

## **Entrepreneurship Education and Self-Employment Intention: The Case of Students in Kwara State Universities**

*Joshua Sule Mamman Ph.D*

*Kwara State University, Malete, Ilorin, Kwara State, Nigeria*

### **Abstract**

*Self-employment intention is crucial to the formation, growth and development of entrepreneurship. Entrepreneurship on the other hand is seen as the engine of economic growth and sustainable development of emerging economies like Nigeria. This study examined the impact of entrepreneurship education on self-employment intention among business education students in universities in Kwara State. The study answered two research questions and one null hypothesis was tested for the study. Descriptive survey research design was used for the study. The population of the study comprised of 372 business education students from the three universities offering business education in Kwara State. The study was a census study. Entrepreneurship Education and Self-employment Intention Questionnaire (EESIQ) which was duly validated with a Cronbach alpha reliability coefficient of 0.82 was used to gather data for the study. Three hundred and seventy two copies of the questionnaire were administered, and all were retrieved and used for the study. The data collected to answer the research the questions were analyzed using mean and standard deviation. Linear regression (least square regression) statistics was used to test the hypothesis at 0.05 level of significance. The study found that students have a strong positive intention for self-employment, and entrepreneurship education has a significant positive impact on students' self-employment intention for sustainable development ( $B = 1.78$ ;  $t(370) = 9.257$ ,  $P = 0.000$ ). Based on the findings, the following are recommended among others: there is need for management of universities to make entrepreneurship education a compulsory course to all departments as this will help to direct youth's attitude towards self-employment, Non-govermental Organizations and philanthropists should also do more in the area of start-up capital for the students who indicated strong self-employment intention to help them actualize their intention.*

**Key words:** *Green buildings, resources, certification, benefits*

### **Introduction**

Entrepreneurship plays a significant role in economic development not just on national level, but within the global economy. It is seen as essential engine of growth and sustainable development in the economy. It requires the use of imperativeness towards the creation and use of new thoughts and ideas. Entrepreneurship critical ingredients include among others; the willingness to put

it all on the line with respect to time, worth or work, the ability to figure a convincing venture team, the creative capacity to marshal required resources, and skills of building technique for success; and ultimately the vision to see opportunity where others see problems. Entrepreneurship transcends the mere creation of operations. Although that is certainly an important facet, it is not the whole thing. The characteristics of discovering opportunities, bearing risks and having the brain to push thoughts through to reality combine into a unique point of view called entrepreneur (Global Entrepreneurship Monitor, 2010). An 'entrepreneurial perspective' can be created in people. This point of view can be shown inside or outside an association, in trading and non-trading undertakings, and in business or non-business activities with the end goal of delivering imaginative thoughts. Accordingly, the enterprise is a coordinated idea that saturates an individual's business in a creative way. It is this viewpoint that has reformed the way business is directed at every level and in every nation. Various scholars have given different definitions to entrepreneur. For instance, Nieman and Nieuwehuizen (2009) defined an entrepreneur as one who sees an opportunity in the market, creates, gathers resources and grows a business venture to meet needs. In the same vein, entrepreneurship has been viewed as the eagerness and capacity of a person to look for opportunities to set up and to run an undertaking effectively. Yet another definition postulated by Hisrich and Peters (2012), viewed entrepreneurship as the way toward making something new with worth by devoting the necessary time and effort assuming the accompanying fund psychic and social hazard, and saving the following prizes of financial and individual fulfillment and freedom.

Today, entrepreneurship has become one of the most dynamic forces in developing nations and reinforces world's economic growth and sustainability. Entrepreneurial activity is an engine of a country's long-term economic growth. The importance of entrepreneurs and entrepreneurship is long recognized by researchers such as Engle (2010). Importantly, some studies relating to entrepreneurship education and self-employment intention have reported that there is a significant relationship between entrepreneurship education and self-employment intention (Unachukwu, 2009; Ekpo & Edet, 2013). It was argued that students who graduated in entrepreneurship reach higher scores in entrepreneurship intention and entrepreneurial self-efficacy than students who graduate in another discipline (Noel, 2011).

The roles of entrepreneurship in the building of a self-reliant economy cannot be overemphasized. Also, entrepreneurship has been seen to play a fundamental role in the eradication of unemployment in Nigeria, which encouraged the Federal Government of Nigeria to make it mandatory for schools to include it in their curriculum. The main purpose of this remains to develop expertise as entrepreneurs. Entrepreneurship education is the working of learning and abilities either "about" or "with the end goal of" business enterprise by and large, as a major aspect of perceived educational programs at primary, secondary and tertiary-level institutions (Global Entrepreneurship Monitor, 2010). Another explanation of entrepreneurship education is the inculcation into individual the ability to generate innovative ideas and change them to gainful activities. It can be seen as the way toward uniting inventive and imaginative and coupling these with management and

organizational skills to combine people, money, and resources to meet an identified need and create wealth. Nwangwu (2007) is of the opinion that business is a procedure of uniting the elements of creation, which incorporate land, labour, and capital to create a product or render service. Paul (2005) stressed that entrepreneurship education is structured to achieve the following objectives; to offer functional education for the youth that will enable them to be self-employed and self-reliant, to provide the youth graduates with adequate training that will enable them to be creative and innovative in identifying novel business opportunities, To serve as a catalyst for economic growth and development, and to make certain bearing feasible and to reduce high rate of poverty, create employment generation, and reduction in rural-urban migration among others. From these objectives, it is clear that entrepreneurship education is needed more than ever before in Nigeria.

Self-employment intentions are fundamental to understanding the entrepreneurship process because they form the underpinnings of new business. Since entrepreneurship occurs over time, self-employment intentions may then be considered as the essential strides in a developmental pattern of the business. Entrepreneurship education is therefore seen as a distinct social institution that seeks the establishment and maintenance of a functioning economy through job creation with a wide range of interest put into consideration especially as regards unemployment reduction. For instance, Ajzen (2008) defined entrepreneurship education as that form of education which inculcate into the individual learner concept, skills and knowledge on how to start a new business or create jobs. Entrepreneurship education is therefore regarded as a vital tool for the reduction of unemployment. In a study conducted by Wilson, Kickul, and Marlino (2007), it was revealed that entrepreneurship education serves as a medium of increasing students' interest in entrepreneurship career. Also, some previous studies have reported findings on the impact of entrepreneurship education on career intentions and aspiration of tertiary students in Ghana. It was found that most people were motivated to a large or very large extent to start-up a business by virtue of their exposure to entrepreneurship training (Owusu-Ansah, 2004). Another study from Sri Lanka, (Kumara, 2012) has further revealed that students who have received entrepreneurial education always have positive attitudes and beliefs towards self-employment. Additionally, Hannon, (2009) found that an estimated 78% of students used in a study in Ireland who had taken entrepreneurship education showed future interest to be business owners. However, only 30% of postgraduates who have not taken entrepreneurship education showed interest to own business in the future, and 39% indicated interest in starting their own business with their institution's facilities. From the above, it can be observed that most existing research conceptualize entrepreneurship education as an instrumental facilitator of self-employment intention towards the reduction of unemployment.

Self-employment intention deals with the desire of a person to start a business in the future (Davidson, 2009). Considering the relationship between self-employment intentions and self-employment actions, authorities in the field of entrepreneurship such as Shapero and Sokol (2011) and Carsrud and Johnson (2012) identified two determinants of self-employment intention to be individuals

and environment. As indicated by them, a person with entrepreneurial qualities, capacities, and recognitions must get himself or herself in an atmosphere favourable for business activities. The main impetus to end up business visionary might be conceivably considered as deliberate and conscious (Krueger, Reilly, & Cassrud 2010). There are several reasons why an individual chooses to be self-employed. Some of the reasons are as follows: The desire to have economic freedom - some choose to be self-employed on the basis of economic opportunity; to receive compensation based on merit; the desire to be autonomous - the desire to be free from being subservient to others, to be independent, to be ones own boss; desire to exert authority - to have power and to make decision may ginger some people to embark on entrepreneurship exploits; and self-actualization - the desire to be self-actualized, to realize one's dreams, to create something, to take advantage of ones creative needs.

Results of this investigation should be of interest to the government at all levels, students, teachers and the general public because of the alarming rate of unemployment that permeates the nation.

Intention is seen as the goal or purpose behind a specific action or set of actions. Generally, intention is the cognitive state immediately before executing a behavior (Krueger, 2009). Intention is the mind that directs a person's attention (experience and action) towards a specific object (goal) or a path to achieve something (means). It emphasizes the reasons or motivational factors identified by founders which underline their action in starting up a firm. Entrepreneurship education has been introduced into Nigerian learning institutions since 2006 and yet the rate of unemployment is on the increase. It therefore becomes paramount to find out whether this programme (entrepreneurship education) has been able to instill in the youths the right intention, attitude and desire towards self-employment.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The general purpose of this study was to find out the impact of entrepreneurship education on self-employment intention for sustainable development among business education students in universities in Kwara State.

### **Research Hypothesis**

The hypothesis formulated for the study was tested at 0.05 level of significance

**H<sub>01</sub>: Entrepreneurship Education has no significant impact on self-employment intention of business education students in universities.**

## Methodology

Descriptive survey design was adopted for the study. The study was a survey of the self-employment intentions of business education students in universities. The population of the study consisted of 372 Business Education students from universities that offer Business Education in Kwara State. There was no sampling as the whole population was used for the study which makes it a census study. A structured questionnaire tagged Entrepreneurship Education and Self-employment Intention Questionnaire (EESIQ) designed by the researcher and duly validated with a Cronbach reliability coefficient of 0.82 was used to gather data for the study. The questionnaire consisted of twenty (20) carefully designed items after an extensive review of the literature. The items were placed on the 4-point rating scale of Strongly Agreed (SA) SA = 4, Agreed (A) = 3, Disagreed (D) = 2, and Strongly Disagreed (SD) = 1. A total of three hundred and seventy-two (372) copies of the questionnaire were administered, and all were retrieved. The data collected to answer the research question were analyzed using mean and standard deviation. The mean rating of 2.50 was used for decision regarding the research question. This was calculated based on the 4-point rating interval used in the study. Items with mean values of 2.50 and above were considered as agreed while items with mean values below 2.50 were considered as disagreed. The hypothesis was tested using linear regression statistic at 0.05 level of significance. Regression was used in order to determine the impact of entrepreneurship education on self-employment intention.

## Findings

### Self-employment Intentions of Business Education Students

**Table 1** Responses on Entrepreneurial Intentions

S/N	Items	$\bar{x}$	Std
1	My professional goal is to be an entrepreneur	3.52	0.87
2	I am ready to do anything to become an entrepreneur	3.43	1.03
3	I am determined to create a business venture in the future	3.57	0.79
4	Being an entrepreneur will give me great satisfaction	3.43	1.02
5	I prefer to be the boss of myself	3.66	0.68
6	I love jobs that i will do at my own time	3.50	0.92
7	I prefer to be an employer than to be an employee	3.21	1.12
8	Being an entrepreneur has more advantages than disadvantages	2.98	1.21
9	A career as entrepreneur is attractive for me	2.87	1.25
10	Among various options, I would rather be an entrepreneur	3.00	1.08
Weighted average		3.32	1.00

Source: Field survey, 2016

The data in table one indicates the intention to be entrepreneurs were very strong amongst the business education students of universities in Kwara State, at mean of 3.47, and standard deviation of 0.92.

### The Impact of Entrepreneurship Education on Self-employment Intention

**Table 2** *Extent of Value of Knowledge of Entrepreneurship Education*

S/N	Items	$\bar{x}$	Std
1	Start-up Basics	3.08	0.84
2	Business Planning	3.05	0.87
3	Business Models	3.18	0.66
4	Corporate Entrepreneurship	3.22	0.64
5	Patents & Technology	3.15	0.68
6	Idea development	2.96	0.72
7	Process from idea to realization of a start-up	3.09	0.88
8	Problem recognition & solution development	3.41	0.67
9	Writing a business plan	3.61	0.58
10	Lifestyle of an entrepreneur	2.98	1.01
Weighted Mean		3.17	0.76

Source: Field survey, 2016

Results revealed that business education students indicated that entrepreneurship education has impacted them to great extent in the following ways: start-ups, business planning among the specific entrepreneurial competencies. Overall, Table 2 revealed that entrepreneurship education has positively impacted self-employment intentions of business education students to a great extent with a mean of 3.17 and standard deviation of 0.76.

### Test of hypothesis

The null hypothesis of the study was tested using linear regression (least square regression) at 0.05 level of significance.

**Ho1: Entrepreneurship Education has no significant impact on self-employment intention of business education students in universities.**

**Table 3a** *Summary of Regression Analysis of Impact of Entrepreneurship Education on Self-employment Intentions*

Model	N	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	F-cal.	P-value
1	372	0.371	0.494	0.378	37.31	0.000

Table 3a summarizes the regression results of entrepreneurship education on self-employment intentions. The result indicated that there is a positive correlation between the entrepreneurship education and self-employment intentions ( $R = 0.37$ ) while R-squared is 0.494 which means that the independent variable (entrepreneurship education) explained 49.4% variations of the dependent variable (self-employment intentions). These indicate a good fit of the regression equation. Thus, this is an accurate reflection that, entrepreneurship education statistically significantly impacted self-employment intentions of business education students in universities.

**Table 3b** *Test of Significance*

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Std Coefficients	t	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
	B	Std. Error	Beta			Lower Bound	Upper Bound
(Constant)	1.678	.036		46.01	.000	1.606	1.750
Entrepreneurs hip Education	1.780	0.164	0.675	9.25	.000	1.045	2.098

a. Dependent Variable: Self-employment Intentions

The test of significance results as presented in Table 3b showed that entrepreneurship education statistically significantly impacted the self-employment intentions of business education students ( $B = 1.78$ ;  $t(370) = 9.257$  and  $P = 0.000$ ). It indicated that at 5% level of significance there is enough evidence that the regression equation is well-specified and that a significant relationship exists between entrepreneurship education and self-employment intentions of business education students and therefore it impacted the self-employment intentions. Based on this, the null hypothesis was rejected and it was concluded that entrepreneurship education has significant positive impact on self-employment intentions of business education students. The researcher is 95% confident that the slope of the actual regression line is somewhere between 1.045 and 2.098. In other words, the researcher is 95% sure that intensive entrepreneurship education will impact self-



employment intentions of business education students somewhere between 1.045 and 2.098.

## **Discussion of Findings**

The study examined the impact of entrepreneurship education on self-employment intentions among business education students in universities. The study revealed that business education students have strong positive intention for self-employment. This means that business education students have the intention to be job creators instead of job seekers. This implied that they prefer to start their own business after school. This finding supports the earlier finding of Owusu-Ansah, (2004) who found that most people were motivated to a large or very large extent to start-up a business by virtue of their exposure to entrepreneurship training. Also, Kumara, (2012) has further revealed that students who have received entrepreneurial education often develop positive attitudes and beliefs towards self-employment and entrepreneurship intention to a large extent. Additionally, Hannon, (2009) posits that an estimated 78% of students surveyed in Ireland who have passed through entrepreneurship education expressed interest in starting their own business in the future.

It was found that business education students have acquired knowledge of entrepreneurship education in the areas of basic business start-up, writing of business plan, idea development, process from idea to realization of a start-up, business model, problem identification and solution development and others. This means that students are acquiring relevant entrepreneurial competencies. This finding supports the earlier finding of Kumara, (2012) who stated that entrepreneurship education impacts, for example, entrepreneurial self-efficacy. Also, Mwasalwiba, (2010) stated that the final decision to become an entrepreneur is a long "process in which attitudes and intention evolve based on the development of individual competence, experiences and relations to the business context. The study also found that there is a positive correlation between the entrepreneurship education and self-employment intention ( $R = 0.37$ ) and therefore, it statistically significantly impacted business education students' self-employment intention ( $B = 1.78$ ;  $t(370) = 9.257$ ,  $P = 0.000$ ). The positive impact of entrepreneurship education is further complemented by meta-studies of entrepreneurship education (Bechard & Gregoire, 2005; Dickson, Solomon, & Weaver, 2008; Mwasalwiba, 2010). Their research found that entrepreneurship education programmes could be a source of entrepreneurial trigger-events that impact on entrepreneurial intention. In line with this, Pittaway and Cope, (2007) observed that entrepreneurship education programmes tests had insignificant impact on entrepreneurial intention. All these clearly indicated that entrepreneurship education can change the course of the nation because it can lead to creation of jobs. The findings relate to the earlier findings of Omolayo (2006) who stated that students' exposure to entrepreneurship education has a positive influence on the student's entrepreneurial intentions.



## Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study which revealed that students have positive self-employment intention and that students have acquired skills and knowledge of entrepreneurship education in the areas of basic business start-up, writing of business plan, idea development, process from idea to realization of a start-up, business model, problem identification and solution development among others. It was concluded that entrepreneurship education has great impact on self-employment intention of business education students. This clearly indicated that entrepreneurship education could serve as a means for curbing the high rate of unemployment among youth that it is a medium of creating employment opportunities. With this one could say that entrepreneurship education play a vital role in inculcating in the students the necessary knowledge, skills and attitudes that could enable them to create jobs which would in turn lead to the growth and sustainable development of the economy.

## Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations are made: There is need for management of universities at all levels to make entrepreneurship education a compulsory course to all departments as this will help the students to have more positive intention to set up their own business. Non-governmental Organizations and philanthropists should also do more in the area of take up capital for the students who indicated strong self-employment intention to help them actualize their intention.

Teachers of entrepreneurship should make the teaching of entrepreneurship more practical so as to enable students to acquire practical skills rather theoretical knowledge. This will go along way to make their intention to own a business stable. Also, there is need for governments and other stakeholders, such as the media, schools and investors, to create a more enabling environment for youth to inculcate entrepreneurship culture as well as ensuring their access to finance; mentorship and other basic needs that would enhance their capacities to actualize their entrepreneurial intention

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