

Entrepreneurial Motivation and Students' Self-Employment Intentions in Gombe State University

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Abstract

The study examined the influence of entrepreneurial motivation on self-employment intentions among undergraduate students in Gombe State University, Nigeria. Using a cross-sectional sample survey design, the study targeted 535 respondents with a well-designed 5-likert instrument. The internal consistency of the instrument was tested and was found to be adequately reliable for all constructs. Normality of data was also tested at 0.05 level of significant and normality was found to be valid. Multiple regression analysis was used to establish the effect of entrepreneurial motivation on students' self-employment intentions. Results revealed that entrepreneurial motivation and desirability for self-employment both have significant positive effect on students' self-employment intentions. However, feasibility of self-employment has no significant positive effect on students' self-employment intentions. The study recommends that relevant stakeholders including policy makers and university entrepreneurship tutors to employ measures that would enable students to perceive self-employment as a feasible career option.

Keywords: Entrepreneurial motivation, Desirability of self-employment, Feasibility of self-employment.

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Background to the Study

The increasing number of graduates at all levels of education without jobs or employments is a thing of concern in Nigeria. Over the years, the Federal Government through successive regimes had introduced measures to tackle this growing concern. For instance, in 1976, The Federal Military Government introduced Operation Feed the Nation (OFN) Scheme, which faded out after sometime. In 1985, the government introduced Mass Mobilization for Self Reliance and Economic Recovery (MAMSER) and National Directorate of Employment (NDE) to address the issue of graduate unemployment but recorded very minimal success. While NDE was retained by the erstwhile Civilian Governments, another scheme known as National Poverty Eradication Programme (NAPEP) was introduced. These two programmes are still in operation in Nigeria. All these measures so far have proved to be grossly ineffective in solving the problem of graduate unemployment which have assumed critical dimension (Akpomi, 2009). While the issue of unemployment is not only peculiar to Nigeria but a global phenomenon, Akmaliah (2009) argued that world over, graduates continue to find it hard to secure jobs not only in the private setting but even in public enterprises. However, it has been observed that entrepreneurship plays an important role in tackling unemployment. For instance, Bygrave and Minniti (2000) submitted that there is an increasing expectation that entrepreneurship addresses unemployment challenges faced by many young graduates.

According to Fitzsimmons and Douglas, (2005); Chandler and Lyon (2001), entrepreneurship involves identifying, evaluating and exploiting investible opportunities and introducing new products to the market through organised efforts which often preceded by an individual perceiving a venture as feasible and/or desirable. McStay (2008) argued that entrepreneurship is now a worldwide phenomenon where the growth of economies are largely and continually being impacted by the emergence of innovative business start-ups that have particularly been important especially in the creation of employment opportunities. Garavan and O' Cinneide (1994) maintained that there is a large sense of recognition of the enormous contribution of entrepreneurship to employment generation, innovation and economic development with Landstrom (2005) maintaining that the global economy is so volatile; hence necessitating a need for a focus on entrepreneurship which is believed to serve as catalyst for stabilizing economies through the creation of employments.

Upon the recognition of the role of entrepreneurship in tackling unemployment through the creation of jobs; and upon the consideration of the power of education in developing attitudes, skills and entrepreneurial mindset, the Federal Government in 2004, through the National Universities Commission (NUC) introduced Entrepreneurship Education, which is aimed at equipping students with entrepreneurial skills, attitudes and competencies in order to be job providers and not job seekers. This supports the viewpoints of Olufunso (2010); McStay (2008) who posited that entrepreneurship education refers to the purposeful intervention by an educator in the life of the learner (the student) to survive in the world of business, arguing further that entrepreneurship education develops and stimulates entrepreneurial process, providing all tools (feasibility and desirability as well as confidence in one's self) necessary for self-employment and/or starting up new ventures. To help

combat the nation's growing graduate unemployment problem, the National Universities Commission (NUC) in July 2004, organized a workshop on entrepreneurship for Nigerian Universities as a way forward. The NUC's workshop produced a draft curriculum on entrepreneurial studies for Nigerian Universities. Consequently, many Universities have initiated entrepreneurship education programmes (offered mostly in the form of general study courses-GSTs/Gens) in an attempt to reverse graduate unemployment trend by giving the needed training in entrepreneurial skills and theory to enable students to perceive self-employment as a feasible and desirable career option as well as the confidence (self-efficacy) for setting up businesses and the consideration of self-employment as a viable career option.

It is believed that entrepreneurship education is an imperative that would make a positive contribution to improving the entrepreneurship orientation of people, leading to the acquisition of skills, creativity, confidence, drive and courage as well as enabling the recipients of such education to perceive entrepreneurship as a feasible and desirable career options, in order to create employment for self and others (Gelderen, Brand, Praag, Bodewes, Poutsma & Vangils, 2006). This notion was earlier purported by Locke and Latham (2002) who argued that the objective of entrepreneurship education include is raising students' awareness of self-employment as a career option and argued further that entrepreneurship education should be aimed at promoting the development of personal qualities that are relevant to entrepreneurship, such as confidence, creativity, risk taking and responsibility; and providing the technical and business skills that are needed for self-employment or new venture start-up. It is upon this premise that this paper examined the effect of entrepreneurial motivation on students' self-employment intentions in Gombe State University

Statement of the Problem

Upon the recognition of the role of entrepreneurship in tackling unemployment, the Federal Government in 2004, through the National Universities Commission (NUC) introduced Entrepreneurship Education, which was aimed at equipping students with entrepreneurial skills, attitudes and competencies in order to be self-reliant through self-employment. In a workshop, NUC produced a draft curriculum on entrepreneurial studies for Nigerian Universities. Consequently, many Universities have initiated entrepreneurship education programmes in an attempt to reverse graduate unemployment trend by giving the needed training in entrepreneurial skills to students for setting up businesses and to consider self-employment as a viable career option. However, since the introduction of entrepreneurship into the curriculum of universities in Nigeria with the aim of triggering intentions of students for self-employment as opposed to government employment/white collar jobs, there seems to be increase of graduate unemployment. For instance, statistics from the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS, 2016) have shown that unemployment rate in Nigeria had averaged 9.76% each year from 2006-2016. In 2017, unemployment rate rose from 14.2% to 18.8% with majority of those between the ages of 15-24 years, which is the average age of entry and graduation from university education. While this high rate could be attributed to other factors including economic recession in recent times, questions still rage as to what is/are the role(s) of entrepreneurship education in Nigerian Universities and/or whether the

objective of entrepreneurship education in enabling students to view self-employment as a feasible and desirable career option and the confidence (self-efficacy) to pursue self-employment as opposed to white collar jobs is being realized.

Objectives of the Study

The main objective of the study is to establish the effect of entrepreneurial motivation on students' self-employment intentions among students in Gombe State University.

Hypotheses

- i. Entrepreneurial Motivation has no significant positive relationship with Self-employment intention.
- ii. Desirability for self-employment has no significant positive effect on self-employment.
- iii. Feasibility for self-employment has no significant positive effect on self-employment intentions.

Conceptual Review

Despite many controversies over the definition of entrepreneurship, the field has matured in more recent times. Entrepreneurship has emerged as an important force in global economic growth. Entrepreneurship as an academic discipline is still considered relatively new, the term entrepreneurship has very long history. In fact, the history dates as far back to 1732 when according to Minniti and Levesque (2008), an Irish economist Richard Cantillon made use of the word in reference to individual(s) with a willingness and desire to carry out any form of arbitrage which involves some form of financial risk in starting a venture. Minniti and Levesque (2008) argued that *entreprendre* can be translated to mean "to start or undertake something". This paper has found the definition given by Hisrich, Peters and Shepherd (2005) as apt and has adopted it for working. Hisrich, Peters and Shepherd (2005) portrayed entrepreneurship as a dynamic process of creating incremental wealth by entrepreneurs who take responsibility for the major risks in terms of time, equity and career commitment. They further argued that entrepreneurship include such behaviors as initiative taking, organizing and reorganizing social and economic mechanisms to turn resources and situation to practical account, the acceptance of risk or failure.

Motivation

Nuttin (1984) sees the concept of motivation as a dynamic and directional aspect of behavior. Perwin (2003) argued that, traditionally, motives have been studied in order to answer three kinds of questions:

- (i) What activates a person
- (ii) What makes him chose one thing over another and
- (iii) Why do different people respond differently to the same stimuli

These questions give rise to three important aspects of motivation: activation, selection-direction, and preparedness of response (Thrikawala, 2011). Part of motivational theories includes incentive theories. Incentive emphasize the motivational pull of incentives, i.e. there is an end point in the form of some kind of goal, which pulls the person towards it, such as achievement motivation.

Furthermore, according to Thrikawala (2011), motivation can be intrinsic and extrinsic. Intrinsic motivation refers to a personal interest in the task, e.g. achievement motivation. Extrinsic motivation refers to an external reward that follows certain behavior. However, it is worth mentioning that motivation is not a static state. This is because people's motives change throughout their life.

Feasibility of Self-Employment

Shapero and Sokol, (1982) argued that an individual's perception of feasibility of self-employment is related to the person's perception of available resources such as financial support or knowledge (entrepreneurial education). McMullen and Shepherd (2006) maintained that the belief in the ability of an individual to pursue entrepreneurial action (perceived feasibility), is a function of entrepreneurial education. In other words, Perceived feasibility of self-employment refers to the degree to which starting a new business is perceived as a feasible career option. This is related to his or her perception of available resources such as financial support, education or knowledge, etc.

Desirability of Self-Employment

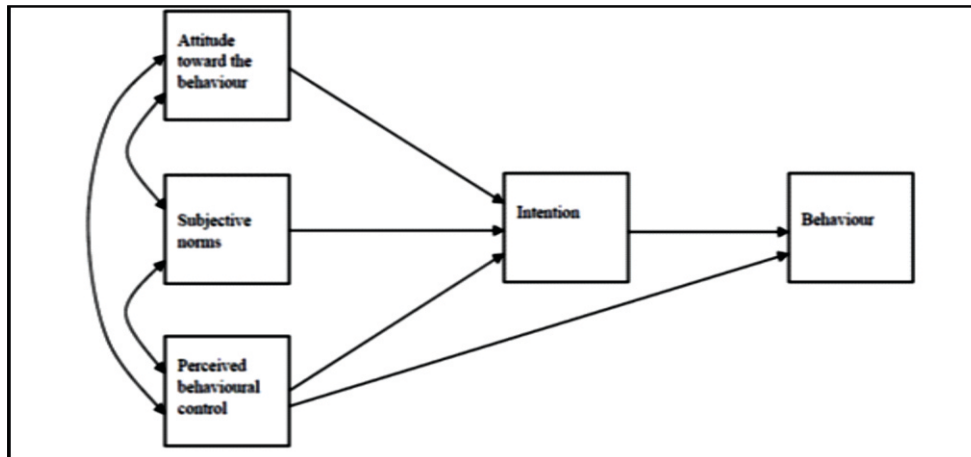
Perceived desirability of entrepreneurship is an affective attitudinal judgment (an emotive response) and entrepreneurs use such judgment to make decisions on whether or not to act (Mitchell, Busenitz, Bird, Gaglio, McMullen Morse & Smith, 2007). In other words, perceived desirability is the degree to which starting a new business is perceived as a desirable career option. Shapero and Sokol (1982) asserted that entrepreneurial event is a product of an individual's perceptions of desirability of entrepreneurship affected by their own personal attitudes, feelings and values which are a result of their unique social environments such as education or professional influence. That is to say; a person first needs to see that the act of self-employment is actually desirable to her or him before the intention for self-employment will be formed. Accordingly, Bygrave and Minniti (2000) purported that desirability for self-employment is formed through intuitive thinking in the intentions process. In making reference to the contribution of Mitchell et al., (2002), it could be argued that the goal of entrepreneurship education would be to develop in the recipient (students), a positive attitude towards entrepreneurship.

Theoretical Review

Understanding entrepreneurial intention or reasons why people opt for self-employment require the application of a coherent and robust theoretical framework that sufficiently reflects new business intentionality. In the literature, many intention models have been developed and researchers such as Shapero and Sokol (1982); Ajzen and Fishbein's (1991, 2005) and Bandura (1986) over time have developed theories that explain intentions towards new venture creation and entrepreneurship. These theories include the theory of entrepreneurial event developed by Shapero and Sokol (1982), Ajzen and Fishbein's (1991, 2005) theory of reasoned action and planned behaviour (TPB), as well as Bandura's (1986) social learning theory of self-efficacy which have all been used extensively by scholars to explain intentions of individuals towards entrepreneurship, self-employment and/or new venture creation.

This paper is underpinned to the theory of planned behavior (TPB). The Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB, Ajzen 1991) has become the most frequently used theoretical framework in recent studies of entrepreneurial intention (Gelderen et al. 2006). In which, interaction between social and personal factors is focused, and also intention is considered as the function of the attitude towards the behavior, the subjective norm and the perceived control.

Fig 1.



Methodology

Data Sources

Primary data were used for this study. Primary data were collected through the use of a structured questionnaire.

Research Design

This study used a cross-sectional sample survey to establish a representation of the reality of the effect of entrepreneurial motivation on students' self-employment intention using a homogeneously administered research instrument (questionnaire). A cross-sectional survey was thought appropriate since the study has the objective examining the effect of entrepreneurial motivation on self-employment intentions.

Table 1: Sampling Frame Work

Year of Study	Population (Registered Students)	Percentage	Sample size
2 nd Year	142	25%	36
3 rd Year (1 st semester)	136	25%	34
3 rd Year (2 nd semester)	133	25%	33
Final Year	124	25%	31

Instrument Development

The research instrument used in this study is composed of two parts. The part one included a number of demographic questions. The second part involved with the entrepreneurial motivation and self-employment intention of the students. Entrepreneurial motivation was measured by two dimensions which include Desirability of self –employment and Feasibility of self-employment.

All items were measured by responses on a five-point Likert scale of agreement with statements, ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5).

Results and Analysis

Method of Data Analyses

Multiple regression analysis was used to establish the effect of entrepreneurial motivation on students' self-employment intention.

Reliability

The internal consistency of the instrument was tested. The cronbach's alpha for all the constructs were higher than 0.6. This shows adequate reliability.

Table 2: Reliability Estimates

Construct	Cronbach's alpha value
Self-employment Intention	0.723
Desirability of Self employment	0.677
Feasibility of Self employment	0.696

Normality of Data

Normality of data was also tested at 0.05 level of significant and normality was found to be valid.

Regression Analysis

Regression analysis was done to as to establish the effect of entrepreneurial motivation on students' self-employment intention. The predictor variable in this instance is entrepreneurial motivation whereas students' self-employment intention is the dependent variable.

Table 3: Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
1	.457 ^a	.203	.183	.47951	1.943

From the model summary, Adjusted R square is 0.183. It means that there is a 18.3 % of the effect of the entrepreneurial Motivation on Self -employment intention.

Table 4: ANOVA table in the Regression analysis

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	6.432	6	1.708	7.027	.000 ^a
Residual	25.634	114	.239		
Total	32.066	120			

ANOVA table in the regression analysis, Significant P value is 0.000. It is less than the significant level 0.05. It can therefore be concluded that 18.3% of the effect is in the significant level.

Table 5: Coefficients table in the Regression analysis

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	
(Constant)	1.832	.522		3.511	.001
Desirability of Self employment	.394	.106	.354	3.733	.000
Feasibility of Self employment	.073	.113	.063	.645	.521

From the Table 5, Coefficients table in the Regression analysis, Beta value between Self-employment intention and Desirability of self-employment is 0.354. This is significant at 0.05 levels ($P < 0.05$). But the Beta value between Self-employment intention and other predictor variables as Feasibility of self-employment is 0.063. This is not in significant level. The P values of this dimension is greater than the 0.05 levels.

Finally, in terms of the Multiple Regression analysis, we can come to the conclusion that the predictor power of the Entrepreneurial motivation is in the weak level. The results of the regression analysis summarized in above tables show that Entrepreneurial motivation contributes significantly to Self-employment intention ($F = 7.027$; $P < 0.05$) and predicts 18.2% of the variation found. Desirability of the self-employment in the Entrepreneurial motivation contributes significantly to Self-employment intention. And also self-employment intention is not contributed significantly by Feasibility of Self-employment.

Hypotheses Testing

Summary of the data analysis is given below through the hypotheses testing.

Table 6: Hypotheses Testing

NO	Hypotheses	Results	Tools
H ₁	Entrepreneurial Motivation has no significant positive effect on students' self-employment intentions.	Rejected	Regression
H ₂	Desirability for self-employment has no significant positive effect students' self-employment intentions.	Rejected	Regression
H ₃	Feasibility of self-employment has no significant positive effect on students' self-employment intentions.	Accepted	Regression

Note: All are significant at 0.05 levels.

Discussion of Findings

The rejection of hypotheses 1 and 2 support the findings of Krueger (1993). Krueger (1993) found perceived desirability explaining over half of the variance in self-employment intentions, with feasibility perceptions having the higher explanatory power over the variance. Fitzsimmons and Douglas (2011) having explored the possible effect of interaction effect between perception of desirability in the formation of self-employment intentions, they found self-employment intentions to be positively related to perceived desirability. Similarly, Fretschner and Weber (2013) found that entrepreneurship motivation is significantly positively associated with desirability for self-employment. On the revelation that feasibility has no significant positive effect on self-employment, the revelation is a contradiction to the findings of Fitzsimmons and Douglas (2011) and Krueger (1993) whose findings differ from the outcome of this research.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The study concludes that entrepreneurship motivation and desirability for self-employment have significant positive effect on students' self-employment intentions in Gombe State University. However, feasibility of self-employment has no significant positive effect on students' self-employment intentions. The study therefore recommends that relevant stakeholders including policy makers, parents and entrepreneurship education teachers to employ measures that could help tackle related factors which expose students not no perceive self-employment as a feasible career option. These factors include lack of financial assistance and lack of risk taking ability respectively.

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