

An Empirical Investigation on the Relationship between Entrepreneurial Orientation, Entrepreneurial Education and Entrepreneurial Intention in Nigeria: A study of some selected Students of Higher Learning

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Abstract: Youth empowerment is one of the major concerns of Nigerian government like any other developing countries all over the world. It is the reasons why it needs to encourage its youths to be engaged in entrepreneurial activities with the ultimate objective of becoming self-employed and self-reliant. Similarly in Nigeria, the government has introduced several policies aimed at eradicating poverty by encouraging self-employment among youths. One of such policies is the introduction of entrepreneurship education into the curriculum of higher education which is aimed at promoting and inculcating entrepreneurship amongst the students of higher learning. Hence, this study aims at investigating the relationship between entrepreneurial orientation (EO), entrepreneurial education (EE) and entrepreneurial intention (EI) among undergraduate students at Nigerian Universities. A total of 74 valid questionnaires from the students were used and the study find out that, both EO and EE has direct positive relationship with EI. The study also has both theoretical and practical contributions. Finally, the study suggests direction for future research.

Keywords: Entrepreneurial Orientation, Entrepreneurial Education, Entrepreneurial Intention, PLS Path modeling, Measurement Model, Structural Model, Student of Higher Learning, Nigeria

INTRODUCTION

Nowadays, entrepreneurship as a field of study has attracted the attention of researchers, agencies and government at all level (policy makers). This is due to the increasing the need for entrepreneurs with the determinations in constructing new ideas and making such ideas into profitable businesses that will improve country's economic growth and development [1]. Furthermore, persistent increase in unemployment and poverty are another motives for the intensifying worry in the issue of entrepreneurship, this becomes evidently since from the post economic slump era of the early 1980's; the deterioration of the market activities for agricultural products and the recognition of the vital role played by small and medium enterprises (SMEs) in providing job opportunities to check unemployment and eliminate poverty [2].

Additionally, governments, researchers as well as other agencies in both industrialized and emerging nations assumed that entrepreneurship is a substantial way to economic growth and development [3], [4]. Nevertheless, nowadays SMEs are the drivers for entrepreneurial activities, by providing resourceful and competitive power [5]. Therefore, to encourage more participation in entrepreneurial activities, government agencies and researchers require highlighting the factors

influencing entrepreneurial intentions [1]. Today, one of the greatest challenges facing most of the emerging countries all over the world is how to engage their teeming youths gainfully employed. The growing rate of unemployment among graduate youths as a result of difficulty in getting jobs that is in line with their careers and expectations has consequently become the main aim of passionate to both academicians and manager assessment [6]. Furthermore, lopsidedness of the ratio between demand for labour and that of the aggregate number of teaming youth or graduates try to find jobs causes high level of youth unemployment rate [7]. For instance, in Nigeria, year after year plentiful of youths are graduating from different colleges and universities without corresponding job opportunities for them [8]. The issue of entrepreneurship program in Nigeria could be attributed to political instability and deprived implementations of socio-economic policies of successive government, which contributed to the problem of high level of unemployment in Nigeria [9]. As a result of these and many more, the country experienced deterioration in the productivity level, high rate of poverty, high rate of inflation and high rate of insecurity as well as several practices of violence among youth [10]. Consequently, this pushed the government to initiate various policies and programmes aimed to reduce poverty by encouraging skill

attainment, inspire innovation spirit, as well as self-independent among youth [7]. Many countries all over the world not only Nigeria to use the instrumentality of entrepreneurship development programmes in their institutions of high learning with a view to inculcate the entrepreneurial intention to their teaming youth and to achieve a better economic growth [11]. However, many Universities and polytechnics were established in Nigeria to produce qualified and skill manpower for government, private sectors and also for self-reliance to achieve sustainable growth in the economy [12]. Unfortunately, most of the curriculum does not have entrepreneurial contents which could have encouraged students to be self-reliant after graduation [13]. As a result of the increase of unemployment among the Nigerian youth, the federal government under the Federal Ministry of Education introduced and makes it compulsory for every University to develop Entrepreneurship Development Education/Programs in its curriculum. Still this effort not yielded any expected result [12]. Therefore, in line with the above, this paper tend to investigate the influence of entrepreneurial orientation (EO) and entrepreneurial education (EE) on entrepreneurial intention (EI) in Nigeria using some selected students of higher institutions of learning.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Intention is a predictor of individuals' action [14]. Intention catches motivational factors which stimulate individuals' behaviour, showing the individuals' effort in planning to convert his/her behaviour into action/practice [15]. Thus, the chances of having a performance of any behaviour depend upon the intention to perform such behaviour. According to [16] intentions are the only most important predictor of any planned behaviour, entrepreneurial behaviour included. This means having knowledge about the antecedents of intentions would lead to the understanding of any intended behaviour. Entrepreneurial intention refers to as the willingness of a person to execute entrepreneurial behaviour, to involve in entrepreneurial activities, or to be self-reliant [17].

Development of the concept of entrepreneurial orientation has been associated with the work of [18] where he defined it at the firm level. According to him a firm that is called entrepreneurial must employ market and product innovation, and takes in charge moderately risky investments [19]. He used three dimensions to attribute a firm which is entrepreneurial, these include; innovation, taking risks as well as proactive. Some authors [20] defined the term as "the strategy-making processes that provide organizations with a basis for entrepreneurial decisions and actions". Furthermore, Entrepreneurial orientation has become a vital construct that has been widely used in literature related to entrepreneurship. Studies confirm that at firms' level, entrepreneurial orientation has some influence on the performance of the firms, their profitability, level of

growth as well as product innovations [21–23]. However, [24] argued that entrepreneurial orientation is considered to have five proportions which always been used for attributes as well as identifying the primary processes of entrepreneurship orientation. According to them these dimensions are risk taking, "being innovative", "proactive", "competitive aggressiveness" and "autonomy". Researchers have found that in general the entrepreneurial orientation construct including these five dimensions can be considered collectively [25, 26] or separately [24, 27] depending on the context. Furthermore, the above dimensions were used to measure the firms' entrepreneurial performance where by the firms with high scores in these dimensions would be considered as entrepreneurial [28]. However, since the individual's attitude or behaviour is used to define a small or entrepreneurial organization, the entrepreneurial orientation aspects or dimensions could be applied to an individual [28]. For example, when investigating students' intention to become entrepreneurs, applying these five dimensions to them would not only be reasonable, but useful when designing efficient method for them [28]. Therefore, an individual entrepreneurial orientation is always regarded as individuals' personal qualities and or attitudes that will enable him to be self-employed. Studies confirm that individual personal attributes or traits could increase person's probability of being an entrepreneur, [29–31].

With regards to entrepreneurial education, this refers to the training given to an individual's regarding entrepreneurship. Is a skill and or knowledge by which individual possesses in a given field over a period of time [12]. According to [32] entrepreneurship program is a type of training which help participants in developing their entrepreneurial attributes by supporting them with services to successfully embark into new ventures. Thus, entrepreneurship education go beyond guiding someone on how to start and run a venture, by inspiring students' creativity, critical thinking and advancing their sense of self-worth and accountability [33]. However, irrespective of the purpose of acquiring entrepreneurial knowledge, the importance of such knowledge to entrepreneurial activities will not be overlooked [17]. Argued that entrepreneurial courses have a positive relationship with the intention to be self-employed. They further provide three reasons which entrepreneurial courses become antecedents of entrepreneurial intention. First, students who participated in entrepreneurial classes learn techniques of generating ideas on how worthwhile (e.g. Business analyses). Another reason is that, the total number of subjects ponders the level of departments' consideration of self-reliance as an authorized career choice. Lastly, entrepreneurship education offers students a way to improve business ideas and make same opportunities lucrative than others. According to [34] entrepreneurial education and experience could help an individual to get higher returns from

entrepreneurial businesses. Studies revealed that, when compared with developed countries; entrepreneurs in less developed nations (women in particular) have less experience in terms of conducting business. This is similar to the saying of [35], where he argued that, in developed countries, entrepreneurs are highly educated than other underdeveloped nations. Likewise, study conducted by [36] found that education can influence students' posture regarding entrepreneurship and their entrepreneurial self-efficacy. Thus, absence of entrepreneurship education brings to low level of students' entrepreneurial intentions [37]. Therefore, in line with the above literature this study proposed the following hypotheses:

H1: There is positive relationship between Entrepreneurial Orientation and entrepreneurial intention.

H2: There is positive relationship between Entrepreneurial Education and entrepreneurial intention.

Research Framework

The study focuses examining the relationship between Entrepreneurial Orientation, entrepreneurial education and entrepreneurial intention.

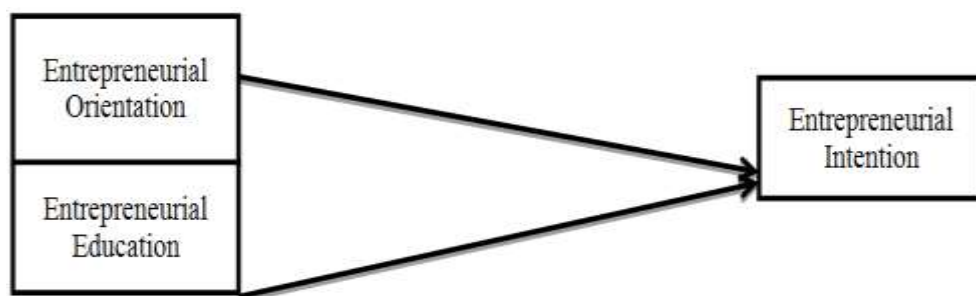


Fig-1: Conceptual Framework

METHODOLOGY

It is a cross sectional research design where the data were collected only in a given point in time [38, 39]. Structured survey questionnaire were used to collect data from the students' of Bachelor Degree in Business Administration from Usmanu Danfodiyo University, Sokoto, Nigeria. One hundred and three (103) questionnaires were randomly distributed in a personally administered approach, out of which seventy four (74) were duly completed and returned which represent 76.2% response rate. Variables under study was measured using the adapted questionnaire from the previous literature, where, six (6) questions on Entrepreneurial intention were adapted from [40] three (3) questions on Entrepreneurial orientation and three (3) questions on Entrepreneurial education all from [40], all in 5 point Likert scale. The data analyzed using Smart-PLS 3.2.6. statistical package.

The Measurement Model

The primary aim of measurement model is to filter the data, which is to assess and confirmed the constructs validity and reliability before establishing the goodness of measures, they are examined through the

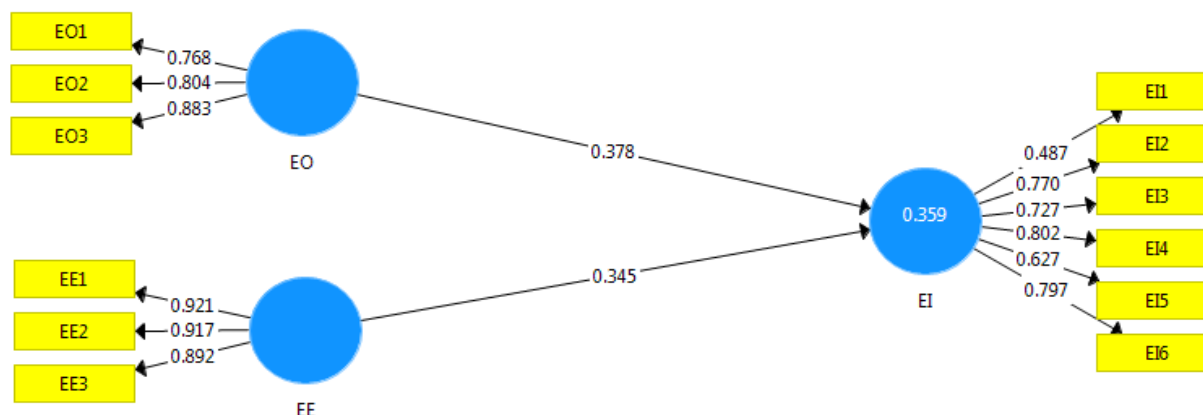
indicators reliability, which is 0.4 is accepted, internal consistency, using conversant reliability and composite reliability, 0.7 is accepted level, convergent validity using average variance extracted (AVE), which must be 0.5 and above [41, 42], and discriminant validity using factor loading, any item loading on the other construct higher than their loadings should be deleted [41], [42]. Therefore, it has resolved that the instrument adapted in this study is reliable, since none of the items is with less than 0.4. All items loaded on their respective construct ranges from 0.490 to 0.921, this is in line with [41] and [43], which is acceptable since it is above the cut-off value of 0.4. Equally, the composite reliability, value ranges from 0.856 to 0.935 which are also greater than the recommended value of 0.7 [43]. To determine the convergence validity, AVE was used. The AVE ranges from 0.505 to 0.828 which is above the minimum cutoff value of 0.5 [43]. Lastly to determine the discriminant validity, the average variance extracted (AVE) is compared to correlation squared of the interrelated variables of concerned constructs which indicated adequate discriminant validity. Table 1 presents the convergent validity of measurement model and Table 2 present the discriminant validity.

Table-1: Convergent Validity of Measurement model

Constructs	Items	Loadings	AVE	CR
Entrepreneurial Education	EE1	.921	.828	.935
	EE2	.917		
	EE3	.892		
Entrepreneurial Intention	EI1	.487	.505	.856
	EI2	.770		
	EI3	.727		
	EI4	.802		
	EI5	.627		
	EI6	.797		
Entrepreneurial Orientation	EO1	.768	.672	.860
	EO2	.804		
	EO3	.883		

Table-2: Discriminant Validity

Constructs	EE	EI	EO
EE	.910		
EI	.486	.711	
EO	.374	.507	.820

**Fig-2: Measurement Model****Structural Model**

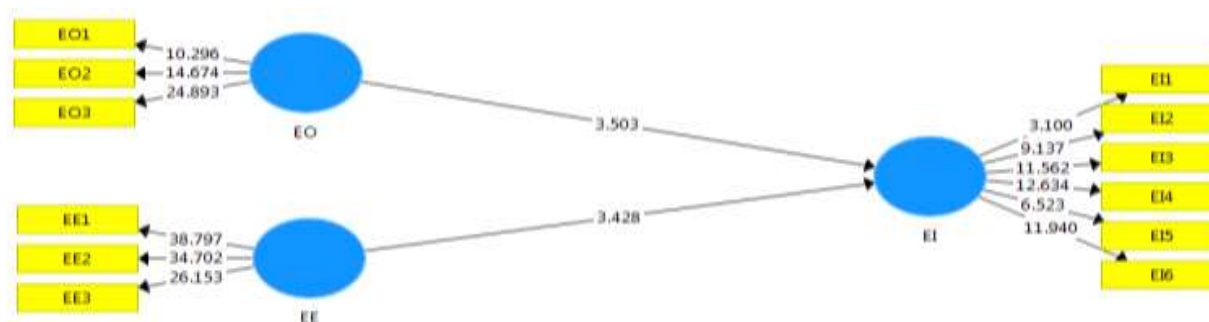
After achieving the requirement of the measurement model, the next step was to test the

proposed hypotheses of the study by running PLS Bootstrapping in smart PLS 3.2.6. (see Table 3).

Table 3: Hypotheses Testing Results

Hypotheses	Relationships	Std Beta	SE	T Statistics	Decision
H1	EO → EI	.378	.108	3.503**	Supported
H2	EE → EI	.345	.101	3.428**	Supported

**P<0.01 (1 tailed)

**Fig-3: Structural Model**

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The objective of this study is to investigate the relationship between EO, EE and Student entrepreneurial intention. The statistical finding of the study shows that hypothesis 1 (H1) is supported, where EO – EI relationship is significantly positive ($\beta = .378$, $t = 3.503$) this is consistent with the earlier finding of [29]–[31]. Consequently, it indicates that, the higher the individual entrepreneurial orientation the higher their intention to become entrepreneurs. Similarly, H2 is also supported, where EE is positively related to EI ($\beta = .345$, $t = 3.428$) this in line with findings of the previous studies [36], [44–46]. Furthermore, this result also shows that, entrepreneurship education assists the students by making them ready to handle the future uncertainties, and also helping them to become the future entrepreneurs. Similarly, the positive relationship between entrepreneurial education and intention to start business is likely because the present study was conducted among business related students. The findings of this study contribute in both theory and practice. Theoretically, this study contributes by extending the existing literature by jointly investigate the relationship between EO, EE and EI which is not been given much consideration by the previous studies. In practical contribution the results of this study will help stake holders (i.e. agencies and governmental organizations) in taking appropriate decisions as regards to the execution and implementation policies on education. Finally, this study suggested that large sample should use for the future research using PLS-SEM in order to re-validate the model by considering the whole North-western part of Nigeria.

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