

# Effect of Entrepreneurship Education on Self-Employment Initiatives among Nigerian Science & Technology Students

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## Abstract

Entrepreneurship education is introduced into Nigeria educational system to provide the necessary skills, competence, understanding, and prepare the Nigerian graduate for self-reliant, thereby contributing in nation building. This paper examines the effect of entrepreneurship education on self-employment initiatives among science and technology students of Gateway Polytechnic, Saapade Remo, Ogun State, Nigeria. Data obtained for analyses was obtained through self-administered questionnaires. In addition, simple percentage ranking, correlation and regression analysis techniques were used to analyse the questionnaires. The result obtained indicates that entrepreneurship education is a good policy and it has positive effect on self-employment initiatives. This study recommends that students should be encouraged beyond entrepreneurship school training projects to business ventures start-ups at micro and small-levels. Also, the Polytechnic management should collaborate with existing entrepreneurs and business organizations in providing entrepreneurship training to the students. Lastly, the polytechnic management, the government and other stakeholders can give special recognition, awards and sponsorship assistance as motivation to students whose projects are realistically outstanding. This will stimulate self-employment drives among graduates.

**Keywords:** entrepreneurship education, self-employment initiatives, science and technology students.

## 1. Introduction

The Key to the success of establishing a culture of entrepreneurship in Africa is education and training that depends on all stakeholders, the state, educators and learners. Apart from the educational impact and influence, the school is the place where most (holistic) profound impact can be brought about in the development of the youth (Njoroge and Gathungu, 2013). The essence of entrepreneurship education is to build in the students, entrepreneurship spirit and culture (Akpomi, 2009; Adejimiola and Olufunmilayo, 2009). Entrepreneurship education recognized as one of the vital determinants that could influence students' career decisions (Kolvereid and Moen, 1997; Peterman and Kennedy, 2003). The inability of graduates to contribute meaningfully to economic development through self-employment informed the introduction of entrepreneurship education in schools.

In order to make Nigerian graduates more resourceful and self-reliant, the Federal Ministry of education introduced entrepreneurship education into the curricula of the universities, polytechnics and colleges of education through their regulatory and supervisory agencies – National Universities commission (NUC), National Board for Technical Education (NBTE) and National Commission for Colleges of Education (NCCE). This became expedient in order to offer a realistic approach to solving the endemic problem of unemployment facing the nation. Thus, entrepreneurship development has since been made a compulsory course for all students in the three levels of tertiary education irrespective of students' areas of specialization (Yahya, 2011).

Scholars in their various views have also supported the need for higher institutions to inculcate entrepreneurial spirits into their products. For instance, Nwangwu (2007) in his view supported entrepreneurial education and also argued that graduates with adequate skills and training will be creative and innovative in identifying noble business opportunities. Fayolle (2004) and Bhandari (2006) observed that more institutions have adopted a wide range of entrepreneurship programmes and training activities which appears to be influencing students in terms of generating entrepreneurial interest and going into the business of the choices. Soutaris, Zerbinati and Al-Lahan (2006) revealed that entrepreneurial programmes raise attitudes and behaviour capable of provoking entrepreneurial intentions among youths who have interest in the economic development of their nation.

In spite of the increasing recognition of entrepreneurship education as a source of self-employment initiatives, regional development and economic dynamism in a rapidly globalizing world, there has been no systematic attempt to look at it from the science and technology students' perspective. Thus, this study investigates the rate at which science and technology students of Gateway Polytechnic embrace entrepreneurship education and also if it stirs up self-employment initiatives among students or not. This however aids the study to evaluate the effectiveness of entrepreneurship education in the institution and if need be make adjustments in the curriculum. The other sections of this study are divided into four parts. The second section reviews the existing

literature and the third part covers methodology. Section four presents discussion of the findings while section five concludes and proffers proper policy recommendation.

## 2. Literature Review

Entrepreneurship is more than simply “starting a business.” It is a process through which individuals identify opportunities, allocate resources and create value. This creation of value is often through the identification of unmet needs or through the identification of opportunities for change. This process however, requires learning. Entrepreneurship education is the form of education designed for the learner to become an entrepreneur. This study is based on the following theories.

### 2.1 Theoretical Review

**Human Capital Theory (HCT):** The human capital theory advocates education as a tool for improving human capital, stimulating labour productivity and boosting the levels of technology across the globe (Robert, 1991). Human capital theorists encourage investment in nation’s workforce (people working with public and private sector organizations) because expenditure on training and development is a productive investment like investment on physical assets (Olaniyan and Okemakinde, 2008). Besides, human capital enhancement through quality education is a critical factor that propels economic growth and sustainable development in East Africa, Hong Kong, Korea, Singapore and Taiwan (Olaniyan and Okemakinde, 2008).

Furthermore, Schumpeter (1934) views entrepreneurship training as responsible for creative destruction, implying that education acts as an impetus for creating new ideas, improved techniques, new technologies and new products. In addition, Van-Den-Berg (2001) establishes a correlation between the level of education and new products development in knowledge-based economies that invested massively in education, technology and related growth elements.

**Need for Achievement Theory (NAT):** This is a psychological theory of McClelland (1965), which shows the functionality of strong relationship between need for achievement (n-achievement), economic development and entrepreneurial activities. The proponent of the theory- McClelland (1965) explains that there would be a relatively greater amount of entrepreneurial activities in the society, where the average level of need achievement is relatively high (McClelland, 1956). The import of the theory is that when students/ learners are sufficiently motivated to have high need for achievement in life through entrepreneurship education, there is greater tendency for them to set up their own businesses after graduation.

**Risk Taking Theory (RTT):** Another theory that supports entrepreneurship education is the risk taking theory of Richard Cantillon and John Stuart Mill. The theory perceives entrepreneurship as a mental education that stimulates individuals to take calculated risk for which future stream of benefits are guaranteed and people taking big risk have to contend with a great responsibility (Alam and Hossan, 2003). The summary of the theory is that entrepreneurship education improves the ability, capability and potentials of individuals to undertake risks for which economic benefits are ensured.

### 2.2 Conceptual Review Entrepreneurship Education

According to the Commission Communication (2006), entrepreneurship education is “the individual ability to turn ideas into action”. It includes creativity, innovation and risk taking, as well as the ability to plan and manage projects in order to achieve objectives and to master one’s own life. Entrepreneurship education according to this description is the kind of training given to awaken sense of initiative of individuals and their ability to turn ideas into reality. Entrepreneurship education in a school curriculum ensures that each learner has a chance to become an entrepreneur and each student is the architect of his/ her fortune. Entrepreneurship education is an approach to stimulate students to be curious and creative. Towobola and Raimi (2011) explained entrepreneurship education as pragmatic and meaningful interaction between learner and instructor developing the ability of the learners to identify, evaluate and generate ideas and solving business problems in a unique way.

UNESCO (2008) stated that entrepreneurship education is all kinds of experiences that give students the ability and vision of how to access and transform opportunities of different kinds. It goes beyond business creation. It is about increasing student’s ability to anticipate and respond to societal changes. It is seen by UNESCO as education and training which allows students to develop and use their creativity and to take initiatives, responsibility and risks. To Lee and Wong (2008), entrepreneurship education is a catalyst for economic development and job creation in any society. This is because it seeks to provide students with the knowledge, skills and motivation to encourage entrepreneurial success in a variety of settings (Okafor, 2014). Entrepreneurship education is the kind of education given to people with a view of developing entrepreneurship qualities properly followed-up with support services for smooth take-off and successful running of business (Idada, Okosun, Anolu, Atagana and Aiwansedo, 2011). According to Mauchi *et al.* (2011), entrepreneurship education is defined as the process of providing individuals with the ability to recognize commercial

opportunities and the knowledge, skills and attitudes to act on them. Adebayo and Kolawole (2013) described entrepreneurship education as a specialized training to the students or trainees to acquire skills, ideas, managerial abilities and capabilities for self-employment than employed for wage pay.

In a similar vein, Ekankumo and Kemebaradikumo (2011) stressed that entrepreneurship education seeks to provide students (especially those in tertiary schools) with the knowledge, skills and motivation to encourage entrepreneurial studies in a variety of setting. From these assertions, it is obvious that a well implemented entrepreneurship education will climax in economic empowerment and development.

The above views show that entrepreneurship education in scope, nature and characteristics is a rebranding education culture meant to guarantee a comprehensive educational system re-engineering obvious deficiencies of the existing education system. It aims at equipping the students with requisite skills and capacities needed for the global workforce.

### **Self-employment**

Self-employment refers to a situation where an individual creates, begins and takes control of the business decision rather than working for an employer. Abdulkarim (2012) described self-employment as act of working for oneself. Self-employment is the act of generating one's income directly from customers, clients or other organizations as opposed to being an employee of a business or person. When one is self-employed, it means one is carrying on one's own business rather than working for an employer (Citizens Information, 2014). This implies that self-employment is a situation in which an individual works for him/ herself instead of working for an employer that pays salary or wages.

### **2.3 Empirical Reviews**

This section review studies that are relevant to the relationship between entrepreneurship education and self-employment initiatives. Linan, Rodriguez-Cohard and Rued-Cantuche (2005) used the Entrepreneurial Intention Questionnaire (EIQ) to measure entrepreneurial intentions of two different Spanish universities. Using factor and regression analyses techniques, the findings show that youths' intention to become an entrepreneur depends on personal attraction towards entrepreneurship, perceived social norms and perceived feasibility or self-efficacy.

A couple of studies were also investigates with respect to the Nigerian economy. Onah (2006) examined the entrepreneurship education needs of self-employed artisans and craftsmen in the urban area of Enugu state, Nigeria. The questionnaire was distributed among 600 artisans and craftsmen. The study used both the mean scores and two-way analysis of variance (ANOVA). The result shows that the entrepreneurial skills that are comprised of management skills, accounting skills, public relation skills, marketing skills, communication skills and record keeping skills explained significant part of the success achieved by the craftsmen and artisans. Mania (2013) examines the role of entrepreneurship education on job creation in Nigeria. The author concludes that entrepreneurship is primarily learned by experience and discovery. The study further states that entrepreneurial learning should be conceived as a lifelong process, where knowledge is continuously shaped and revised as new experience take place.

Conversely, Agu and Chiaha (2013) investigate the impact of entrepreneurship education on the employability of university graduates in Nigeria. The sample size consists of 320 respondents. The study concludes that entrepreneurship education enables graduates possess employability skills. Akhuenoukhan, Raimi and Sofoluwe (2013) examine the impact of entrepreneurship education on employment generation in Nigeria. They employed an econometric analysis using a secondary quantitative data to draw conclusion. The study discovered that entrepreneurship is well-developed it would be an effective tool for poverty reduction, employment generation, fast-track the realisation of universal primary education and promoting gender equality.

In addition, Anam, Iba and Aregbe (2014) examine the impact of entrepreneurial education on productive employment and sustainable poverty reduction in Cross River State using 60 beneficiaries of the Central Bank of Nigeria Entrepreneurial Development Center in Calaba. The findings established that there is a significant relationship between entrepreneurial education and employment creation as well as poverty reduction in the state. Daku and Oyekan (2014) suggests various education and youth support programmes in terms of skills, attitudes and capacities to establish business outfits for self employment in Nigeria. The authors suggest the needs to produce well-trained tutor; provide a healthy workplace and environment; develop the required political will; and enlighten parents and children on the relevance of the planned education system. In addition, youths should be supported in establishing new businesses and also be educated from time to time so as to stay afloat in business. This will however energise the economy as it brings new ideas to life through innovations, resourcefulness and the aspiration to build something of life-long significance.

Furthermore, Okoro (2014) examined the impact of entrepreneurship education on the enhancement of entrepreneurial skills among undergraduates in South-Eastern universities. Using the descriptive survey design, the findings revealed that entrepreneurship education curriculum have significant impact on entrepreneurial skills in undergraduates. It further shows that there is poor utilization of entrepreneurship education pedagogies in the teaching of entrepreneurship education in the region. Onuma (2016) examined the import of exposing

under-graduates students to entrepreneurial education on the ability to create after graduation using 200 final year students from Ebonyi State University. The findings showed that entrepreneurial education is relevant to students as it equipped them with skills for post-graduation job creation ability rather than job seekers.

### 3. Research Design and Methodology

The research design adopted for this study is survey and descriptive designs. Data were obtained through structured questionnaires. The population of this study comprises of students in the final year classes (HND II and ND II) of science and technology related departments of Gateway Polytechnic, Saapade, Ogun State, Nigeria totalling two hundred and five (205). Simple random sampling technique was used to draw the respondents. In order to reduce the sample size to a manageable size, the use of Yaro- Yamane's expression adopted:

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e^2)}$$

Where:  $n$  = Sample size,  $N$  = Total population,  $e$  = Margin of error.

Therefore; Given  $N = 205$ , and  $e$  is assumed to be 5%.

The sample size, 
$$n = \frac{205}{1 + 205(0.05^2)} = 135.54$$

Conjectural statements were developed to reflect the variables using a five-point likert scale containing frequencies and simple percentage of responses from the respondents. Simple percentage ranking was used to analyse the perceptions of the respondents. The hypothesis was tested using the PPMC (Pearson Product Moment Correlation)  $r^2$  statistics and t-statistics. The simple linear regression of the study that addressed the stated research objective is:

$$Y = \alpha + \beta X + \mu$$

Where;  $Y$  = entrepreneurship education,  $X$  = self-employment initiatives,  $\alpha$  = constant,  $\beta$  = slope and  $\mu$  = error term.

Prior to the result, the validity test reported 0.823 and 0.819 for respondents' bio-data and the research questions using the Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) techniques. At 5% significance level, the values are larger than their critical value. Using the Cronbach-alpha value, the reliability test values were 0.89 and 0.90 for the former and the latter respectively greater than the benchmark value (0.75). Thus, the study passed both validity and reliability tests.

### 4. Data Presentation and Analysis

A total of one hundred and thirty-six (136) questionnaires distributed, out of which one hundred and eight (108) completed and returned; however, eight out of the returned questionnaires disqualified because they were not duly completed as required. Thus, the number of questionnaire used for this purpose of analysis is one hundred (100).

**Table 4.1:** Demographic analysis

Gender	Frequency	Percentages (%)
Male	44	44
Female	56	56
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>
Age (Years)	Frequency	Percentages (%)
14-25	50	50
26-30	45	45
31-35	5	5
36 & Above	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>
Department	Frequency	Percentages (%)
SLT	32	32
Computer Sci	27	27
Comp Eng.	15	15
Elect/ Elect	14	14
Weld & Fab.	10	10
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>
Class	Frequency	Percentages (%)
HND II	57	57
ND II	43	43
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Field Survey (2016).

Analysis in Table 4.1 reveals that there were more female respondents compared to male. Majority of the respondents were still young in age as 100% of them fell within the ages 14 to 35.

**Table 4.2: Summary of Data Collected**

S/N		SA	A	U	D	SD
1.	Entrepreneurship is any creative, innovative and enterprising human action in pursuit of opportunities through the creation of commercial activity in whatever scope	72 (72)	24 (24)	4 (4)	-	-
2.	Entrepreneurship education plays a big role in equipping students for future carrier development.	70 (70)	26 (26)	4 (4)		
3.	Entrepreneurship education has the prospect of enhancing job creation in society with rising unemployment.	56 (56)	30 (30)	4 (4)	4 (4)	6 (6)
4.	Entrepreneurship education in the long run increases the rate at which science and technology students embrace self-employment.	52 (52)	48 (48)	-	-	-
5.	Entrepreneurship education can stimulate science and technology students to development interest in self-employment.	56 (56)	36 (36)	4 (4)	4 (4)	-
6.	Entrepreneurship education enables science and technology students to development interest in self-employment.	46 (46)	38 (38)	10 (10)	6 (6)	-
7.	Entrepreneurship education provides good and adequate preparation for science and technology students in starting up and growing new firms.	42 (42)	54 (54)	-	4 (4)	-
8.	Entrepreneurship education/ training can stimulate science and technology students to start business venture without much or less stress.	56 (56)	34 (34)	-	6 (6)	4 (4)
9.	Entrepreneurship education/ training are better delivered by management science tutors compared to tutors from other discipline.	28 (28)	48 (48)	16 (16)	8 (8)	-
10.	Attendance of entrepreneurship education and practical carried-out add value to science and technology students' knowledge and economic competitive.	46 (46)	42 (42)	10 (10)	-	2 (2)
11.	Graduates from Nigerian tertiary institutions, who have access to entrepreneurship education, are better economically empowered than those with no access.	60 (60)	26 (26)	8 (8)	6 (6)	-
12.	The entrepreneurship education influences students in terms of generating entrepreneurial interest and engaging in the business of their choice.	52 (52)	40 (40)	8 (8)	-	-
13.	Science and technology students need not entrepreneurship education for self-employment initiatives.	10 (10)	18 (18)	6 (6)	32 (32)	32 (32)
14.	Self-employment initiatives and engagement is made possible if the syllabus of science and technology courses are delivered entrepreneurially.	26 (26)	44 (44)	16 (16)	10 (10)	4 (4)
15.	Entrepreneurship education and practical enhance science and technology students' knowledge and provide opportunity for self-reliant and sustenance.	58 (58)	30 (30)	8 (8)	4 (4)	-

**Source:** Field Survey (2016).

**Note:** SA, A, U, SD and D denote strongly agree, agree, undecided, strongly disagree and disagree.

**Test of Hypotheses**

H<sub>0</sub>: Entrepreneurship education does not lead of self-employment initiatives among science and technology students.

In testing the hypothesis, questions 5 & 6 as contained in table 4.2 were used.

**Table 4.3**

Response Required	Response from Question 5	Response from Question 6
Strongly Agreed	56	46
Agreed	36	38
Undecided	4	10
Disagreed	4	6

**Source:** Field Survey (2016).

**Table 4.4**

Responses to Question 5 (X)	Responses to Question 6 (Y)	X <sup>2</sup>	Y <sup>2</sup>	XY
56	46	3136	2116	2576
36	38	1296	1444	1368
4	10	16	100	40
4	6	16	36	24
-	-	-	-	-
<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>4464</b>	<b>3696</b>	<b>4008</b>

Source: Authors' computation (2016).

$$r = \frac{n(\sum xy) - (\sum x \sum y)}{\sqrt{n(\sum x^2) - (\sum x)^2} \sqrt{n(\sum y^2) - (\sum y)^2}}$$

Formula;

$$r = \frac{4(4008) - (100 \times 100)}{\sqrt{5(4464) - (100)^2} \sqrt{5(3696) - (100)^2}}$$

$$r = \frac{20,040 - 10,000}{\sqrt{22,320 - 10,000} \sqrt{18,480 - 10,000}}$$

$$r = \frac{10,040}{10221.23}$$

$$r = 0.9822$$

**Table 4.5: Interpretation of the size of correlation**

Correlation	Negative	Positive
None	-0.09 to 0.0	0.0 to 0.09
Small	-0.3 to -0.1	0.1 to 0.3
Medium	-0.5 to -0.3	0.3 to 0.5
Strong	-0.1 to -0.5	0.5 to 1.0

Source: Authors' computation (2016).

This shows that (0.9822) of the respondents' response is positive, that entrepreneurship education has strong positive relationship with self-employment initiatives.

#### Test of Hypotheses

H<sub>0</sub>: Entrepreneurship education does not lead of self-employment initiatives among science and technology students.

In testing the hypothesis, questions 5 & 6 as contained in table II were used.

The t-statistics was also estimated in Table 4.6.

**Table 4.6: T-statistics coefficients**

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T-stat	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1 (Constant)	0.312	0.210	-	1.486	0.108
Entrepreneurship Education	0.412	0.208	0.208	1.981	0.044

a. Dependent Variable: Self-Employment Initiatives.

The estimated result for entrepreneurship education and self-employment initiatives derived is presented in table 4.6 above revealed the effect of entrepreneurship education on self-employment initiatives among science and technology students of Gateway Polytechnic, Saapade Remo, Ogun State, Nigeria. The table reports entrepreneurship education has a positive and significant effect on self-employment initiatives in Nigeria. In magnitude, a unit change in entrepreneurship education enhances self-employment initiatives by 0.412 units. The t-statistics shows that entrepreneurship education was significant at 5% critical level with self-employment initiatives. Invariably, the F-statistic result also indicates that a simultaneously significant impact at 0.05 critical regions.

## 5. Conclusion and Policy Options

This study investigates the impact of entrepreneurship education on self-employment initiatives among science and technology students of Gateway Polytechnic, Saapade Remo, Ogun State, Nigeria. Using the regression analysis, the result revealed that entrepreneurship education is a good policy and it has positive effect on self-employment initiatives. It further shows that entrepreneurship education has influenced students' interest in

entrepreneurial activities and building their choice of business. This is in line with the results of Fayolle (2004), Bhandari (2006) and Nwangwu (2007) that entrepreneurial education equipped students with adequate skills and training that are useful in identifying noble business opportunities. It further shows support to the argument of Linan *et al.* (2005), Ona (2006), Soutaris, Zerbinati and Al-Lahan (2006), Agu and Chiaha (2013) and Okoro (2014) that entrepreneurial programmes raise the right attitudes and behaviour towards imbibing entrepreneurial spirit.

In conclusion, entrepreneurship education can stimulating science and technology students to start business venture without much or less stress. The findings above reflect that entrepreneurship education has potentially to empower young graduates in order for them to be self-employed after graduation. The paper therefore, recommends that, to encourage science and technology students in embracing entrepreneurship education the more in Polytechnics, and make the training a source of self-employment initiates for graduates, the following steps be taken serious:

- I. That entrepreneurship facilitators in the polytechnics should endeavour to be more passionate and entrepreneurs at heart so as to be able to inculcate same in students;
- II. That entrepreneurship facilitators in the Polytechnics should provide articulate guide to students in the choice of project/ business idea to instil in the students, continuous interest in the business idea even after school;
- III. That students should be encouraged by the facilitators beyond entrepreneurship practicals/projects, to kick- start the business ventures in a micro/ small level based on the skills acquired in the school;
- IV. That the polytechnic management through the Centre for Entrepreneurship Development should always organize an exhibition programme on academic sessional basis, inviting stakeholders both from the public and private sectors, to evaluate students entrepreneurial activities;
- V. That the polytechnic management through the Centre for Entrepreneurship Development should work in collaboration with the existing entrepreneurs/ business organizations around them in providing entrepreneurship training to students in order for them to develop self-employment initiatives through the course;
- VI. That the teaching of entrepreneurship courses should not be limited to the lecturers in the social and management sciences disciplines alone but extend to others in pure sciences, engineering and technology in general. This should be corroborated with continuous “train-the trainers” workshop; and
- VII. That the Polytechnic management in conjunction with government and other stakeholders can give special recognition/ award, and if possible provide assistance in terms of technical-know-how and sponsorship to student(s) whose project(s)/ product(s) is found outstanding. This might stimulate self-employment drives in graduates.

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