

ENTREPRENEURIAL ORIENTATION AND ENTREPRENEURIAL INTENTION AMONG UNDERGRADUATES: THE ROLE OF EMPLOYMENT STATUS OF PARENTS AND PERCEIVED EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY ON GRADUATION.

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Abstract

Entrepreneurship is often highly ranked as a solution to the soaring rate of unemployment among the youths. This study ascertains whether employment status of parents and perceived employment opportunity on graduation influence entrepreneurial orientation and entrepreneurial intention, and whether entrepreneurial orientation positively relates with entrepreneurial intention among undergraduates. Design was cross-sectional and data were collected with self-report questionnaire. Convenient sampling technique was adopted. Two hundred and twenty-eight undergraduates were drawn from final year students of a State-owned university in south-south Nigeria. Of the total participants, 51 have both parents self-employed, 84 have both parents on paid employment, while 93 have either of the parents self-employed or on paid employment. The participants comprised 120 males, 107 females, 211 married and 5 unmarried. Their age mean was 24 years (SD. 2.84). Data analyses revealed that undergraduates do not differ in entrepreneurial orientation ($F(df; 2,225) = .69, p > 0.05$), and do not differ in entrepreneurial intention ($F(df; 2,225) = 1.02, p > 0.05$) on the basis of employment status of parents. Analysis also showed that undergraduates do not differ in entrepreneurial intention ($F(df; 2,226) = 2.87, p > 0.05$) on the bases of perceived employment opportunity on graduation, and that there was a significant positive relationship between entrepreneurial orientation and entrepreneurial intention ($r = .63(df; 226) = .63 p < .001$) among undergraduates. It was concluded that employment status of parents does not influence entrepreneurial orientation and entrepreneurial intention. Future studies should draw samples from a few universities.

Key words: entrepreneurship, entrepreneurial orientation and employment opportunity.

Introduction

The importance of entrepreneurship for economic development is well acknowledged. This understanding was succinctly captured in Dabson's (2007) remark that "globally entrepreneurship has become an article of faith, reflecting a confidence and certainty that its facilitation will lead to positive economic outcomes". In fact, entrepreneurship has been theoretically and empirically linked with a number of socio-economic desirable outcomes. For instance, it has been widely referred to as a catalyst for economic growth and national competitiveness, the engine of growth and the key factor in economic development. Little

wonder that entrepreneurial development, small business development and skill acquisition projects reflect in the policies and activities of the various levels of governments, and sometimes in activities of some concerned individuals. The interest in entrepreneurship has expression in the high number of schools across all levels of education that have introduced entrepreneurship courses in their curricula, the phenomenal rise in seminars, conferences and workshops with the theme of entrepreneurship.

The concept entrepreneurship expresses any attempt to create a new business enterprise or to expand an established business or the processes of starting and continuing to

expand new businesses (Dabson, 2007). It is the process of doing something new and something different for the purpose of creating wealth for the individual and adding value to society (Kao, 1999). Entrepreneurship as a process has three distinct stages that covered the pre-launch phase, the start-up phase, and growth phase (Baron, & Shane, 2005). Entrepreneurship is a process, while entrepreneur is a person who has initiative skill and motivation to set up a business or enterprise of his/her own and who always looks for high achievements; someone who demonstrates initiative and creative thinking, is able to organize social and economic mechanisms to turn resources and situations to practical account, and accepts risk and failure (Hisrich, 1990).

In the extant literature, among aspects of entrepreneurship that have attracted appreciable research interest is entrepreneurial orientation and entrepreneurial intention. Entrepreneurial orientation (EO) refers to an individual's attitude towards engaging in entrepreneurial activities, be it within an existing firm or creating a new venture (Wu, 2009). At both individual and organizational levels, entrepreneurial orientation is described in terms of innovativeness, willingness to take risks, pro-activeness, competitive aggressiveness, and autonomy (Lumpkin & Dees, 1996; Miller, 1983). On the other hand, entrepreneurial intention (EI) refers to an individual's intention to create a new venture in the near future (Wu, 2009). It is the state of mind that directs and guides the actions of the entrepreneur toward the development and the implementation of new business concepts. In simple term, entrepreneurial intention is the intention to own a business or the intention to be self-employed.

Unemployment among youths is becoming a global phenomenon. Aside economic cost, unemployment has both social and political implications. One seemingly viable way of addressing this problem is to inculcate the spirit of entrepreneurship with the

goal of achieving self-employment among the youths. This is a process that inherently needs sufficient understanding of youths in relation to the various facets of entrepreneurship. As Kennedy, Drennan, Renfrow and Watson (2003; cited in Dabale & Mase, 2014) noted, an understanding of the factors that influence and shape an individual's intentions to go into entrepreneurship is critical if programs and policies to enhance entrepreneurial behavior and post-education incidence of entrepreneurship are to be developed. Clearly, the literature shows remarkable empirical effort in understanding these factors. However, while a few variables, such as entrepreneurship education and training, role of gender, tendency to take risk, need for achievement, religion, and previous experience have been examined as antecedents of entrepreneurial orientation and entrepreneurial intention, there is dearth of study, particularly in this research location that ascertain how employment status of parents and perceived employment opportunity on graduation relate with entrepreneurial orientation and entrepreneurial intention among the youths. Consequently, the problem statement of this study is to ascertain how parent's employment status, perceived employment opportunity on graduation influence entrepreneurial orientation and entrepreneurial intention, and how these two latter variables relate with each other among youths. The purpose of this study is two-fold; to contribute to the extant literature on issues of antecedents of entrepreneurial orientation and entrepreneurial intention among undergraduates, and to test two proposals (modeling effect and refuge effect) on entrepreneurship. The two proposals were separately represented in the two independent variables. Modeling effect is expressed in parent's employment status and tested in hypothesis 1 and 2, while refuge effect is expressed in perceived employment opportunity on graduation and is tested in hypothesis 3.

The importance of understanding entrepreneurial orientation and entrepreneurial intention lies in the observation that these variables predict behaviour. Entrepreneurial intention is a state of mind that guides individual actions in order to create and develop a new business or entrepreneurial activity (Shiri, Mohammadi, & Hosseini, 2012). The relationship between attitude, intention and behaviour is explicit in Ajzen (1991) theory of planned behaviour. The theory proposes that intentions are a function of three sets of factors: attitudes towards the behaviour, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control. The theory further asserts that intention is an accurate predictor of planned behavior, especially in cases where the behavior is difficult to observe, rare, or involves unpredictable time lags. Entrepreneurial behavior displays these characteristics, which explains why several empirical studies of entrepreneurship have applied the theory (Krueger & Carsrud, 2000; Krueger, Reilly, & Carsrud, 2000).

The refugee effect proposes that as unemployment rises, people have difficulty finding paid jobs and are led to self-employment as an alternative (Garba, Djafar & Mansor, 2013). In other words, self-employment increases as unemployment rises. This is a case of necessity entrepreneurship, the individuals not having better choices for work before they decided to start a business. The role model effect proposes that an individual behaviour, including career choice is influenced by those he/she wants to be like. As also expressed in the theory of planned behaviour, an individual's decision to engage in a particular type of behaviour is often influenced by the opinions and actions of others, the way in which others demonstrate

their identities and the example provided by others. Bandura's (1986) social learning theory offered explanation for the modeling effect. Social learning theory suggests that role models provide vicarious learning experiences which can increase self-efficacy and thereby strengthen particular interests and choices of action with regard to various fields of education and career. 00

Literature Review

In the extant literature, empirical search for antecedents of entrepreneurship has been on individual or psychological, family background and socio-environmental factors (Peng, Lu, & Kang, 2012). However, the independent variables of this study are aspects of the last two categories of factors. Employment status of parents is a family background factor, while perceived employment opportunity on graduation is a socio-environmental factor. Consequently, the preceding review was biased in the direction of the independent variables. According to Shapiro and Sokol (1982) the family, especially father and mother, exercises great power over the desirability and feasibility for the process of the creation of a new company. Opoku-Antwi, Amofah, Nyamaah-Koffuor, and Yakubu (2012) studied entrepreneurial intention among senior high school students and observed, among others that entrepreneurial intention among the students was generally high and that students whose families own business were more inclined to entrepreneurship than those whose families do not own business. Akanbi (2013) studied familial factors (parental occupation and family income), personality traits and self-efficacy as determinants of entrepreneurial intention among vocational based college of education students and observed that parent's occupation, among other variables linearly

contributed to the prediction of entrepreneurial intention, whereas family income did not. Saeid, Harm, Thomas, Mohammad and Martin (2014) examined the effects of role models and gender on students' entrepreneurial intentions with both undergraduate and post-graduate students and observed that knowing a successful entrepreneurial role model exert an indirect, positive effect on the entrepreneurial intentions of the students via the motivational antecedents of entrepreneurial intentions, namely attitudes towards behaviour, subjective norms and perceived behavioural control. Suartha and Sri Suprapti (2016) compared individual entrepreneurship orientation (IEO) and entrepreneurial intention among students from two faculties of economics and business and observed no significant difference in IEO between male and female students, but significant difference between those whose parents were entrepreneur and civil servants. Van Auken, Fry, and Stephens (2006) examined the impact of role model activities on potential entrepreneur's desire to own a business and found that role model activities related to involving the respondent in professional activities, employment in the business, and discussions about the business were found to be significantly related with interest in starting a business.

Garba, Djafar and Mansor (2013) examined the influence of poverty, unemployment and gross domestic product (GDP) on entrepreneurship and observed that poverty and GDP influence entrepreneurship negatively, while unemployment influences entrepreneurship positively. Ozerkek, and Dogruel (2015) tested two views (refugee effect and prosperity pull) on relationship between self-employment and unemployment and observed no refugee effect over the period. The results revealed that the rate of unemployment is not positively related with self-employment rate. While refugee effect

suggests a positive relationship, prosperity pull hypothesis proposes a negative relationship between self-employment and unemployment. Similarly, Mao (2016) investigated the question whether the growth rate in the number of businesses is actually affected by the growth rate in unemployment and tested the two distinct relationships between unemployment and self-employment, i.e. "refugee" and "prosperity" effects and observed that prosperity effects were considerably stronger than the "refugee" effects. Szewczyk, Widera, and Parvi (2013) examined the relationship between entrepreneurship and unemployment and reported that entrepreneurship does not Granger cause unemployment (number of registered unemployed individuals). Unemployment does not Granger cause entrepreneurship. Glocker, and Steiner (2007) studied the question whether self-employment is a way out of (long-term) unemployment. The researchers estimated the relationship between the entry rate into self-employment and previous (long-term) unemployment on the basis of pseudo-panel data for the period 1996-2002 in Germany and found that previous (long-term) unemployment significantly increase entry rates into self-employment for both men and women.

Ekpe and Mat (2012) investigated the moderating effect of social environment (influence of friends, families, role models, advisors) on the relationship between entrepreneurial orientation (education, self-efficacy, entrepreneurial decision, work experience) and entrepreneurial intentions among female undergraduates and reported that entrepreneurial orientation (self-efficacy and education) had significant positive influence on entrepreneurial intention. These researchers also observed that social environment (friends' agreement) moderated the relationship between entrepreneurial

orientation (education) and entrepreneurial intentions. Mungai (2013) studied the relationship between socio-cultural factors (gender and culture) and intentions to become entrepreneurs in the context of public university undergraduates and observed that students do not consider gender when evaluating alternative career options, entrepreneurship education was significantly related to entrepreneurial intentions, entrepreneurial perceptions positively related to students entrepreneurial intentions and entrepreneurial disposition positively related to entrepreneurial intentions. Awang, Amran, Md Nor, Ibrahim, Razali (2016) investigated the relationship between entrepreneurial orientation and entrepreneurial intention among students and reported that students grade, individual entrepreneurial orientation (comprises of proactive personality and risk taking propensity) were proven important in explaining attitude towards entrepreneurship, participation in entrepreneurship education, personal behaviour control and subjective norm and that individual entrepreneurial orientation, personal behaviour control and subjective norm directly explained entrepreneurial intention.

Hypotheses

- 1 Entrepreneurial orientation of undergraduates will significantly differ along with employment status of parents.
- 2 Entrepreneurial intention of undergraduates will significantly differ along with employment status of parents.
- 3 Entrepreneurial intention of undergraduates will significantly differ along with degree of perceived

employment opportunity on graduation

- 4 Entrepreneurial orientation will have significant positive relationship with entrepreneurial intention among undergraduates.

Method

Participants

Two hundred and twenty-eight regular final year students (in their second semester) of a State-owned university located in South-south Nigeria were sampled for this study. The sample cut across students from pure sciences, social sciences and arts disciplines. The use of final year students is most appropriate for study ascertaining students' entrepreneurial orientation and entrepreneurial intention as they were at a stage in their life when they must have been thinking about career path. Of the total participants, 51 have both parents self-employed, 84 have both parents on paid employment, while 93 have either of the parents self-employed or on paid employment. The participants comprise 120 (53%) males and 107 (47%) females, 211 (97%) married and 5 (3%) single. The participants age mean was 24 years (age range: 17-34) and 2.84 standard deviation

Instrument

Stull (2005) 15-item-scale on entrepreneurial orientation was adopted. The scale has three dimensions (risk taking, innovativeness and pro-activeness). Risk taking indicates venturing into the unknown, innovativeness means engaging in activities that result in new ideas which may result in new products, services and processes, while pro-activeness is acting in anticipation of future needs and challenges that can lead to new opportunities. Bulut (2008) reported Cronbach's alpha of

.89 on the scale. The present researcher observed Cronbach's alpha of .90. Sample item is "I do things that have a chance of not working out". Wu's (2009) seven-item scale on entrepreneurial intention was adopted. Sample item is "I will start my own business in the near future". On development of the scale, the author reported a Cronbach's alpha of .94. And the present researcher observed Cronbach's alpha of .97. Six-point Likert method of summated rating scale (6-strongly agree, 5-moderately agree, 4-agree, 3-disagree, 2-moderately disagree and 1-strongly disagree) was adopted for the two scales. Perceived employment opportunity on graduation was measured with 2 items developed by the present researcher. One of the items reads "On the basis of the present employment condition in Nigeria, how likely do you think you will get employment immediately you graduate" For this measure, Likert 4-point response (most likely, likely, unlikely and most unlikely) was used. For all the scales, scores were computed by averaging each participant responses to the items.

Procedure

The participants received the research questionnaires in their lecture halls or hostels. The distribution of the questionnaire followed convenience sampling techniques, as only those students who were available and willing to participate constituted the research sample. The questionnaires were distributed with the assistance of two students who received from the researcher adequate training on questionnaire administration. While some of filled questionnaires were received on administration, some were received some few

days after administration. Of the 250 questionnaire distributed, 237 were returned. However, after sorting out the ones that were not properly filled, 228 questionnaires (participants) were finally used for data analysis.

Design and Statistics

A cross sectional research design was adopted as data were collected at one point in time. Hypotheses 1, 2 and 3 were tested with one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA), while hypothesis 4 was tested with Pearson-Moment Correlation Coefficient. These statistical tests adopted were appropriate for the study as the first 3 hypotheses tested for differences, while the fourth hypothesis tested for relationship. The adopted statistics are parametric tests; therefore a few assumptions associated with them were taken into cognizance. For instance, data collected were independent. Interval scaling was archived with the adoption of Likert scaling format. However, test of skewness indicated normality for entrepreneurial orientation scores and otherwise for entrepreneurial intention scores. Specifically for hypothesis 4, scatter plots produced with SPSS on the data showed linearity of relationship between the variables. Ellis' (2010) recommendation on effect size calculation was adopted for hypotheses 1 through 3. As the F-ratio results from Levine test of equality of variance for hypotheses 1, 2, and 3 were not significant at 0.05, "equal variance assumed" statistics were adopted from the SPSS outputs.

Source of Variation	SS	Df	MS	F	eta ²	P
Between Groups	1.09	2	.55	.68	0.005	.51
Within Groups	181.49	225	.81			
Total	182.58	227				

One-way analysis of variance (table 2) indicated no significant difference in entrepreneurial intention of undergraduates whose parents were self-employed, on paid employment or either of the parents was self-employed or on paid employment $F(df; 2,225) = 1.02, p > 0.05$. Therefore, the hypothesis that entrepreneurial intention of undergraduates will significantly differ along with their parents' employment status was not supported. The obtained effect size

(η^2) was 0.008. Effect size of .008 is a very small one, and it implies that parents' employment status has trivial effect on entrepreneurial orientation of undergraduates.

Table 2: One-way ANOVA on difference in Entrepreneurial Intention of Undergraduates Based on Parent's Employment Status

Source of Variation	SS	Df	MS	F	η^2	P
Between Groups	3.87	2	1.94	1.01	0.08	.37
Within Groups	430.72	225	1.91			
Total	434.59	227				

One-way analysis of variance (table 3) indicated no significant difference in entrepreneurial intention of undergraduates that scored high and those that scored low in perceived employment opportunity on graduation, $F(df; 2,226) = 2.87, p > 0.05$. Therefore, the hypothesis that undergraduates will significantly differ in entrepreneurial intention along with degree of perceived employment opportunity on graduation was not supported. The obtained effect size (η^2)

was 0.01. This is a small effect size, and it implies that perceived employment opportunity on graduation has trivial effect on entrepreneurial orientation of undergraduates.

Table 3: One-way ANOVA on difference in Entrepreneurial Intention of Undergraduates Based on Degree of Perceived Employment Opportunity on Graduation

Source of Variation	SS	Df	MS	F	η^2	P
Between Groups	5.40	1	5.40	2.87	0.01	.09
Within Groups	425.94	226	1.88			
Total	431.34	227				

Pearson correlation coefficient (table 4) indicated significant positive relationship between entrepreneurial orientation and entrepreneurial intention among undergraduates, $r = .63(df/226) = .63$ $p < .001$. This statistics implies that among undergraduates, as entrepreneurial orientation increases, entrepreneurial intention also increases. Therefore, the hypothesis that proposes significant positive relationship between entrepreneurial orientation and entrepreneurial intention among undergraduates was supported. More so, the effect size statistics, which is the r^2 was .40. This is well above large effect size benchmark of .25, and it implies that among undergraduates, entrepreneurial orientation has large effect on entrepreneurial intention. It also implies that among undergraduates entrepreneurial orientation explained 40 percent variance in entrepreneurial intention.

Table 4: Relationship between Entrepreneurial Orientation and Entrepreneurial Intention among Undergraduates

N	M (SD)	df	r^2	P
EO	228	3.82	(.92)	
	226	.63	.40	.001
EI	228	4.61	(1.38)	

Discussion

This study ascertains whether parent's employment status and perceived employment opportunity on graduation influence entrepreneurial orientation and entrepreneurial intention, and whether entrepreneurial orientation relates positively and significantly with entrepreneurial intention among undergraduates. These concerns were tested in four hypotheses. The finding on hypothesis 1 showed that parents' employment status has no significant effect on entrepreneurial orientation

of undergraduates. This finding did not support hypothesis 1 and the proposal of modeling effect, and therefore contrary to some extant findings (e.g. Opoku-Antwi, Amofah, Nyamaah-Koffuor, and Yakub's, 2012). A plausible explanation for the contrary result as observed in this study is that aside parents, there are other sources of influence (e.g. peers, school, mass media) on children attitude, particularly those elements (risk taking, innovativeness and pro-activeness) that constitute entrepreneurial orientation. And just as the children of self-employed parents are exposed to circumstances for these elements, so are the children of parents on paid employment. Therefore, it could be proposed that these other influences concealed the effect of parent's employment status on entrepreneurial orientation.

The finding on hypothesis 2 showed that parent's employment status has no significant effect on entrepreneurial intention among undergraduates. This finding did not also support hypothesis 2 and the proposal of modeling effect, and therefore unexpected and contrary to some extant findings (e.g. Akanbi's, 2013; Saeid, Harm, Thomas, Mohammad & Martin's, 2014). Like hypothesis 1, a plausible explanation for the contrary result observed in this study is that aside parents, there are other sources of influence (e.g. availability of capital) on children attitude, particularly those elements related to entrepreneurial intention. Again, just as the children of self-employed parents are exposed to circumstances for these elements, so are the children of parents on paid employment. Therefore, it could be proposed that these other influences concealed that effect of parents' employment status on entrepreneurial intention. Another plausible explanation could be the economic and social status of self-employed individuals in this research location. In this research location, the majority of self-employment individuals are artisans and petty traders, and in most cases the

socio-economic ranking of these and other similar groups is lower than that of those on paid employment. This explained why self-employment when compared to paid employment is not usually the first choice for anybody, including the very successful entrepreneurs. Aware of this disadvantage, both the children of self-employed parents and those of paid employment parents are likely to have similar attitude towards self-employment.

The finding on hypothesis 3 showed that perceived employment opportunity on graduation has no significant effect on entrepreneurial intention among undergraduates. This finding did not also support hypothesis 3 and the proposal of refuge effect, and it was unexpected and contrary to some extant findings (e.g. Garba, Djafar&Mansor's2013). However, few other findings (e.g Ozerkek&Dogruel's, 2015; Szweczyk, Widera, &Parvi's, 2013) were in congruent with the result of this study. The above indicated inconsistency in the findings on how unemployment relates with entrepreneurial intention. The finding on hypothesis 4 showed that entrepreneurial orientation positively and significantly relates with entrepreneurial intention among undergraduates. This finding supported hypothesis 4 and it is in congruent with extant studies such as Wu's (2009) and Ekpe and Mat's (2012). A plausible explanation for these results is that entrepreneurial orientation and entrepreneurial intention are attitudes within the same domain, for that they are most likely to correlate.

The descriptive statistics showed that the participants were high on entrepreneurial orientation and entrepreneurial intention. These indicate positive attitudes, and it should be welcome as it could result in entrepreneurial behaviour, other things being equal. However,

the descriptive statistics that the participants have high perception of paid employment opportunity on graduation speaks doom for entrepreneurship. It also indicated that the participants were either unaware or unwilling to acknowledge the near absence of job opportunity before them. Perhaps, this is a case of optimism bias, that is, the tendency of individuals to underestimate the likelihood that they will experience adverse event, in this case unemployment. The government should not be silent about that, as such high level of perceived paid employment opportunity on graduation could negate the spirit of self-employment.

Conclusion and Recommendation

First, parents' employment status does not have significant effect on entrepreneurial orientation and entrepreneurial intention among undergraduates. Second, perceived employment opportunity on graduation does not have significant effect on entrepreneurial orientation and entrepreneurial intention among undergraduates. And third, significant positive relationship exists between entrepreneurial orientation and entrepreneurial intention among undergraduates. In other words, as entrepreneurial orientation is increasing entrepreneurial intention is also increasing.

The present study has some limitations which point to directions for future research. Sample was drawn from only one state-owned university. This has implication for result generalization. Therefore, future studies should draw samples from a few universities. Self-report questionnaire was the sole tool for data collection. There could be issue of method bias. Future studies should adopt triangulation approach in data collection. This study is cross-sectional, which does not identify cause-effect

relationship. Future studies should explore quasi-experiment and longitudinal study to enable causal interpretation. Factors affecting entrepreneurial intention are broadly grouped into three categories: individual or psychological, family background and socio-environmental. Future studies should adopt structural equation modeling in order to capture a good number of variables from the various grouping of factors.

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