Exploring the Impact of Entrepreneurship Education on Enterprise Creation of Undergraduate Students in South-West of Nigeria

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Abstract
This study explored the effect of entrepreneurship education on enterprise creation among undergraduates in southwestern Nigeria. The study sample consisted of all final year undergraduate students' that must have taken entrepreneurship education as a course or a course under General Studies Unit (GST) in nine universities (Federal, State and Private) in Lagos, Ogun and Oyo states. The population was 80,740 and a sample of 3,160 final year undergraduate students. The data was collected using a structured questionnaire (r=0.86). Data were analysed using multivariate regression. It was found that there existed a significant relationship between entrepreneurship education (CP, TM, and EIA) and enterprise creation of university undergraduate students' in South-West of Nigeria; $F_{(3;3078)} = 4938.134$; $R^2 = 0.828$, *and* $\Delta r^2 = 0.82$. *The analysis showed that curriculum practices (CP) significantly predicted enterprise creation of university undergraduate students (β = 0.568); teaching methodologies significantly predicted enterprise creation of university undergraduate students' (β = 0.348), accounting for 82.8% of the variance. It was recommended that government/policy makers should provide a better environment for facilitating new enterprise creation. Also, the universities should encourage students to participate in mandatory industrial attachment with reputable firms that can support the students in enterprise/venture creation, among others.*

Keywords: Entrepreneurship curriculum practices, Teaching methodology, Industrial attachment, Enterprise Creation.

Introduction

Entrepreneurship Education has been considered a relevant field of study among developed academics globally for a period of time due to several factors which includes a means of regenerating stagnated economies, stimulating growth and reducing unemployment rate by providing new jobs. Entrepreneurship Education is the process of equipping students with an enhanced capacity to generate ideas and skills to proactively make use of the skills in concrete productive ventures. Also, entrepreneurship education equips students with additional knowledge, attributes and capabilities required in setting up a new venture, usually a business. The fact remains that one of the policy goals of university education as entrenched in the National Policy on Education, is the development of entrepreneurial skills among undergraduates (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2009; and Esene, 2014). Furthermore, entrepreneurship has been recognized as a relevant element in the dynamics of all economies and it is regarded as the driving force to economic growth and creation of jobs (Salihu, 2015).

Literature Review

Entrepreneurship and increasing employment share a great deal in common, as entrepreneurship can be seen as a special form of employability. Green & Amah (2012) asserted that entrepreneurship is a legitimate way to earn a living and higher institution students require education that is a valid career option. Multiple researchers (Efe, 2014; Kareem, 2015; Moses, Olokundun, Akinbode, Agboola & Inelo, 2015; and Ayo-sobowale, 2021) have shown that entrepreneurship education is a key to solving unemployment amongst college graduates and alleviating poverty in Nigeria. Generally, given the held view that entrepreneurship is the key to poverty eradication, employment generation and rapid economic development, various governments in Nigeria have, over the past three decades, evolved policies and programmes aimed at developing entrepreneurship. Aidis, Estrin & Mickiewicz (2012) noted that entrepreneurship and new business creation promote innovation and development, boost employment creation and lead to more equitable income distribution.

Today's fast-paced economies call for individuals' that are enterprising, widely knowledgeable and able to effectively manage risks and uncertain situation (Enu, 2012). The current inclusion of entrepreneurship in the Nigerian university system is due to the growing need for entrepreneurship education as a basic skill in the educational system. The most fundamental reason for thinking about entrepreneurship education at the university level is finding a sustainable and lasting solution to the rapid growing unemployment widespread among university graduates in Nigeria. The integration of entrepreneurship studies in the university education system is aimed to prepare the youths to be responsible enterprising individuals who will become entrepreneurs or entrepreneurial thinkers and contribute to economic development and sustainable communities (Ministry of Education in conjunction with National Universities Commission, 2011). Considering the benefits of entrepreneurship to graduate employment, Nigerian universities are now favourably disposed towards motivating entrepreneurial thinking and behavior geared towards development of students' awareness and interest in entrepreneurship (Babatunde & Durowaiye, 2015; and Ayo-sobowale, 2021).According to Tende (2015), the greater proportion of economic activities in most countries has been through small business ventures.

The SMEs have been key drivers of economic growth, innovation and job creation (BER, 2016). SMEs have been identified as the prevailing form of enterprise and the most important driver of employment (OECD, 2017). Goetz, Fleming & Rupasigha (2012) found that venture creation has a significant positive economic impact not only on wages and salary employment but also on per capital growth and poverty reduction.

Enterprise creation depends on one's prepared mindset or intentions, and this depends on one's personality and abilities (Majumdar, 2008). Enterprise creation aims to develop confident, enterprising and creative graduates' who will be able to cope with the ever changing business environment, recognize opportunities and to take responsible and measured risks. Enterprise creation is job creation via the creation of MSEs. Empirical research reveals that the prominent role of SMEs to economic development, especially in area of wealth creation and employment generation in countries like China, India, Malaysia, Nigeria, Ghana and a few others (Egbetokun, 2009). Enterprises mostly start as micro or small enterprise, but might grow to become large enterprises. Few start-ups (2-9%) grow above ten employees but they make a substantial contribution to job creation, ranging from 19-54%. Ayyagari, Demirgua-Kuut & Maksimovic (2011 & 2014) found that small enterprises with fewer than 100 employees and young enterprises (established less than 2 years) have the highest job creation rates. A recent OECD study came to a similar conclusion, showing that young small enterprises create a disproportionately high number of jobs. The OECD study provides further insights concerning micro-enterprises as the seed bed of start-ups.

Enterprise, according to Rae, Martin, Ancliff & Hannon (2012), must be understood as skills, knowledge and personal attributes required to implement creative ideas and innovation to practical situations. It encompasses "initiatives, independence, creativity, problem-solving, identifying and working on opportunities, leadership and acting resourceful to effect change" (Rae et al., 2012). Having a risk-taking attribute may benefit graduates who are intent on setting up their own business. The role of small businesses and entrepreneurship cannot be over-emphasized as agent of economic growth, employment creation and poverty alleviation (GEM, 2015/2016). In most economies SMEs occupy the greatest proportion of enterprises (Katua, 2014). The SMEs constitute over 90% of total enterprises in most economies and are credited with generation of highest rate of employment growth and account for a major share of industrial production and exports. In Nigeria, SME is defined as any enterprise with a maximum asset base of N50 million (excluding land & working capital) with no lower or upper limit staff (SMEEIS, 2015). A study done by the Federal Office of Statistics showed that 97% of all businesses are SMEs and there are over a total of 17.4 million SMEs in Nigeria.

According to Ariyo (2011), the SMEs sector provides an average of 50% of Nigeria's employment and 50% of it's industrial output. Also, Afolabi (2014), found that in the last 5 years, the MSMEs sector accounted for about 99.6% of the registered businesses in the country by which 65% of the labour force earn a living. Furthermore, Anderson & Noseleit (2011), using the longitudinal data for Swedish regions, explored the effect of start-ups on employment growth. The study showed that start-ups recorded a positive effect on employment change in the sector. Thus, entrepreneurship, through MEMEs contributed to the creation of wealth, employment and income generation, both in rural and urban areas, and ensuring a more equitable income distribution.

Entrepreneurship Education is considered to be one of key instruments for increasing entrepreneurial intentions and it's been confirmed that there is a positive linkage between entrepreneurship education and entrepreneurial intentions (Zhang et al., 2014; Rauch & Hulsink, 2015; Westhead & Solesvik, 2016; and Ayo-sobowale, 2021). Also, Davey, Hannon & Penaluna,2016; Rudhumbu, Svotwa, Munyanyiwa & Mutsau (2016) in their study of 250 university students showed that most students have a positive attitude towards entrepreneurship education and would prefer to be entrepreneurs at the end of their studies. The intentions of students can provide insights and a platform for the emergence of an entrepreneur. Participation in a creative well designed and practical oriented entrepreneurship education programme can influence or increase the intentions of undergraduates' towards engaging in entrepreneurial activities which will lead to entrepreneurial actions such as employment creation and enterprise creation after graduation (Ayo-sobowale, 2021).

In this study, entrepreneurship education is used in a narrow sense of referring to students intentions to start a business. Also, entrepreneurship education equips students with additional knowledge, attributes and capabilities required in setting up a new venture, usually a business. Therefore, Linan (2004), integrated the **Statement of the problem**

This study explored the effect of entrepreneurship education on enterprise creation among undergraduates in southwestern Nigeria.

Hypotheses:

1. There is no significant relationship between entrepreneurship education and enterprise creation of university undergraduate students' in South-West of Nigeria.
2. There is no significant relationship between entrepreneurship education curriculum practices and enterprise creation of university undergraduate students' in South-West of Nigeria.
3. There is no significant relationship between entrepreneurship education teaching

methodologies and enterprise creation of university undergraduate students' in South-West of Nigeria.

4. There is no significant relationship between entrepreneurship education industrial attachment and enterprise creation of university undergraduate students' in South-West of Nigeria.

Methodology

The population of this study consisted of 80,740 final year undergraduate students' from 3 randomly selected states out of the 6 states in the South- West of Nigeria. Also, nine universities were selected based on convenience and stratified sampling technique. The nine universities sampled were based on proprietorship (Federal, State and Private) and were Lagos State-University, Ojo, University of Lagos, Akoka and Caleb University (Lagos State); Federal University of Agriculture, Abeokuta, Tai Solarin University of Education and Covenant University, Otta (Ogun State); University of Ibadan, Ladoke Akintola University of Technology and Ajayi Crowther University (Oyo State).. A total of 3,160 final year undergraduate students' constituted the sample of the study. These students must have taken courses in entrepreneurship education/GST courses in entrepreneurship education and must have complied with the NUC guideline of 2007 on inclusion of entrepreneurship education in the curriculum. A structured questionnaire (r=0.86) was used in collecting data. Data were analysed using multivariate regression at 0.05 level of significane.

Results:

The table 1 below showed the descriptive statistics of linear regression that showed the relationship between entrepreneurship education and enterprise creation of university undergraduate students' in South-West of Nigeria. The scatter-plot (diagram 1) showed that there exists a relationship between Enterprise Creation (EnC) (M = 47.90, SD = 12.822), Entrepreneurship Education Curriculum Practices (CP) (M = 48.38, SD = 13.03), Entrepreneurship Education Teaching Methodology (TM) (M = 49.04, SD = 12.75) and Entrepreneurial Industrial Attachment (EIA) (M= 46.11, SD = 14.47).

Table 1: Descriptive statistics of Entrepreneurship Education and Enterprise Creation

	M	*SD*	*N*	*R*				*P*
				En.C	*CP*	*TM*	*EIA*	
En_C	47.90	12.822	3082	1.000	.897	.875	.679	.000
CP	48.38	13.030	3082	.897	1.000	.604	.611	.000
TM	49.04	12.748	3082	.875	.604	1.000	.646	.000
EIA	46.11	14.471	3082	.679	.611	.646	1.000	.000

Diagram 1: Scatter-plot for Enterprise Creation

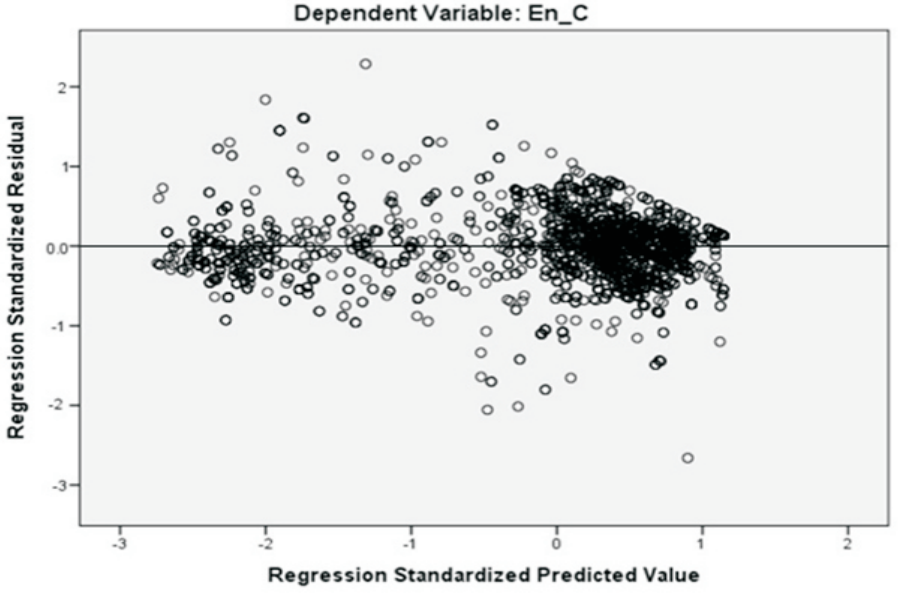


Table 2: Regression analysis of Entrepreneurship Education and Enterprise Creation

	B	*SE*	*B*	*T*	*P*	*F*	*P*	R^2	ΔR^2
(Constant)	2.935	.387		7.591	.000	4938.134	.000[b]	.828	.828
CP	.568	.017	.577	32.799	.000				
TM	.348	.019	.346	18.598	.000				
EIA	.009	.010	.010	.920	.357				

A multiple linear regression was conducted to determine the relationship between the Entrepreneurship Education variables (CP, TM, and EIA) and Enterprise Creation (EnC) of university undergraduate students' in South-West of Nigeria. Using the enter mode, it was found that there exists a significant relationship between Entrepreneurship Education variables (CP, TM, & EIA) and Enterprise Creation (EnC) of university undergraduate students' in South-West of Nigeria; $F(3,3078) = 4938.134$; $p < 0.001$, $R^2 = 0.828$, and $\Delta r^2 = 0.82$. The analysis showed that CP significantly predicted EnC of university undergraduate students' in South-West of Nigeria ($\beta = 0.568$, $t(3081) = 32.799$, $p < 0.001$; TM significantly predicted the EnC of university undergraduate students' in South-West of Nigeria ($\beta = 0.348$, $t(3081) = 18.598$, $p < 0.001$); and EIA does not significantly predict EnC of university undergraduate students' in South-West of Nigeria ($\beta = 0.009$, $t(3081) = 0.920$, $p < 0.05$). This implied that CP and TM accounted for 82.8% of the variance in EnC of university undergraduate students' in South-West of Nigeria.

Therefore, the regression equation is as follows :

EnC = 2.935 + 0.568 (CP) + 0.348 (TP) + 0.009 (EIA)

Where: EnC = Enterprise Creation

CP = Entrepreneurship Education Curriculum Practices

TM = Entrepreneurship Education Teaching Methodologies

EIA = Entrepreneurial Industrial Attachment

Discussion Conclusion and Recommendations

The result showed that CP and TM influenced enterprise creation of university undergraduate students' in South-West of Nigeria. This result is in line with the studies of Ooi et al., (2011); Garikai (2011); and Katua et al., (2014). Furthermore, EIA does not significantly predict Enterprise Creation of university students' in South-West of Nigeria. This implied that CP and TM accounted for 82.8% of the variance in Enterprise Creation of university undergraduate students' in South-West of Nigeria. Therefore, the null hypothesis that stated that there is no significant relationship between entrepreneurship education and Enterprise Creation was rejected at 0.05 level of significance. Thus, there exists a positive relation between Entrepreneurship Education and Enterprise Creation which is line with the studies of Idagho & Ainabor (2011), Adetayo et al., (2015) and Salisu (2016).

In this 21st Century, university education has been acknowledged as a primary mechanism for creation of knowledge-economy and development of human capital all over the world and Nigeria is not an exception. At the university level, students define their future perspectives in the short and medium terms, with entrepreneurship becoming a job option which is valued by the students. A university's primary objective is to teach students' how to develop a business idea and creating new ventures. The findings from this study showed that entrepreneurship education has a significant relationship with enterprise creation. Therefore, government/ policy makers should provide a better environment for facilitating new enterprise creation by providing more assistance through funds, loans etc. Universities should encourage students to participate in mandatory industrial attachment for a minimum of 3-6 months with firms that can support them in entrepreneurship. The university should consider entrepreneurship education curricular to include the writing out of business plan, feasibility studies on creation of ventures.

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