

FROM CLASSROOM TO STARTUP: ASSESSING SKILLS ACQUIRED THROUGH ENTREPRENEURSHIP PROGRAMMES IN TERTIARY INSTITUTIONS IN NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

This paper assessed students' perceived knowledge, skills and attitudes towards general entrepreneurship programme in tertiary institutions in Ogun State. This study adopted the descriptive survey research design. The population for the study comprised tertiary institutions Students in Ogun State, Nigeria. A sample of 1050 students was selected using Multistage sampling procedure. An instrument titled "Entrepreneurship Programme Assessment Questionnaire (EPAQ)" was used to elicit information from the respondents. The findings of the study showed that the students had positive perception on skills of the general entrepreneurship programme ($\bar{X}=3.04$, $SD = 0.79$). It further revealed that majority (66%) possesses high skills on entrepreneurship. The result also showed that demographic variables (class, sex, age and level) significantly influence students perceived skills on entrepreneurship ($F(4,986) = 10.73$, $p < 0.05$) with level in school having the highest influence ($\beta = 0.005$, $p < 0.000$). It was concluded that students of tertiary institutions in Ogun state had a positive perception of skills acquired through general entrepreneurship programmes.

Keywords: Students Perception, Entrepreneurship Programmes, Tertiary Institutions.

INTRODUCTION

Tertiary institutions are widely acknowledged as a key component in building a knowledge-based economy and increasing human capital (Olokundun, 2017). The United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) outlined a worldwide education system for higher education in the 21st century, describing contemporary tertiary institutions as places where graduates may hone their entrepreneurial talents. Jami and Gokdeniz (2020) posit that universities and colleges serve as more than just classrooms; they are also centres for the training of individuals to create business ventures.

In 2007/2008, the Nigerian federal government mandated tertiary institutions (Ogun State tertiary institutions inclusive) in the country to provide the Entrepreneurship Education Programme (EEP) in their various institutions (Aliu, 2008). This order was made with the hope that tertiary institution students would acquire the mind-set, knowledge, and skills that would enable them to contribute to the economy as job creators rather than consumers. This was to be facilitated through a joint initiative between the National Universities Commission (NUC), the National Board of Technical Education (NBTE), and the National Commission

for Colleges of Education (NCCE). The EEP aims to equip tertiary education students with the knowledge and experience necessary to start their own businesses and support themselves. This is done to boost the national economy, advance the country's technological and industrial development, and reduce poverty (Olorundare & Kayode, 2014). This has likely led to the establishment of entrepreneurship education programmes at the vast majority of Nigeria's tertiary institutions (Olorundare & Kayode, 2014).

Entrepreneurship is a process for wealth creation and socioeconomic development since it significantly improves the quality of life of people, sectors, and the overall economy (Ababtain & Akinwale, 2019). Entrepreneurs have a significant role in the development of new economic activities through innovation, which helps society generate income, jobs, and growth (Mahmud *et al.*, 2019). With the advent of endogenous growth models, entrepreneurship has emerged as one of the most important factors determining economic development patterns. Economic development is considered a long-term upward trend in a country's real per capita income. The function of the entrepreneur in economic development is essential, especially in the processes of industrialization and economic expansion. Entrepreneurs put scientific advancements to practical use in order for economic development to occur (Thaddeus, 2012; Shittu *et al.*, 2022). Thus, the need to increase small, medium, and large firms in any nation for economic development is important. To this end, it is important to build and encourage a sizable pool of business owners capable of launching and growing innovative companies that contribute to broader societal and economic objectives (Ujunwa, et al., 2011).

In order to develop business skills, students in tertiary institutions are enrolled in a compulsory entrepreneurship program. In certain cases, students may already have skills that only need to be developed further. Students get a structured training method that will provide them with the knowledge and skills essential to running a successful company as a result of participating in this programme. Learning is soaking up skill via a combination of book acquisition and hands-on experience with tools and machinery in order to create new and improved designs and products (Dashen, 2012). Oyelola, et al., (2013) provides a working definition of skill acquisition as "the ability to execute a skill successfully," which is often acquired via practice or instruction. Learning new skills and putting new acquisition to use are two ways in which a vocational education programme helps a person realize their full potential and develop their abilities in the field in which they are most interested and knowledgeable.

A well-functioning educational system that accounts for the needs, aspirations, and ideals of society at any given period is crucial to the growth of new technologies and enterprises in every given civilization. Nigeria, like many other developing nations throughout the world has struggled to address pressing economic problems including unemployment, lack of education, criminality, and poverty. Demand for robust national development can be met only if people are actively involved in productive endeavours.

The entrepreneurship programme facilitates the development of the talents and abilities necessary for the successful performance of entrepreneur duties. Students in an entrepreneurship programme are put through a series of carefully crafted activities designed to help them develop the skills necessary to start and run their own businesses. Thus, an entrepreneurship programme is more than simply a training programme; it's an all-encompassing process that helps someone realise their dream of becoming an entrepreneur.

It is so surprising that many Nigerian tertiary institution graduates, despite having participated in an entrepreneurial training programme, are seeking traditional office jobs. It is expected that students exhibit their entrepreneurial thinking capacity by designing their future business plans to be actualized after graduation. It's surprising that, after they graduate, so few of these students are able to launch their own enterprises. As a consequence, many

individuals have fallen victim to drug addiction, prostitution, armed robbery, terrorism, and other social problems as a direct result of the chronically high unemployment rate (Ogundola, 2016).

LITERATURE REVIEW

Literature such as Iro-Idoro (2017) set out investigation on the correlation between prior exposure to entrepreneurship education and the desire to start a business among Nigerian college students enrolled in Ogun. According to the results, one's level of familiarity with the concept of entrepreneurship is the defining characteristic in deciding whether or not to go on such a professional path. The prediction of college students' plans to start businesses was quite accurate. Students' aspirations to create enterprises while in education may be predicted in large part by their familiarity with entrepreneurship. Predicting whether or not a student will pursue entrepreneurial endeavours while enrolled in higher education relies heavily on their level of entrepreneurship expertise. The aspirations of Ogun State's entrepreneurship students are strongly connected with their exposure to and understanding of the entrepreneurial process. Because of the strong correlation between these two variables, we may assume that fewer young people will engage in entrepreneurial activity if they do not acquire the necessary skills and knowledge (Abualbasal et al., 2019).

Ugal, et al (2021) surveyed students at the Cross River State College of Health Technology in Calabar, Nigeria, to learn more about their familiarity with and interest in various entrepreneurship-related courses and resources. According to the results, students at the school may gain from entrepreneurial education since it equips them with the tools to generate their own job prospects after graduation. Nonetheless, there seems to be a detrimental influence on the programme's use rate due to students' unfavourable attitudes regarding it.

Okoro (2021) looked at the need for students and recent graduates to have certain entrepreneurship skills in order to be competitive on a global basis. Survey research was employed for this investigation. Among the many critical entrepreneurial skills that students and recent graduates need to have, the ability to organise, entrepreneurship, and run a successful trade show ranks high. Managing inventories, determining net profit, and keeping debt ledgers are other necessary skills. The results also highlighted the ICT abilities that would be necessary for students and graduates. Accessing contra vision computer applications, deleting and merging emails, entering data, and copying, pasting, and inserting correctly are all examples of these abilities. Additionally, the study found that there are significant variations between the entrepreneurial and information and communication entrepreneurship skills required of students and those that are essential for graduates.

According to Amanamah (2017), she looked at whether or not there is a substantial difference in how respondents feel about entrepreneurship education depending on factors like gender and marital status. The poll results showed that people generally look favourably upon initiatives to advance the education of entrepreneurship. The gender variable did not reveal any significant variations in respondents' opinions of entrepreneurship education. While married respondents had a more positive outlook on entrepreneurship education than single respondents, a t-test revealed a statistically significant difference between the two. The majority of students have a positive outlook on entrepreneurship education, and those who are single are more likely to go into entrepreneurship for themselves than those who are married.

Rahim and Mukhtar (2021) surveyed students' views on entrepreneurship education at the University of Calabar in Cross River State, Nigeria. The majority of students surveyed had a positive outlook on enrolling in entrepreneurship studies courses. The study's findings

suggest that undergraduates at Nigerian colleges see the study of entrepreneurship favourably (Davwet et al., 2019).

Quite recently a number of tertiary institutions across Nigeria (Ogun State inclusive) have started offering entrepreneurship education programmes with the aim of creating awareness and to encourage students to consider self-employment as an option in their career developments. Similar developments have taken place in Ghana, Rwanda, Singapore and other countries as well (Oleforo et al., 2013). However, given the fact that large numbers of graduates still come out of these tertiary institutions where entrepreneurship education programmes exist in search for employment, many people are beginning to doubt the effectiveness of these programmes. It is not clear if students have the adequate skills of entrepreneurship. However, previous studies on entrepreneurship programme in tertiary institutions focused on views of students on the outcome leaving the process of the programme. Also majority of these studies were conducted outside Ogun State. Arising from these problems, the study is being conceived to assess students' perceived skills of entrepreneurship in tertiary institutions in Ogun State, Nigeria (Josic & Preradovic, 2019)

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The general objective of the study is to assess students' perception on entrepreneurship skills in tertiary institutions in Ogun State, Nigeria. The specific objectives of the study are to:

1. Assess students perceived skills on the general entrepreneurship programme in tertiary institutions in Ogun State;
2. Determine the students level of skills on the entrepreneurship programme;
3. Determine the influence of demographic variables (class, sex, age and level) on the perceived skills of students on general entrepreneurship programme; and
4. Determine the contribution and difference of demographic variables on the perceived skills of students on general entrepreneurship programme.

Research Questions

The study was guided by the following research questions:

1. What are students perceived skills on the general entrepreneurship programme in tertiary institutions in Ogun State?
2. What is the students level of skills on the entrepreneurship programme?
3. What is the influence of demographic variables (class, sex, age and level) on the perceived skills of students on general entrepreneurship programme?
4. What are the contribution and difference of demographic variables on the perceived skills of students on general entrepreneurship programme?

DATA COLLECTION, METHODOLOGY AND FINDINGS

This study adopted the descriptive research design. Quantitative research technique was used for the study. An instrument titled "Entrepreneurship Programme Assessment Questionnaire (EPAQ)" was used to collect data (Lawan et al., 2015). The instrument consisted of two sections. Section A: Personal Data (This section elicit information relating to socio demographic data of the students); Section B: Students' Knowledge, Skills and Attitudes toward the programme adapted from Amanamah (2017), (this section investigated skills of selected students toward the programme) this section includes ten (10) statements each on each variable. The rating scale for the questionnaire are as follows 4= Strongly

Agree, 3= Agree, 2= Disagree, 1= strongly. In other to ensure the validity of the instrument, the instruments were subjected to validation by experts in research, test and measurement. The experts were requested to assess the relevance of the items in addressing the research questions bearing in mind the purpose of the study to ensure internal validity of the instrument. Reliability of the instruments was ensured through inter item correlation. Pilot study of the instrument was carried out in an institution which was not part of the sample for the study. In other to ensure the validity of the instrument, the instruments were subjected to validation by experts in research, tests and measurements. The experts were requested to assess the relevance of the items in addressing the research questions bearing in mind the purpose of the study to ensure internal validity of the instrument. Reliability of the instruments was ensured through inter item correlation. Pilot study of the instrument was carried out in an institution which was not part of the sample for the study. 50 students were also given the instrument. Thereafter, alpha value of 0.901 was established respectively for each variable in the instrument. 50 students were also given the instrument. The direct delivery and retrieval method was employed in the administration of the instruments of the research work. A total of 991 copies of the questionnaire were administered and retrieved by the researcher.

Sample Characteristics

The population for the study comprised all the Directors and Students of the 12 tertiary institutions that complied with the Federal Government of Nigeria directive on general entrepreneurship programme in Ogun State, Nigeria. Ogun state tertiary institutions comprised Eight (8) Universities, Two (2) Polytechnics and Two (2) Colleges of Education that offered the mandatory entrepreneurship programme. A multistage sampling procedure was used for this study. Both probability and non-probability sampling methods were used in the multistage sampling process, and they function independently yet in tandem with one another. Thus, tertiary institutions in Ogun State, Nigeria were stratified randomly into the existing three forms of higher institutions (University, Polytechnics and College of Education) in Nigeria. This is accomplished by first dividing the population into homogeneous subsets, whose members have similar characteristics, and then selecting samples at random from within each subset. Three higher institutions of learning (one University, one Polytechnics and one College of Education) were purposively selected based on compliance with the requirement for entrepreneurship programme. Thereafter, 7 departments/faculties were purposively selected from each institution to form the sample frame. 50 students were conveniently selected from each department/faculty to form a total of 350 students from each institution. However, due to attrition of sample, 991 students were used for the study.

DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

Research Question One:

What is the perception of students on skills of the general entrepreneurship programme in tertiary institutions in Ogun State, Nigeria?

Table 1
SUMMARY OF FREQUENCY COUNTS, PERCENTAGES, MEAN AND STANDARD DEVIATION ON
SKILLS OF THE GENERAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP PROGRAMME IN TERTIARY INSTITUTIONS IN
OGUN STATE, NIGERIA

S/ N	ITEM	Strongly Disagree (%)	Disa agree (%)	Agr ee (%)	Strongly Agreed (%)	Me an	Stan dard Devi ation
1	I think I can make decisions regarding the progress of my business	44 (4.4%)	55 (5.5 %)	582 (58. 7%)	310 (31.3%)	3.1 7	0.72
2	I am able to influence a customer or client to try a new product for the first time	50 (5%)	92 (9.3 %)	542 (54. 7%)	307 (31%)	3.1 2	0.77
3	I think I have capability of qualified team members in my business	65 (6.6%)	81 (8.2 %)	527 (53. 2%)	318 (32.1%)	3.1 1	0.81
4	I have the ability to use different social and non-social medium to communicate my business idea	59 (6%)	87 (8.8 %)	557 (56. 2%)	288 (29.1%)	3.0 8	0.78
5	I think I possess the technical skills to manage my business	42 (4.2%)	113 (11.4 %)	556 (56. 1%)	280 (28.3%)	3.0 8	0.75
6	I think I have got a sense of time management skills to achieve my objectives	66 (6.7%)	91 (9.2 %)	573 (57. 8%)	261 (26.3%)	3.0 4	0.79
7	I possess problem-solving skills in achieving my entrepreneurship goals	65 (6.6%)	93 (9.4 %)	597 (60. 2%)	236 (23.8%)	3.0 1	0.77
8	I can use financial software that help to keep track of financial processes	75 (7.6%)	116 (11.7 %)	586 (59. 1%)	214 (21.6%)	2.9 5	0.80
9	I have ability to multitask as a prospective entrepreneur	74 (7.5%)	112 (11.3 %)	606 (61. 2%)	199 (20.1%)	2.9 4	0.78
0	I think I am a good brand marketer	135 (13.6%)	114 (11.5 %)	501 (50. 6%)	241 (24.3%)	2.8 6	0.94
Grand Average Mean and Standard Deviation						3.0 4	0.79

From Table 1 it was discovered that majority of the students agreed that they can make decisions regarding the progress of their business ($\bar{X}=3.17$; $SD = 0.72$), they can influence a customer or client to try a new product for the first time ($\bar{X}=3.12$; $SD=0.77$), They have capability of qualified team members in their business($\bar{X}=3.11$; $SD = 0.81$), they have the ability to use different social and non-social medium to communicate my business idea ($\bar{X}=3.08$; $SD = 0.78$), they possess the technical skills to manage their business($\bar{X}=3.08$; $SD=0.75$), they have got a sense of time management skills to achieve their objectives ($\bar{X}=3.04$, $SD = 0.79$) among others. It was further revealed that the mean of all item rose above the criterion mean of 2.5. In the same vein, the average grand mean also rose above the criterion mean. Furthermore, the standard deviation of the items appears clustered which implies a unanimous response towards the items in the scale on their perception of skills of entrepreneurship programme. By percentage, it was discovered that 100% of the item responses are positive on skills of general entrepreneurship programme in tertiary institutions in Ogun State, Nigeria table 2.

Research Question two: What is the students' level of skills on the entrepreneurship programme?

Research Question three: What is the influence of demographic variables (class, sex, age and level) on the perceived skills of students on entrepreneurship?

Table 2 SUMMARY OF REGRESSION ON INFLUENCE OF DEMOGRAPHIC VARIABLES (CLASS, SEX, AGE AND LEVEL) ON THE PERCEIVED SKILLS OF STUDENTS ON ENTREPRENEURSHIP.								
Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square
Regression	4282.812	4	1070.703	10.727	.000 ^b	.204 ^a	.042	.038
Residual	98418.050	986	99.815					
Total	102700.862	990						
a. Dependent Variable: Skills								
b. Predictors: (Constant), Sex, Age, Type of school, Level								

The result showed that demographic variables significantly influence students perceived skills on entrepreneurship in tertiary institutions in Ogun State, Nigeria ($F_{(4,986)} = 10.73$, $p < 0.05$). The result also showed that the demographic variables accounted for only 4.2% of influence on the perceived skills of students on entrepreneurship.

Research Question four: What are the contribution and difference of demographic variables on the perceived skills of students on general entrepreneurship programme?

Table 3 SUMMARY OF CONTRIBUTIONS OF DEMOGRAPHIC VARIABLES (CLASS, SEX, AGE AND LEVEL) TO THE PERCEIVED SKILLS OF STUDENTS ON GENERAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP PROGRAMME					
Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	
(Constant)	55.144	1.704		32.362	.000
Type of School	-.552	.400	-.044	-1.380	.168
Level	1.879	.361	.193	5.207	.000
Age	-.017	.126	-.005	-.139	.890
Sex	1.359	.729	.059	1.865	.062
a. Dependent Variable: Skill					

From Table 3, the result showed that level in school contributed significantly to the perceived skills on general entrepreneurship programme ($\beta = 0.005$, $p < 0.000$).

DISCUSSION

The study investigated students' perceived skills on entrepreneurship through general entrepreneurship programme in tertiary institutions in Ogun State and it was discovered that students in tertiary institutions in Ogun State have positive perception on skills on the entrepreneurship. This corresponds with the findings of Iro-Idoro (2017) that college students who took an entrepreneurship course were more likely to graduate with an entrepreneurial mindset. Okoro (2021) findings that college students and graduates require entrepreneurial

skills including the capacity to plan, market, and execute trade exhibitions. In addition to these core competencies, students need skills in areas like inventory management, profit and loss accounting, and debt management. Student apathy about the programme seems to have a negative effect on its uptake, based on the findings of Ugal, et al., (2021). In furtherance, Manuere, et al., (2013) findings that students from different schools agreed that entrepreneurship education is important, and many of them planned to start their own businesses after graduation. The findings of Amanamah (2017) suggested that students see entrepreneurship classes favourably. Rahim and Mukhtar (2021) findings reported that, overall, students had a positive outlook on entrepreneurship courses. Ismail, et al., (2019) findings that students' perception of the effectiveness of entrepreneurship programmes has a positive moderately correlation with their self-entrepreneurial skills development in a Malaysian Public University and Josić and Preradović (2020) research the attitudes of students of information sciences and informatics towards acquiring entrepreneurial skills during their study.. The analysis of responses revealed that students perceive most of the entrepreneurial skills as very important to master.

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings of the study, it was concluded that students had positive perception of the acquired skills. However, this study recommends that entrepreneurship programmes should be extended to secondary schools students of secondary especially those in commercial classes to prepare them early enough for the competitive world of unemployment. It also recommends that the students who have embraced the entrepreneurship programme and acquired necessary skills should be equipped to establish their own business and become employers of labour thereby enhancing the country's economy.

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