary schools accounted for 14.7% unemployment, secondary school 53.6% and tertiary schools constituted 12.4%. He further states that the progress in Nigeria lies in the productivity of its citizens and quality education and genuine vocational programmes hold the key, this will improve economic growth and development strategies as part of poverty alleviation and assist the unemployed in job search.

Nwafor (2007) points out that the whole idea about entrepreneurship education is self-employment, which will generate employment opportunity to others that must work with him as he cannot work alone. In his view, potential entrepreneurs are separated from general population given to variety of business that entrepreneurs have created. An entrepreneur always sets his goals and objectives, goes all out to achieve them without minding any obstacle on the way. All stones before an entrepreneur are converted into stepping stones towards achieving success. He is always confident, independent in thought and optimistic in his action. Furthermore, he sees entrepreneurs as original and unique in thoughts, innovations and creations with knowledge and versatility. He further stresses that entrepreneur always "stands out" when he is thorough, original and unique in his way of doing things.

Kiadese (2007) citing Nelson (1996) noted that entrepreneurship education is much relevant in the tertiary education curriculum as it provides students with skills and knowledge to successfully launch and operate their own business venture, provide them with the opportunity to develop own and practice skills and perspectives that

are vital; to entrepreneurial success. David (2000), posited that the inclusion of entrepreneurship education in tertiary institutions curriculum will serve the students in experiencing and understanding what is involved in setting up a business, he further added that entrepreneurship education would also be useful to tertiary students. Studies such as that of Kiadese (2007) and Okon (1990) have reported a high level of entrepreneurship education among tertiary institution students. However, awareness of entrepreneurship education among students is not enough but the need to find out the level of their entrepreneurship aspiration or readiness to establish a business of their own.

According to Denga (2005) in Kiadese (2007) entrepreneurship aspiration refers to the desire of an individual to set up and manage business. Also Consortium of Entrepreneurship Education also defined entrepreneurship aspirations as the willingness of individual to own a prosperous business. Research from the Consortium of entrepreneurship education as reported by Cathy (2003) also reported that the youth level of awareness is closely related with their entrepreneurial aspiration. In other words, their level of awareness is a greater factor in stimulating their interest to set up a personal business after school.

The essentiality of becoming self-reliant in other to safeguard oneself against the problem of unemployment that is eating deep into young graduates in Nigeria necessitated that urgent attention to be given to entrepreneurship education and increase level of entrepreneurship aspiration among these young graduates for the purpose of arresting the embarrassing situation in youth unemployment among graduates of our higher institutions of learning. This study therefore, investigated the level of entrepreneurship aspiration among tertiary institutions students in Ogun State.

Research Questions

The following research questions were raised in other to guide the study:

1. What is the level of entrepreneurship aspiration among students in a Nigerian University?
2. What are the reasons for the level of entrepreneurship aspiration among students in a Nigerian University?
3. Will the students' differ significantly in their level of entrepreneurship aspiration by gender?

Method

The study adopted a descriptive design. This is because the design permitted a description of the relationship between the independent and the dependent variables.

Population and Sample

The population for the study consists of all students in the Faculty of Education of Olabisi Onabanjo University. In this study, the population was stratified into four that is 100 to 400 levels respectively from which the simple random sampling technique was adopted in selecting 150 students from each of the 300 level and 400 level students. 100 level and 200 level students were excluded from the study because of the assumption that they might not have offered enough courses with entrepreneurship content. In all, three hundred students participated in the study.

Research Instrument

A Researcher designed and validated Students' Entrepreneurship Aspiration Scale (SEAS) was the only instrument used for the study. The SEAS comprised of two sections, section A sought demographic information of the respondent such as level of study, sex and course, while section B contained 20 structured items meant to elicit information on the level of entrepreneurship aspiration. The instrument were validated by two of the researcher's colleagues who are experts in the area of questionnaire design and test construction in the Faculty of Education, Olabisi Onabanjo University, Ago-Iwoye while test-retest reliability was carried out to establish its reliability, the exercise yielded a reliability coefficient of 0.78. The instrument was personally administered to the students.

Data Analysis

Data collected were analyzed using simple percentage and frequency counts and t-test of significance at 0.05 level of confidence.

Results and Interpretation

The results of the study are presented in table 1 to 3 to reflect the order in which the research questions were raised and answered:

Research Question 1: What is the level of entrepreneurship aspiration among Ogun state tertiary institution students?

Table 1: Students Level of Entrepreneurship Aspiration

Aspiration Level	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Low Aspiration	165	55
High Aspiration	135	45
Total	300	100

The result in table 1 shows that 165 (55%) students possessed low aspiration for entrepreneurship while the remaining 135 (45%) students possessed high aspiration to set up businesses of their own after graduation.

Hence, entrepreneurship aspiration among tertiary institutions students is low.

Research Question 2: What are the reasons for the level of entrepreneurship aspiration among the students?

Table 2: Reasons for the level of Entrepreneurship Aspiration among Students

S/N	Reasons	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Preference for White Collar Job	180	21.63
2.	Lack of Capital	88	10.58
3.	High readiness to join politics	96	11.54
4.	Theoretical Teaching of Entrepreneurship concept without resources to practice with	155	18.63
5.	Non-availability of Entrepreneurship skills acquisition equipment	133	15.99
6.	Fear of positive support from family members	68	8.17
7.	Prolong years of suffering before breakthrough	112	13.46
	Total	832	100

Table 2 reveals that majority of the students that is one hundred and eighty who represent approximately 22% gave reasons for low entrepreneurship aspiration in favour of preference for white collar job. Eighty eight students who constitute 11% of the respondents base their reasons to be lack of capital to start business with. Also, ninety-six students who represent 11% provided reasons for high readiness to join politics at the completion of their programme because of the belief that they will make it easily in that way. Moreover, one hundred and fifty-five students representing 18% based their reasons on teaching of entrepreneurship concept at the tertiary institutions without recourse to real practice of the act. Another reasons given for low aspiration by one hundred and thirty-three students who are 16% of the respondents is the non-availability of entrepreneurship skills acquisition equipment in tertiary institutions while sixty-eight students representing 8% of the respondents raised the fear of positive support from family members. About one hundred and twelve students stated that the reasons for low aspiration is due to possibility of several years of suffering and struggling before having breakthrough in one's business.

Research Question 3: Will the students' differ significantly in their level of entrepreneurship aspiration by gender?

Table 3: Gender Difference in Students Entrepreneurship Aspiration Level

Gender	N	Mean	SD.	df	t.	Sig. t	P	Remark
Male	142	59.25	6.55	298	0.32	0.766	0.05	Not sig.
Female	158	59.69	7.66					

The result in table 3 revealed a non-significant outcome ($t = 0.32, p > 0.05$). This means that the difference between the mean score of male and female students in entrepreneurship aspiration level is not statistically significant. The mean aspiration score of 59.25 recorded by the male students is not significantly different from the mean aspiration score of 59.69 recorded by the female students. Hence, there is no significant gender difference in the level of entrepreneurship aspiration among tertiary institutions students in Ogun State.

Discussion of findings and Conclusion

The first research question which sought to find out the level of entrepreneurship aspiration among Ogun state tertiary institution students, revealed that majority of the students possessed low level of entrepreneurship aspiration. This finding negated that of Denga (2005) and Consortium of entrepreneurship education (2003) who both submitted in their different studies that the level of entrepreneurship aspiration among students is very high haven belief that entrepreneurship aspiration has a lot to do with the extent of exposure to entrepreneurial content. Answer to research question 2 revealed a non-significant outcome. That is, there is no significant gender difference in the level of entrepreneurship aspiration among tertiary institutions students in Ogun State. The finding supported that of Cathy (2003) and Kiadese & Adetayo (2007) who found that teachers had similar responses according to gender in their perception of the relevance of entrepreneurship education in school curriculum, in view of this efforts should be put in place by all stakeholders in education to encourage and develop entrepreneurship aspiration in the undergraduate in all our higher institutions of learning.

Lastly, several reasons were given by the selected students on the discouraging factors for entrepreneurship aspiration among them, as it can be concluded from the study that the level of entrepreneurship aspiration among higher institutions students in Ogun State is very low. Therefore, considering the importance of entrepreneurship aspiration among youth and school leavers it becomes very imperative that urgent measure be put in place in solving most of the problems militating against the aspiration of youth and young school leavers to own or set up a business of their own.

Recommendations

Based on the findings in this study the following recommendations were made in other to improve the level of

entrepreneurship aspiration among tertiary institutions students:

* Efforts should be made by parents and all other stakeholders in education to create a positive towards entrepreneurship among the students because encouraging the enterprise spirit in young people is a pre-condition to achieving progress in employment, growth competitiveness and innovation.

* There is need for Government and School authority to establish a Practice Firm for the students. This is a training method based on the simulation of entrepreneurship life in order to study the changing operations and the preconditions of running a successful enterprise.

* Course Lecturers in conjunction with the Faculty can organized visitation to entrepreneurs in the community, through such visitations, instructors can expose students to successful small businesses, provide opportunities for students to practice their skills, enable students to become familiar with entrepreneurial and management tasks, and introduce students to contacts that they can draw upon to pursue their entrepreneurial dreams.

* University management should organized seminars on entrepreneurship skills and attributes which are needed by entrepreneurs to succeed in business for students. Here successful entrepreneurs can be invited to give seminars on their experiences to students.

References

- Ashmore, C. (2002). Five stages of lifelong learning. *Consortium for Entrepreneurship Education*. Also available at www.entrepreneurship.ed.org.
- Bateman, T. and Shell, S. (1999). *Management Building competitive advantage*. Fourth edition, Boston:Irwin Megraw Hill.
- Cathy, A. (2003). The Consortium for Entrepreneurship Education. Columbus, O.H.
- David, O. (2001). *Advancing Innovation and Entrepreneurship Education*, London Longman Group Ltd.
- Dike, E. (2009). Vocational Education: Missing link in Nigeria's Development Policy. <http://www.nigeria-village-square.com/articles/victor-dike/vocational>.
- Gana, J.S. (2001). Introduction to Entrepreneurship Education. <http://www.entre-ed.org.arch/intro/htm>.
- Kiadese, A. and Adetayo, J.O. (2007). Teachers' Perception of the Relevance of Entrepreneurship Education in Vocational Education. *Journal of Applied Education and Vocational Research*, 2, (3), 146-153.
- Kiadese, A. (2007). An Assessment of Awareness Level on Entrepreneurship Education and Entrepreneurship Aspiration of Ogun State Tertiary Institution Students. *Nigerian Journal of Curriculum Studies, Journal of Curriculum Organization of Nigeria*, 14 (2), 166-174.
- Marilyn Kourislky (2009). Demand for Youth Entrepreneurship Education. http://www.entre-ed.org/_arc/intro.htm.
- Nelson, B. (1996). Entrepreneurship and Self-Employment Promotion in Asia and the Pacific Region. Proceedings of regional Workshop on Training and Entrepreneurship and Self-Employment: Asian Development Bank and ILO.
- Nelson, R.E. & Johnson, S.D. (1997). Entrepreneurship Education as a strategic approach to economic growth in Kenya. *Journal of Industrial Teacher Education*, 35 (1), 7-21.
- Nwafor, P. (2007). *Practical Approach to Entrepreneurship: Small and Medium Scale Enterprises (SMES)* Precision Publishers Limited, Enugu.
- Okon, S.E. (1990). Promotion of Employment in Contemporary Nigeria: The Role of Entrepreneurship Education. *Business Education Journal*.
- Oyenuga, B.S. (2011). Content Analysis of Entrepreneurship Potentials, Awareness Creation and Learning Outcomes of Secondary School Students in Yoruba Language. A PhD post-field seminar paper presented at the Department of Curriculum Studies and Instructional Technology, Olabisi Onabanjo University, Ago-Iwoye.
- Urevbu, A. (2001). *Curriculum studies*. Benin City: Juland Publishers, Pp. 328.
- Uwameiye, R. & Aduwa-Ogiegbaen, S.E. (2006). Developing Entrepreneurship Culture among Young People in Nigeria. *Nigerian Journal of Curriculum Studies, Journal of Curriculum Organization of Nigeria*, 13 (3), 97-102.
- Uwameiye, R. & Clark, A.O. (2003). Vocational education and entrepreneurship education in Nigeria: the missing link. *Convergence*, 36 (2), 131-141.

The IISTE is a pioneer in the Open-Access hosting service and academic event management. The aim of the firm is Accelerating Global Knowledge Sharing.

More information about the firm can be found on the homepage:
<http://www.iiste.org>

CALL FOR JOURNAL PAPERS

There are more than 30 peer-reviewed academic journals hosted under the hosting platform.

Prospective authors of journals can find the submission instruction on the following page: <http://www.iiste.org/journals/> All the journals articles are available online to the readers all over the world without financial, legal, or technical barriers other than those inseparable from gaining access to the internet itself. Paper version of the journals is also available upon request of readers and authors.

MORE RESOURCES

Book publication information: <http://www.iiste.org/book/>

Recent conferences: <http://www.iiste.org/conference/>

IISTE Knowledge Sharing Partners

EBSCO, Index Copernicus, Ulrich's Periodicals Directory, JournalTOCS, PKP Open Archives Harvester, Bielefeld Academic Search Engine, Elektronische Zeitschriftenbibliothek EZB, Open J-Gate, OCLC WorldCat, Universe Digital Library, NewJour, Google Scholar

